



Minutes of the Meeting of Meare Parish Council
Held on Monday 21st July at 7.30pm in the Meare Community Church

Present: Cllrs Bennetts (CB), C Foster (CF), T Foster (TF), Lander (RL), Lusby (AL), Neale (AN), A Wren (AW), R Wren (RW)

In attendance:

Parish Clerk – Liz Horne (LH)
Cllr Shearer (HS)– Somerset Council (SC)
+ 6 members of public

Public participation

41. Apologies for absence. (LGA 1972 s85 (1))

Apologies were received from Cllr Field (JF), Winter (VW).

42. Introduction of Councillors Lander, Lusby and Wren: Councillors signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office and were welcomed as new members of Meare Parish Council.

43. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest declared.

44. Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 16th June 2025 having been previously circulated and considered a true and accurate record of the previous meetings and were signed by the Chair. Proposed by TF and 2nd AN. **MOTION CARRIED.**

45. Finances

- a. LH circulated annual accounts up to the end of June 2025 along with the bank statement prior to the meeting. Proposed Cllr TF and 2nd Cllr AN. **MOTION CARRIED.**
- b. LH circulated a list of invoices to be paid prior to the meeting for councillors' consideration. Proposed by TF and 2nd CB. **MOTION CARRIED.**
- c. A YTD Budget v Actual report was circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting for information. AW raised a query with line 66/item 93 and asked if this should be under War Memorial.
- d. Bank Accounts- New bank account applications for MPC and the Parish Magazine were signed.
- e. Village Hall –comments regarding the MoU were received from SALC.

ACTION: LH to check the YTD report – line 66/item 93 is entered correctly into scribe.

ACTION: LH to invite the Village Hall Trustees to the MPC September meeting to get the MoU signed.

46. Summary of outstanding actions from previous meetings:

See appendix A

47. County Councillor report

- a. Following the coach accident carrying school pupils back from a school trip to a Minehead school last week in which one 10 year old boy died and several other children and adults were seriously injured, the community has responded well with over 100k received in donations. HS will attend meetings this week to work out how Somerset Council can support the community affected.



- b. Somerset Council is investing in Special Educational Needs and opening up more opportunities for Children to be educated within mainstream schools with additional support from trained staff and teachers. The aim is to keep children local to where they live rather than having to attend special school's miles away from their home, family and friends.
- c. Somerset Council are opening their 8th children's home this week which will create a secure home for children that are difficult to place in foster care or to find an alternative solution for.
- d. There is a backlog of work for Planning Enforcement Officers and HS hopes to update on changes in our next meeting.

48. Planning:

- a. 2025/1088/FUL Erection of wildlife tower at Honeygar Farm
 - b. 2024/20418/PAA Barn at Atlasta Farm, Shapwick Road, Westhay
- Both of the above are for information and no comments are to be submitted.

49. Highways

- a. LCN – no updates available at this time.
- b. White lines – have been added to Chappel lane where it meets Oxen Hill. CB toured the village looking for all the roads where white lines were not fully visible and sent a list to LH who forward to SC.

50. Parish Matters including:

- a) Play area –
 - i. Repairs – Fencing etc... update
9 posts and several rails need to be replaced plus the addition of a wooden pedestrian gate to allow access to the field from Ashcott Road.

ACTION: CF to contact the fencing contractors and meet them at the field to brief them on the works needed.

ACTION: LH to chase up quotes from contractors for fence repairs and gate required.

- ii. Removal of football posts update.
There is no requirement to remove the goal posts at this time. This will wait until after the village hall is built at which time the pitch will be rotated and posts upgraded.
- iii. Inspection report update following the Playing Field Sub-Committee meeting 27.06.25
Most points raised within the report were rated as a low risk, therefore no works are required at this time.
- b) Playing field - Utility quotes- Electricity
All quotes were circulated prior to the meeting for consideration. AN proposed that we go ahead with the 3 year offer with British Gas Lite. TF 2nd. **MOTION CARRIED**
- c) Allotments update- LH advised that Stonewater are not prepared to accept responsibility for maintaining the gravel area outside the vehicle access gate leading to the allotments. This area is to the left-hand side of the final house in Bramble close and is used by residents and their visitors to turn and park, causing potholes and a disruption/dispersal of the gravel.

