

## February 2021

At our January meeting, the Parish Council agreed the precept for 2021/22. The precept is the “proportion” of your Council Tax that is managed by the Parish Council and represents a small proportion of your overall Council Tax. For 2021/22 our Tax Base decreased from 256.77 to 254.98, meaning there are less “taxable” properties in the village. This is due to an increase in the number of properties that are either exempt from Council Tax or who are entitled to a discount. This in turn increases the Band D rate from £104.67 p.a. to £105.41 p.a. The Parish Council decided to increase the precept to take into account inflation only from £26,877 to £27,000. This will raise the Band D rate to £105.93 p.a.

It was fantastic to hear from the National Trust’s ranger that the ‘Slow the Flow’ project at Welham’s Brook proved beneficial during the recent bout of inclement weather by deflecting the excess water into the ponds. What wonderful news!

We submitted a new planning application to SSDC in December for the new pavilion but at time of writing this article it still had not been validated by the Planning Department. Unfortunately, due to ‘lockdown’ planning applications are taking longer than usual to be processed. Hopefully, we will hear something soon.

You may have noticed that the fingerpost in Middle Street is still missing! We were hoping that our parish lengthsman was going to reinstall it but sadly the pole part of the fingerpost was stolen so we are currently looking for a replacement by scouring reclamation yards. Keep your fingers crossed that we will find one soon!

As more and more people are buying electric vehicles, the Parish Council have been asked to investigate the possibility of getting some Electric Vehicle Public Charging Points in the village. We have carried out some initial research and will be carrying out a feasibility study to determine where one or more can be situated; Conservation Area restrictions, if any; what the cost would be and how many residents would benefit from an EV charging point.

The Parish Council have been asked to put a grit bin at the junction of Townsend/Yeovil Road as there have been a few minor accidents with residents falling over due to black ice. We do have a spare bin so this will be installed soon.

Despite the ‘lockdown’ the play area is allowed to stay open and we want children to be able to enjoy themselves in a safe environment. Therefore, please can we ask parents and children to adhere to the updated notices on the gates and in the play area before using the equipment.

### **The COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout**

The vaccine rollout is now underway in Somerset with many over 70’s and 80’s, health care workers and care home residents already having their vaccinations. We will all be contacted by the NHS when it is our time to have an appointment, so please do not contact your local GP surgery direct.

### **Covid-19 Guidelines Update**

The Government published on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021 that England would be in a national lockdown. This means you must stay at home except where necessary. You can only leave your home to:

- shop for basic necessities, for you or a vulnerable person
- go to work, or provide voluntary or charitable services, if you cannot reasonably do so from home.
- exercise with your household (or support bubble) or one other person (in which case you should stay 2m apart). Exercise should be limited to once per day, and you should not travel outside your local area.
- meet your support bubble or childcare bubble where necessary, but only if you are legally permitted to form one
- seek medical assistance or avoid injury, illness or risk of harm (including domestic abuse)
- attend education or childcare - for those eligible

If you do leave home for a permitted reason, you should always stay local - unless it is necessary to go further, for example to go to work. Stay local means stay in the village/town where you live.

It is critical that you follow all of the Government guidelines to keep both yourself and others safe. The virus is airborne. Guidelines are changing all the time about what we can and cannot do, and so you can find the most up-to-date information at:

**<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/>**

Please have a look; this web link is especially useful as there is a lot of information on every aspect of our daily lives. You can find out what businesses, services, and venues are permitted to stay open to getting financial support for individuals or businesses. There is also information on what support is available if you are out of work, need to get food, or want to take care of your mental health. You can also download easy read, large print and translated versions of this guidance in a pdf format.

It is difficult for all of us and easy to say Keep Positive, but we do need to try, and we need to keep looking out for one another. Remember to be kind and we will get through it somehow - together. Keep washing those hands, wear face coverings and practicing social distancing! Stay Safe. Remember - Hands, Face, Space!



**Beware of Scams!**

Sadly, there are some unscrupulous people taking advantage of vulnerable people. We have been alerted to a number of scams going around. These scams, whether it is by email, a telephone call or text message usually ask you for your personal data such as bank account details, passport information etc. If they claim to be from your regular organisations like your broadband, TV Licensing or bank please do not give them the information – make sure you contact the company/bank direct and check to see if the request is genuine.

Never give in to pressure from doorstep salesmen to sign and agree to something there and then.

Trading Standards is warning the public to be on their guard following reports that fraudsters are sending out fake message offering a Covid-19 vaccine in an attempt to steal bank details. The message offers a link to what police call an 'extremely convincing' fake NHS website. Once on the website people are asked to input their bank details to register for a vaccine.

The scam message reads 'we have identified that you are eligible to apply for your vaccine' and then prompts you to click on a link for further information or to 'apply' for the vaccine. If you receive a text or email that asks you to click on a link or for you to provide information, such as your name, credit card or bank details, delete it immediately.

Finally, if someone comes knocking at your door offering to vaccinate you there and then for cash – please say **NO!** The NHS will:

- **NEVER** ask for payment – the vaccine is free
- **NEVER** ask for your bank details
- **NEVER** arrive unannounced at your home to administer the vaccine
- **NEVER** ask you for copies of your personal documents such as your passport

If you think you have been scammed, you can get advice and to find out how to report it at <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/scams/what-to-do-if-youve-been-scammed/>

### **Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour**

For any advice and further/up-to-date information on incidents please go to the website: [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk). If you are a witness to or the victim of a crime, then it is **imperative** that you report it to the police immediately whether it is during the day or at night. When reporting an incident please telephone either 101 for non-emergencies or 999 for emergencies only.

### **Parish Council Meeting 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 7pm**

The Parish Council are now holding their meetings via the virtual meeting platform Zoom. The basic package is free to use and can be accessed at <https://zoom.us/>. If you would like to attend our virtual parish council meeting please contact the Parish Clerk at [clerk\\_montacutepc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:clerk_montacutepc@hotmail.co.uk) for the ID link by the Friday before the meeting. If you do not have access to the internet but would still like to listen in on the meeting please telephone the Parish Clerk on 01935 822455 for the telephone conferencing number so that you can dial in.

If you would like to participate in the public session, please email/phone through the subject/question you wish to raise with the council when you asked for the ID link/telephone number.

If you are accessing the meeting via the **internet**:

- Click on the link or copy the link into your browser given to you in the email.
- Download the Zoom app, if not already done so.

- Test your speakers and microphone on your device (you will be prompted to do this)
- You will then be put in a 'Waiting Room' until you are invited to join.
- Once connected, you must click on the video camera icon at the bottom left-hand side of the screen to enable the video. This is so that councillors can see who is attending the meeting.

If you are accessing the meeting by **telephone**:

- Dial the number given to you by the Clerk.
- Once connected you will be prompted to type in the meeting ID plus #, then #, then the password plus #. You will be placed in a 'Waiting Room' until invited to join.

All microphones will be automatically muted from the start of the meeting. If you wish to participate in the public session your microphone will be unmuted when you are invited to speak.

Council meetings will continue in this form until such time as we are informed that public meetings/gatherings may take place in person.

*Contact details: Sarah Moore, Parish Clerk  
24 High Street, Stoke sub Hamdon TA14 6PS*

*Email: [clerk\\_montacutepc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:clerk_montacutepc@hotmail.co.uk)*

*Telephone: 01935 822455*

*Website: [www.montacuteparishcouncil.com](http://www.montacuteparishcouncil.com)*