

STOKE ST MICHAEL PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes from the virtual meeting held on 23rd July 2020

Present: Cllr Keith Holder (Chair), Cllrs. Amanda Taylor, Keith Hambly, Kim Gibson, Nicholas Corbett, John McEntee and David Richardson-Aitken

Also, in attendance: Kate Egan (Clerk).

1 **Welcome by the Chairman**

2 **Apologies for Absence**

None received

3 **Absent**

Cllr Matthew Rice

4 **Declarations of Interest**

None

5 **Public Session**

There were no members of the public in attendance, but District Councillor Alan Townsend was in attendance

6 **County and District Councillor Reports**

There was no report from Somerset County Council, the District reports were forwarded before the meeting, and has been included as Appendix A.

Items to Note –

Recycle More - Waste collection from households will be three weekly from October, the items that can be recycled will be increased. Letters will be sent out to residents with further information.

Local Plan I and Local Plan II is currently being discussed to become one document, but this cannot happen until the Local Plan II is adopted which will hopefully be at the end of the year.

7 **To confirm the minutes of the previous meetings held on 18th June 2020 and 16th July 2020, previously circulated**

The Council **RESOLVED** that the minutes for 18th June be accepted as a true record and would be signed by the Chair once physical meetings are resumed. The minutes for 16th July be accepted as a true record but with the addition of the following sentence to item 6 (b) “and Parish Councils are awaiting information from the District Councils in relation to One Somerset”

8 **Matters arising from the minutes but not on the agenda**

(a) Item 6 as discussed at the meeting held on 18th June 2020, no road signs had been forwarded to Cllr Keith Holder, this will be done in the next couple of days and the information will be sent to Somerset County Council by the end of the month.

(b) Item 6 (a) as discussed at the meeting held on 16th July 2020. Cllr Keith Holder attended a Zoom meeting hosted by SALC debating the Local Government Reorganisation. The One Somerset proposal for the composition Local Community Networks (LCN) was that 4 to 9 members of the proposed unitary authority would sit on the LCN together with representatives of other public bodies including local police and health services. However, the status of the LCN would be as a sub-committee of the unitary council's cabinet and subject to the council's scrutiny procedures

(c) Item 6 (c) as discussed at the meeting held on 16th July 2020. Cllrs Keith Holder and David Richardson-Aitken met with Mark Baker from Mark Baker Consulting Limited and walked along Tower Hill and Coal Pit Lane to look at the traffic issues. He will feed his findings back to the Council.

9 **Grants**

No applications have been received

10 **To Be Resolved**

(a) Acceptance of quotes to repaint the finger posts within the Parish.

It was **RESOLVED** by the Council to accept the quotes from Chris Ingrem and he will be contacted to commence the works.

(b) Proposal to engage the services of a Tree Surgeon to investigate a tree in St Michaels Close.

It was **RESOLVED** by the Council to contact some Tree Surgeons to investigate the unhealthy tree and obtain quotes for any work that may need to be carried out.

(c) Proposal to set up a Facebook page for Stoke St Michael Parish Council

It was **RESOLVED** by the Council to set up the Page and this will be managed by the Clerk.

11 **Planning Applications – If other planning applications are received between the date of this notice and the date of the meeting, they may be considered.**

(a) Street Trading Application for “The Mendip Chippy” to trade outside the Knatchbull Arms on Wednesday evenings. Due to the short timescales for responses, the decision was made by email and it was unanimously recommended for approval.

12 **Clerk's Report**

(a) Abandoned cars within the village. Photographs of the situation kindly supplied by a resident have been forwarded to the Enforcement Officer, no response has yet been received

(b) An email was received from a resident as to the state of the footpath from Stoke Hill to the Playing Fields as they considered it hazardous whilst using a mobility scooter. This was reported to Somerset Highways on 22nd June 2020, reference number 57064. A response was received on 7th July to say that this was passed to Mendip Highways. An update from the resident has been received to say that tarmac has been added making it safer to use.