ACTION: LH to write a letter back to Stonewater regarding the gravel area outside the vehicle access gate to the allotments

ACTION: LH to confirm meeting with MAA for 7.30pm on the 7th August at the Community Church. LH to put together an agenda and forward to MAA. MPC councillors to attend will be CB, AW, TF and VW(if possible)

- d) Fly tipping-
 - i. Picnic area- AW and RW went through the rubbish that was fly tipped at the picnic area and found address details. Somerset Council will remove the fly

CS

tipped items and the address of the person whose details were found in the waste was past to the enforcement officer for them to pursue.

All agreed to leave the bin in the current location until we have established who owns the land.

ACTION: LH to carry out a Land Reg search for the picnic area in Westhay to try and establish who owns the land.

ACTION: LH to write a letter to the person who fly tipped.

e) Committees and Outside Representation/Keys- updated lists

ACTION: AL to help with website updates with JF to spend some time training. Other councillors to review and confirm if they wish to represent MPC for any of the other committees and activities.

f) CCTV – Training and cost to be agreed £30.00 for 1 hour. TF proposed and 2nd by CB. **MOTION CARRIED.**

ACTION: LH to contact Andrew Robinson and arrange CCTV training for councillors at 7.30pm on Monday 18th August.

g) Parish Magazine update – recruitment

CB and AN met with Helen Mitchell as the successful applicant for the Editor position. Helen will edit and work on the advertising but ideally would like to find someone else in the parish to help find advertisers in the coming months.

h) Resignation & election of replacement councillor

Cllr T James resigned, and her post was reported to the Returning Officer at Somerset Council and advertised from the 1st July. The 14th day is today and we should be advised by Election Services by the middle of this week.

i) SALC report- All to agree the content of circulated report

AW highlighted that the report had spelling errors, varying fonts and grammatical errors and also didn't mention the £3000k profits achieved at the event or where the profits went.

ACTION: LH to contact Fodo at SALC and ask if the report could be edited and re-submitted

j) Parish Councillor Training- decide monthly time/day that works for all and continue from September. All agreed and HS confirmed she would be happy to resume councillor training in September at 6.30pm for an hour before each Parish Council meeting. This training does not replace SALC councillor training. AW proposed and 2nd by AL. **MOTION CARRIED.**

k) Councillors using IT devices in MPC meetings- There is no mention in the MPC Standing Orders that suggests that electronic devices cannot be used in meetings. Therefore, all councillors are now welcome to display the agenda and Parish Meeting related documents during Parish Council meetings.

39. Correspondence

a. Website enquiry re overflowing bins- this was addressed earlier on in the meeting and can be fed back to the parishioner who wrote in.

ACTION: LH to write a reply and explain what action MPC has taken regarding the overflowing bin

c. Parish Preparedness Survey – This survey was completed during the meeting.

ACTION: LH to take a copy and then submit the survey.

40. Next meeting will be on 15th September 2025, 7.30pm in Meare Community Church

Appendix A –

<u>Ongoing Actions July</u>					
Action number	ACTION	Date	Assigned to	Date Completed	Notes
1	All councillors to forward any records/dates of training already completed to LH and LH to initiate a training record for Councillors. Ongoing.		ALL		Cllrs NH, CB, AW sent details
2	LH to collate information on when defibs are available to be added to the Parish Magazine and website.	20.01.25	LH/VW		Email to Cllr Gage 12.02.25 to ask where info for defibs can be found or if she has it. Requested assistance with locations and "what 3 words". 14.02.25 Cllr LG forward some info, to be actioned by LH. 02.04.25 Cllr LG now left and new guardian to assist will collating info. 28.04.25 LH emailed out a form to VW and Helen for them to complete so LH can collate all defib info in one place 25.05.25 LH received info from Helen Mitchell re Westhay defib and resent form to Cllr VW re Church rooms defib on 30.05.25. 30.06.25 VW to forward info on the village defib to LH 08.07.25 Defib form resent to Cllr Winter to complete.
	ACTIONS from MPC meeting 17.02.25				

