

# Parish Council of Barton St David

Clerk to the Council: Caron Potts  
Withy Lane Farmhouse, Silver Street, Barton St David, Somerton, TA11 6DD.  
Tel: 01458 850875, Email [clerkbsd@outlook.com](mailto:clerkbsd@outlook.com)

## All Council Meetings are open to the Public and Press

Please note that due to guidelines on social isolation this meeting will be held **virtually** online. If you would like to 'attend' or ask any questions, please contact the Clerk **before** 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020. An agenda, 'password invitation' and instructions will be issued by 3pm on the day of the meeting.

Dear Councillor

21<sup>st</sup> September 2020

Public Notice is hereby given that the meeting of Barton St David Parish Council, which members are summoned to attend, will be held at 7.30pm on the Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020 virtually via Zoom meeting due to enforced social isolating enforced by the Government due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, when the following business will be transacted.

Caron Potts  
Parish Clerk

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### 7.30pm Public Question Time.

This enables the electors of the Parish to ask questions of, and make comments, regarding the Parish Council. Members of the Public are asked to restrict their comments, and/or questions to three minutes. Questions may also be asked through the Clerk giving 24 hours before the start of the meeting, by phone or email.

### Reports from County and District Councillors.

District and County Councillors may give short verbal reports on matters affecting the Parish including an update on 'One Somerset' and Unitary Council debate.

### Other reports - Footpath Officer, Speedwatch and Police

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## AGENDA

**91.20 Apologies for Absence and to consider the reasons given.**

**92.20 Declarations of Interest.**

### **93.20 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

To agree any items to be dealt with after the Public (including the Press) has been excluded from the meeting. **99.20.5** Clerks pay review

**94.20 Welcome to new councillor Dave Rowley**

### **95.20 Minutes of July Parish Council Meeting**

To confirm and sign (when safe to do so) as a correct record, the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

**96.20 Website accessibility update and demonstration by Jon Harrington**

### **97.20 Planning**

1. New Application – comments by 30<sup>th</sup> September

**20/02188/OUT** Land adj Marlins Main Street. Outline application for the erection of a dwelling house with garage and the formation of a new vehicular access. Revised application with additional supporting information regarding access to site.

## 2. Decisions

**20/01628/FUL** Land OS 6121 Mill Road Barton St David. The erection of stable block - 2 stables with tack/storage room. Application permitted with conditions.

**20/01329/FUL** (revised application) OS 9121 At Butts Drove Gosling Street. The demolition of existing barn and the erection of a new dwelling. Application permitted with conditions.

## 3. Updates

Mill Road Land sale - response from SCC (see letters below)

Lorry Park, Mill Road - potential development

### **98.20 Clerk update**

### **99.20 Plotgate update – Cllr Britton**

### **100.20 Resolutions**

1. Remembrance Day event – restrictions this year
2. Workplan update – Village Hall notice board area tidy up
3. Trees on the Telephone Box Green – agree action
4. Proposed memorial to Cllr Peter Robinson
5. Adopt website accessibility policy
6. Clerk statutory pay increase and 6 month review
7. Training course fees - New councillor essentials £25pp  
- Clerk responding to planning application & data protection regulations £12.50 each
8. Grant money policy

### **101.20 Actions from minutes not already covered / carried forward**

#### **Clerk**

1. Check whether Highways have unblocked drains on Peacock Hill

#### **Cllrs Heron and Goodman**

1. Finalise Tree Policy
2. Identify and map specimen trees in the village

## **FINANCE**

### **102.20.5 Clerk statutory and 6 month review pay increase**

**103.20 Accounts for payment** -To review and approve a schedule of items of expenditure

1. Clerks salary for August £294.39 (including expenses – £59.99 for Microsoft 365 renewal and allowances) and September £381.81 (including allowances, backdated and holiday pay).
2. Jon Harrington £263.63 - Website hosting expenses of £63.63 for May 2018 – May 2020 and £300 for website accessibility review and report.
3. SALC £151.71 – Affiliation fees for SALC and NALC from April 2020 – March 2021

### **103.20 Bank reconciliation and budget**

To agree the bank reconciliation figures against the bank statements.

Review budget and cashflow.

### **104.20 Income Received**

Business savings account Interest received for July £17.94 and August £10.47.

