

BUCKLAND ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL
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Chairman: Councillor Neal Parsons
Parish Clerk: Mrs S Coombe

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Public Session

The Minutes

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Buckland St Mary Parish Council held at The Village Hall on Thursday 6th March 2025 when the following business was conducted.

Members Present

Councillors N Parsons, I Farmer, A Rich, K Every, L Marshall, R Barton & K Albon.

In Attendance

Clerk, Mrs S Coombe, Cllr J Kenton & 10 members of the public in attendance.

2024/80 To receive apologies for non-attendance

Apologies were received from Councillor Wale.

2024/81 To receive declarations of interest

Councillor Every declared an interest in planning application 25/00439/FUL at 2025/85 (i).

2024/82 To receive & approve the Minutes of the last Parish Council meeting on 30th January 2025.

Minutes were received & approved by all councillors.

2024/83 Matters arising from the minutes

The goalposts were discussed again & it was agreed to purchase 2 new goals but have signs to say that they are used at their own risk.

The email from Highways regarding the ongoing road closure & road works at Harveys Lane & Dommett Road respectively was discussed.

2024/84 Reports from Somerset Councillors

Councillor Kenton reported that the Council applied to the Government for financial support and has been allowed to increase Council Tax by 7.5%, more than the usual cap of 5%. If approved at Full Council on 5 March, this would mean a band D property paying an additional £129 a year, or £2.49 a week, but means Council Tax in Somerset will remain below the national average. The Council is facing a budget gap of £52.2m for next year, despite finding new savings of £48m which includes £34m of savings by reducing the number of staff and managers employed. However, the 7.5% increase would generate an additional £9.1m, meaning the Council will again need a Capitalisation Direction to close the gap of £43m. This is a form of one-off assistance offered by Government last year which allows the Council to sell assets or borrow money and use the proceeds to fund the budget gap and the day-to-day running costs. However, cost pressures in Children's and Adults Social Care continue to increase nationally and within Somerset Council which contributes to the budget gap.

2024/85 Planning

(i)

Application No.	25/00439/FUL
Applicant	
Proposal	The erection of 3 dwellings, improvement to access & associated development.
Location	Land Adjacent to Little Hill Farm, Little Hill, BSM, Chard, Somerset, TA20 3SS

Various objections were raised with regards to this application, the full report can be viewed via the Somerset Planning Portal

(ii)

Application No.	25/00257/HOU
Applicant	Mr & Mrs Champion
Proposal	Extension & alterations to existing dwelling.
Location	Lower Lodge, BSM, Chard, TA20 3TA

No Objections

2024/86 Finance

(i) The following were approved for payment:

Village Hall Hire - January	£15.60
Clerks Pay – March 2025	£424.94
Clerks Expenses – March 2025	£45.40
HMRC PAYE – March 2025	£61.00
Fobs – S137 Grant	£300.00
BSM & Bishopswood Cricket Club – S137 Grant	£150.00
Bishopswood Short Mat Bowls – S137 Grant	£150.00

2024/87 Appointment of Internal Auditor

Martyn Powe has agreed to carry out the internal audit for financial year 2024/2025, this was approved by all councillors.

2024/88 Drain Maintenance

Councillors agreed to look again at carrying out the annual drain maintenance for the parish. Clerk to share a copy of drains within the village with all councillors.

2024/89 CBO Life

Rosanna shared an update from Mike Canham with regards the first publication of CBO Life which will hopefully be sent out in the Autumn & continue on a quarterly basis. It will be delivered to all residents by post.

2024/90 School/Community Playground

The school/community playground has been inspected & several pieces of equipment are in need of repair/renewal. Fobs are looking at quotes to replace the equipment, applying for grants & have pledged the money raised at May Fair to fund this & are asking the PCC & Parish Council to match fund what they raise. All councillors agreed in principle to match any funds raised subject to conditions, quotes & grants.

2024/91 VE Day 80 – Thursday 8th May 2025

The Parish Council discussed the celebrations but decided at present not to organise a community event to mark VE Day 80.

2024/92 Correspondence

All correspondence circulated via email.

2024/93 Parish Matters

Cllr Every discussed the pot holes on Little Hill, the council have carried out a temporary repair & have marked the road for future works to be carried.

2024/94 There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.05pm. The next meeting will take place on Thursday 3rd April 2025 following the Annual Parish Meeting.