CS

3	LH to contact the Housing association re the space outside the allotments needing attention.	18.02.25 5	LH	27.02.25	Housing association is Stonewater. 21.02.25 LH submitted an online enquiry form via Stonewater website. 26.02.25 Stonewater request photos and a marked map to show area. Email sent to Cllr James to request assistance. 27.02.25 photos and map sent to Stonewater. 04.03.25 Stonewater confirmed that have forward my enquiry to their Neighbourhoods team. 02.04.25 LH chased housing association 10.04 housing association who apologised for not getting in touch and advised that Gary Henwood would repsond within 5 days 28.04.25 LH chased up again. Respnse stated we should hear somethign within 5 working days - 07.05.25 latest. 12.05.25 LH chased Housing assoc again. 21.05.25 response received stating we should hear something within 5 working days 30.05.25 Liz Chased again. 16.06.25 AN been in touch with Matthew Wall from Axe Brue Internal Drainage Board. LH to write to him to request a meeting for AN to meet with them at the playing field.
	ACTIONS from MPC meeting 17.03.25				
4	TJ to coordinate the repainting project of the goal posts at the planying field. TF/TJ to coordinate dates to remove the football posts.	17.03.25 5	TJ		14.04.25 ongoing. TJ needs help to lift the goalposts to enable her to paint.

CS

5	<p>TJ to explore what repairs can be made at the allotments by the allotment holders and also explore any grants that may be available to facilitate required repairs to the allotments. LH to contact Wessex Water regarding the ditch that MPC is proposing to fill at the allotments. It is thought the ditch belongs to Wessex Water. MPC would like to pipe the ditch LH to liaise with AN for a drainage quote. Internal drainage board to meet with AN and gain permission for the ditch to be piped</p>	17.03.25	AN/LH		<p>24.03.25 email to AN to ask what I need to do. 26.03.25 AN advised he and another councillor would salvage some pipes from the peat fields and place at the allotments. AN to confirm once completed. Email sent to Customer.Services@BWBSL.co.uk and sloan@wessexwater.co.uk 28.04.25 along with all related paperwork received from MAA. Sloan email no longer active, email bounced back 07.05.25 LH emailed MAA members to ask for Water Bill info to pass on to Wessex Water so that they can correctly locate the area concerned. OMPC with outcome of call and await further instructions. 12.05.25 AN will contact Somerset Water Consortium to ask them to advise..</p>
	ACTIONS from MPC meeting 14.04.25				
6	<p>LH to contact MAA Chair and request a meeting to discuss proposed changes plus request the waiting list falls under the Clerks remit. LH to receive any requests for those wanting an allotment to add anyone waiting. LH to liaise with David Naylor and Keith Brandham regarding dates</p>	14.04.25	LH	13.05.25	<p>13.05.25 LH emailed MAA and await dates plus the waiting list.</p>

CB

	for a meeting with MPC.				
7	LH to write letters of thanks to Tom Francis, Ben Thompson (the installation electrician), Chris Francis no 1 Stileway Farm. Livewest Homes Limited, 1 Wellington Way, Skypark, Exeter, EX5 2FZ (company who Ben works for)	14.04.25	LH		24.04.25 email to Cllr's to ask if Tom and Chirs Francis are a couple. 24.04.25 letter sent to Ben via email. 24.04.25 email to Ben to ask for name of manager so that I can write to say thank you. Cllr CF to advise LH on exactly who to write letters to? 08.07.25 email to Cllr Foster to gain clarity on letters required.
	ACTIONS FROM Playing Field Committee Meeting 25.04.25				
8	CF to purchase a piece of pipe to cover the spring on the gate by the diabled space	25.04.25	CF		30.06.25 ongoing
	ACTIONS FROM MPC Meeting 19.04.25				
9	The Playing Field Committee need to assemble at the Play Area and review what is needed for the whole area with regards to fencing, spurs etc.... Information to be passed to Clerk so she can gain amended quotes.	19.05.25	AN, CB, CF, TJ, TF	27.06.25	