VAT rebate £1927.33

### **105.20 Items for next meeting**

Workplan update

**Next meeting** – Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020 7.30pm, venue TBC – assume virtual

## Appendix information for Mill Road land sale

### 1. Letter sent to Councillor Chilcott

Tootle Bec  
Mill Road  
Barton St David  
Somerton  
TA11 6DF

5<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Councillor Chilcott

**Ref: Sale of Somerset County Council land in Barton St David - land north of Laurel Farm, Mill Road and field off Main Street.**

As you may know, Barton St David Parish Council is currently opposing proposals for a planning development on land on Mill Road (ref 20/00975/FUL).

The issue that has caused particular shock and anger in the village is that this land (and another plot in the village off Main Street) were sold by Somerset County Council in a private sale to a private developer without public auction and with no opportunity for dialogue with the village. Previously, villagers have expressed interest in parts of this land, but we understand they were told this was not possible, and informed that if it was put up for sale, it would go to auction.

The parish council has already sought information from your Chief Executive on how SCC sells land, but this was referred to the officer we understand is responsible for agreeing the sale of the land (correspondence attached).

Therefore, we would be grateful if you could arrange to let us know whether SSC has policies and procedures relating to the sale of its land. If so, could you please arrange for all these documents to be sent to our Parish Clerk, Caron Potts – clerkbsd@outlook.com.

The issues we are interested in examining are:

- procedures for decision-making and authorisation for sale of public land
- procedures for decision-making and authorisation for declining the sale of land to neighbours for non-commercial purposes
- how value for money is assured
- public accountability and transparency over sale of public land
- arrangements for overview and scrutiny
- community engagement and dialogue with parish councils on land sales.

This is a highly disappointing turn of events, but Barton St David Parish Council is keen to work with SCC to ensure that there is community engagement on matters that are of such vital importance to people in our village.

When we have had an opportunity to consider any documents, we will contact you again to discuss this further.

Many thanks for your help in this matter.

Yours sincerely

David Pye

Chairman, Barton St David Parish Council

2. Letter received in reply from Oliver Woodhams on behalf of Councillor Chilcott  
Somerset County Council  
County Hall  
Taunton  
TA1 4DY  
Tootle Bec  
Mill Road  
Barton St David  
Somerton  
TA11 6DF  
8th September 2020

Dear Councillor Pye,

I am writing to respond, on behalf of Councillor Mandy Chilcott, to your letter of 5th August 2020 regarding the sale of County Council land at Barton St. David. I apologise for the delay in this response, both myself and some of the other key officers involved have been on leave and it has taken some time to collate the relevant information.

Somerset County Council's policies and procedures relating to the sale of land are set out in the council's Policy for the Disposal of Property Assets, supplemented by the Community Asset Transfer Policy, and the guidance note 'Asset Disposal Options'. The Corporate Asset Management Plan provides the overall policy framework for property asset management. All of these documents are available on the council's website at <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/waste-planning-and-land/local-authorityland-and-building-assets/>. I note from your letter that you are also interested in examining issues relating to procedures for decision making and authorisation, how value for money is assured, arrangements for overview and scrutiny, public accountability and transparency and community engagement. General matters relating to decision making authority, financial regulations and overview and scrutiny are set out in the County Council's constitution and scheme of delegation, which can be found on the County Council's website at <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/how-thecouncil-works/about-the-council-and-its-constitution/>; in particular you may wish to review section 8 of the constitution which relates to decision making.

I note that you wish to consider these documents and, potentially, discuss the matter further. In doing so it may be helpful for you to understand that, under the County Council's scheme of delegation for decision making, the decision to sell the land at Barton St. David is treated as a 'non-key' decision. Officers taking such decisions are required to consult with relevant County Councillors, but there is no requirement to publish such decisions as there would be with a 'Key' decision with a more significant financial value. I am satisfied, having reviewed this case, that the correct process was followed and that all the relevant County Councillors were informed.

I am also satisfied that best value for money has been obtained through the direct sale to a neighbouring landowner, and that the Council's overriding interest of securing value for money has not been compromised by the approach. However, I also recognise that in light of the community interest shown, officers in my team may have considered that further engagement with the Parish Council may have been appropriate and I will be discussing this with the relevant officers involved so we can learn lessons for the future.

You will note from Mr. Field's earlier response that the land has been sold; we note that the Parish Council is opposed to the proposals for development and would refer you to South Somerset District Council who are the local planning authority for this matter.

I would be very happy to discuss the matter further if you wish to do so, following a review of the relevant documentation.

Kind Regards

Oliver Woodhams

Head of Corporate Property

Economic and Community Infrastructure