

**Butcombe Annual Parish Residents' Meeting**  
**Monday 11th May 6.00pm at Butcombe Village Hall**

**Draft Minutes**

**Present**

Councillor Dick Whittington (DW)

Councillor Trevor Mitchell (TM)

Councillor Justin Millard (JM)

1 member of the public

**Apologies for absence**

Councillor John Rodaway (JR)

Councillor Jim Croker (JC)

**Report for 2025/6 by Chair of Parish Council**

**Chairman's Report**

It's been quite a busy year for us, with the usual mix of Planning Applications and lots to do on highways related issues, amongst many other things.

**Planning**

Another busy year, in all we received 21 planning applications, involving 15 properties in the village – given that we only have just over 100 houses in Butcombe this seems like a lot! Once again we have had few cases which have required further engagement with North Somerset Council, often about compliance with planning conditions. We continue to be concerned about the Council's response to some of these, in particular the lack of response on some occasions – we appreciate that resources are stretched, but lack of early action can build up future problems, as demonstrated by the unauthorised activities at Butcombe Barns in the AONB last year.

**Airport Planning and Parking**

As you may be aware the Airport is seeking agreement for (yet) further expansion, including going beyond the current airport envelope to annex part of Felton Common. This is of major concern, and it's important that as many residents as possible make their views known by answering the consultation. It's a major issue for residents in the north of the village, and for all of us in terms of the impact on traffic and litter, including of course the continuing amount of unauthorised parking

**Highways and Drainage**

I am very grateful to my colleague Cllr John Rodaway for his continuing efforts to keep on top of this. While relationships with the Council Highways Team are generally good, there is a lack of response on some issues, generally the more difficult ones. In particular the state of Sutton Lane up to the junction with Bristol Road opposite Ruisling House is quite appalling, the road

surface has gone way beyond the pothole repair state and is now so bad that people are refusing to deliver. We appreciate that potholes are a problem everywhere, and in most cases the Council team does react in reasonable time, but there are a growing number of cases where proper we surfacing is required, not just filling a pothole.

### **Minor Works**

Apart from potholes, we are concerned about the increasing amount of minor flooding and the current inadequacy of the current verge cutting service. North Somerset Council are aware that current arrangements don't fully meet Parish needs, and are intending to embark on a trial programme of additional work at Parish discretion, at cost. We have said we are interested in principle, but more detail is required before we can commit. In essence this would include deeper and more thorough verge cuts in the Autumn, and 'parish gangs' deployed to carry out agreed work two or three times a year – this could include manual clearance of blocked drains, which might be useful.

### **Major Works**

As residents will be aware, recent months have seen some major work on sewers in Butcombe, which has meant numerous, and frequently changing, road closures. No doubt this work was much needed, but the disruption was considerable, and we are grateful to everyone for their patience, and to Wessex Water for their efforts on communication

### **Finances**

Butcombe Parish Council is in good health financially, with more than adequate reserves. However, we are conscious of the likelihood that we'll need to spend more money going forward, so we did make a small increase to the Council precept this year. Butcombe's precept (ie the amount of Council Tax that is raised by the Parish Council) is among the very lowest in North Somerset, both in absolute terms and in cost per household.

### **Councillors**

As ever, I am grateful for the support and dedication of my fellow councillors. However, one or two of us are getting on a bit, and we really do need to find some more involved. We have become a bit male dominated. I appreciate that younger people with families may feel they don't have the time, but the basic role is just half a dozen or so meeting a year, so it doesn't have to be a huge time commitment. Butcombe is a very special village, and I think it's important that we have our own Parish Council, rather than being subsumed into one of the larger Parishes adjacent to us – which would mean less attention but almost certainly a much higher precept.

Earlier this year our then clerk, Colm O'Donahue, had to leave us owing to health problems. We were sad to see Colm leave, but I'm pleased to say Alicia Fox joined us at the beginning of January – Alicia has a lot of experience as a Parish Clerk, and also looks after Clapton in Gordano and Nempnet Thrubwell, so we are in good hands.

### **Parish Council Finance Report**

During 2025/26 the Parish Council received a precept amount of £4000 from North Somerset Council, this was an increase of £216 from the previous year. The Parish Council(PC) also

received Community Infrastructure Levy from NSC totalling £2294. The PC used some of the CIL money to pay for the repair of finger posts within the village and have a balance of £595.76 carried forward to this financial year.

As the financial year for 2025/26 closed the PC held £11,140 in their bank account, this was made up of the £595.76 CIL and a further £1000 held on Earmarked reserves for the North Somerset Pilot maintenance scheme.

If you have any questions regarding the finances for the financial year 2025/26 please do not hesitate to contact me and the public rights to view the AGAR (Annual Governance and Accountability Return) will be displayed in due course.

### **Issues raised by Residents and Priorities for 2026/27**

Member of public said she thought the village Whatsapp group is going well, and expressed an interest in the managing/maintenance of the defibrillator?

Cllr Dick Whittington advised the defibrillator is being managed by member of public (previous Chair of the PC) but it needs some attention to ensure it is fit for purpose.

Councillor Trevor Mitchell suggested a few phone numbers of volunteers are circulated for use in an emergency to help retrieve and deliver the defibrillator if needed.

Member of public is happy to speak to current person looking after the defibrillator and investigate implementing a process to ensure the defibrillator can be retrieved and taken where needed.

Councillor Dick Whittington is keen for training on CPR/defibrillator to be held.

Councillor Justin Milard suggested an A4 poster in the notice boards stating the phone numbers of those willing to help in an emergency.

Clerk to look into CPR/defibrillator training and report back to the Council.

Clerk to make some posters/ leaflets for councillor recruitment.

Requested that the Clerk shares the agendas and minutes via the Parish Council Newsletter email group.

Meeting closed: 18.36