CB

10	LH to establish who owns the land where the picnic area is.	19.05.25	LH/CB		23.05.25 CB said she would gain access to the garage and search for documents. 03.07.25 CB has been to the garage to try and locate papers. 08.07.25 LH emailed Gerald to see if he has seen them and if so was he aware of the content
11	Cllr JF to add Poppy T Event to the Website.	19.05.25	JF/CB		CB to liaise with Elizabeth & Charlotte Norris for information
	ACTIONS FROM MPC Meeting 16.06.25				
12	LH to open MPC current and savings bank accounts with Unity Trust. Signatories are all members of the Finance Committee	16.06.25	LH		
13	LH to open a bank account for the Parish Magazine with Untiy Trust Bank. Signatories as per the finance committee	16.06.25	LH		
14	LH to forward memorandum of understanding re the village hall to SALC for comment before signing at the July meeting	16.06.25	LH	01.07.25	document sent to SALC for review and advice. 02.07.25 Ewan Jones responded from SALC to advise someone would be in touch.
15	LH to write a letter to Axe Brue Internal drainage board re the drainage issues at the allotments.	16.06.25	LH/AN	30.06.25	Letter sent to AN for review before being sent
16	CB to contact SALC to request an extension to the return of the SALC report	16.06.25	CB	20.06.25	

CA

	following the wellness event.				
17	JF to check the picnic area bin on a weekly basis and report to LH if it has not been emptied.	16.06.25	JF/LH		
18	CB to email councillors to advise what is entailed in being on the LCN committee and councillors to advise if they would like to be involved.	16.06.25	CB		
19	LH to establish who may have the keys to the CCTV cupboard so that 2 people can review CCTV.	16.06.25	LH		Key list compiled and Cllr T Foster has purchased new padlocks. TF will forward a list of all current keyholders for all new padlocks.
20	LH to update the details of the Committees and Outside representation and circulate.	16.06.25	LH	30.06.25	Circulated for comment to Councillors
21	ALL councillors to advise what keys they hold for what MPC property so records can be kept and updated. Also assist with retrieving keys from ex councillors.	16.06.25	ALL		
22	LH to add councillors using IT devices in MPC meetings to the agenda and forward the suggested part of the Standing orders for	16.06.25	LH	01.07.25	LH reviewed SO's and there is no mention of the prohibition of use of devices in meetings

CS

	amendment and discussion in July's meeting.				
23	LH to circulate the Councillor recruitment pack that is now available should MPC be in a position to coopt new members onto the council following any future resignations.	16.06.25	LH	01.07.25	emailed out to councillors
24	JF/LH to meet and discuss the removal/amendment of our highways submission form and add a link to SC highways for parishioners to submit directly to them.	16.06.25	JF		
25	LH to contact MS and ask for a price to clean and paint the phone box in Westhay that houses the defib.	16.06.25	LH	01.07.25	Spoke to Malcolm and he will get a price to me before our meeting on the 21st July

CS

Invoices to be paid in May

Colin Foster	New signs for the Playing Field	02.04.25	44.43	21.05.25
Liz Horne	May salary plus expenses	31.05.25	941.00	28.05.25
Ripple	Payrole	31.05.25	10.00	Standing Order
HMRC	Employers Ni Contribution	31.05.25	74.73	
Malcolm Sweet	Village Maint-June	15.06.25	550.00	17.06.25
SALC	Annual subs	10.04.25	655.42	10.06.25
Colin Westover	Memorial Flowers	09.04.25	35.97	21.05.25
Teresa James	Zipwire repair	08.04.25	17.19	21.05.25
Community Church	Donation -room hire Jan to April inclusive	30.04.25	160.00	23.06.25
Cowling Agriculture	Tractor service	23.04.25	180.00	
Valda Energy	Meare Playing Field Electricity	06.05.25	26.15	Direct Debit
Tristan Foster	Tractor Repairs and Yellow paint for road markings	06.05.25	423.97	21.05.25
Adrian M Johnstone	Internal Audit 2025	12.05.25	190.00	
Chris Bennetts	Vase- Villager of the Year	12.05.25	34.98	17.06.25
			3343.84	
WELLNESS EVENT				
Childrens World Charity	SALC Grant-Health and Wellbeing event- arts and crafts	07.04.25	161.35	21.05.25
Owl Enlighting CIC	SALC Grant-Health and Wellbeing event - owl	07.04.25	250.00	21.05.25
Somerset Toiler Hire Ltd	SALC Grant-Health and Wellbeing event- toilet hire	07.04.25	396.00	29.05.25
Daniel Small	SALC Grant-Health and Wellbeing event - Graffiti art workshop	07.04.25	300.00	21.05.25
EmPrint Ltd - Emprint and Signs	SALC Grant-Health and Wellbeing event- Supply of Roadside event signs	09.04.25	242.02	02.05.25
Mark Aylward (Starlite)	SALC Grant-Health and Wellbeing event- Entertainment	06.05.25	100.00	11.06.25
David Thomas Cullen (Back River Rats)	SALC Grant-Health and Wellbeing event- Entertainment	06.05.25	200.00	21.05.25
Georgina Sweet	SALC Grant-Health and Wellbeing event- Entertainment	06.05.25	150.00	21.05.25
S M Kerslake	SALC Grant-Health and Wellbeing event- Design of leaflet and programme plus printing	06.05.25	150.00	09.06.25
Teresa James	SALC Grant-Health and Wellbeing event-Various items	06.05.25	238.82	21.05.25
Ricki Buckingham Music	SALC Grant-Health and Wellbeing event- Entertainment	06.05.25	100.00	21.05.25
Kamilla Wiacek	SALC Grant-Health and Wellbeing event- Entertainment	06.05.25	50.00	21.05.25
Moorvale Creative CIC	SALC Grant-Health and Wellbeing event- Sound Engineer	06.05.25	300.00	11.06.25
Mrs Hazel DeGregorio (Festival Lizards Ltd)	SALC Grant-Health and Wellbeing event - tents, gazeboes and stewards	06.05.25	2000.00	
Mr G Mountstevens (Party Pals)	Bluey Mascot Hire	06.05.25	60.00	21.05.25
Mrs K Munday	Training Session in play area	06.05.25	50.00	
Kevin Davis	BBQ	17.05.25	30.00	21.05.25
Meare and Westhay Ladies Social Club	Food	17.05.25	337.48	21.05.25
			5115.67	VAT £116.15

Invoices to be paid in June

Liz Horne	June salary plus expenses	31.05.25	920.44	30.06.25
Ripple	Payrole	31.05.25	10.00	Standing Order
HMRC	Employers Ni Contribution	31.05.25	74.73	
Malcolm Sweet	Village Maint-July	15.06.25	550.00	
S M Kerslake	April/May Parish Mag Editorial	16.04.25	150.00	24.06.25
S M Kerslake	June/July Parish Mag Editorial	09.06.25	150.00	24.06.25
The Play Inspection Co	Play area annual inspection	16.05.25	108.30	
Chris Bennetts	Floweres - villager of the year	16.05.25	12.00	
1975.47				

Invoices to be paid in July

Liz Horne	July salary plus expenses		1488.49	
Ripple	Payrole		10.00	Standing Order
HMRC	Employers Ni Contribution		169.77	
Nest	Employers Pension contribution		30.87	
Malcolm Sweet	Village Maint-July		550.00	
RBLI	VJ day flags	07.07.25	83.86	
Tristan Foster	Various invoices	08.07.25	128.01	
Chris Bennetts	Concrete for replacement dog waste bin		18.00	

Christina Benn