(c) As stated in the minutes of 21st May item 12c regarding a report of a rotten post on the footpath gate leading to the field from Stoke Hill. A response has now been received from Somerset Highways and the case has been closed as remedial works were not considered necessary.

Update – Due to various posts on Social Media about the post now becoming detached, it has been reported again, reference number 57582.

(d) Development in Yellow Gate. The deadline for public consultation was 7th July, 11 out of 32 consultees responded, 46 comments were received from members of the public all objecting against the development. Somerset Highways have responded stating that the increase on surrounding roads/junctions can't be classified as severe and therefore is acceptable, so agreeing with the application conclusion that the proposal will not give rise to highway safety concerns.

(e) The village phone box located next to The Knatchbull Arms has been removed by BT. A notice was installed inside the box at the beginning of October 2019 and Mendip District Council were informed. The line was stopped at the end of 2019 and after receiving a notification from Mendip District Council at the end of January 2020, stating that they had received no objections it was removed. Over the last few years, it had only been used on average 4 times a year and none of them were to 999.

(f) On the 1st January 2026 unrecorded and under-recorded footpaths will be extinguished. If residents find any issues with footpaths in the parish please either contact the Clerk or the Parish Path Liaison Officer Alun Stewart.

13 Finance

Bank Balances as at 29th June 2020: -

Reserve Account - £24,550.43

Current Account - £15,974.64

Quarterly review of the budget

The budget needs revising and will be brought back to the October Meeting to be clarified alongside the second quarter.

Receipts

(a) Burial fees – £489.00

(b) VAT Refund - £5,327.01

Payments

(c) Clerks Salary – June and July - £517.92

(d) Deeper Green May, June and July Invoice - £360 –

NB The cheque for the May invoice was refused by the bank so is being reissued.

(e) EDF Invoice - £108.80

(f) Monthly usage of Zoom - £7.20

(g) Website hosting - £12.00

(h) ProBusiness – Internal Auditors - £222.00

(i) J Murtagh Tree Services - £475.00

It was **RESOLVED** to agree the above payments. This was proposed by Cllr Keith Hambly and seconded by Cllr Kim Gibson.

14 Accounts for the Year Ending 31st March 2020**(a) Note the Annual Internal Audit Report from the Internal Auditor**

It was noted that in their opinion that adequate control existed and there are no matters which need to be brought to the Councils attention.

The Council **RESOLVED** to agree and accept and receive the report.

(b) To approve the Annual Governance Statement 2019/2020 of the annual return

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Annual Governance Statement 2019/2020

(c) To approve the Accounting Statement 2019/2020 of the Annual Return

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Accounting Statement of 2019/2020 of the Annual Return

(d) To confirm that the Clerk is also the Responsible Finance Officer

The Council **RESOLVED** that the Clerk is also the Responsible Finance Officer

(e) Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Annual Governance and Accountability Return

The Council **RESOLVED** that the dates for the period of exercise of public rights would take place commencing on Monday 27th July and end on the 7th September 2020.

15 Correspondence

(a) Councillor Essential Training – forwarded 26th June 2020

(b) Walking and Cycling Manifesto – forwarded 6th July 2020

16 Matters to report/items for next agenda

(a) Lychgate Cleaning

(b) Dates of Meetings for 2020-2021

(c) Burial Ground Clerk

(d) Appointment of a Lengths man for the Parish

17 Date and time of next meeting: Thursday 3rd September at 7.30pm, location to be advised.

The meeting concluded at 9.05pm

Appendix A

Mendip District Report from Alan Townsend

Cabinet 6th July

1. Finance - an overspend for 2019/20 of £95k is expected. This is easily funded through reserves. This year will be a challenge with a forecast £4.7M overspend, with some £1.85M spent on COVID, and it is not clear how much will be covered by central government.
2. Local Plan - the Local Plan Single Review is scheduled to be submitted in September 2023. There will be a further hearing on Local Plan Part 2 by the inspector in September 2020 to review the allocation of 505 houses in the north east of the District.
3. Social Housing - It is planned to provide new properly affordable greener homes to rent. Funding was allocated for a due diligence exercise to examine Mendip owned sites for the potential to develop 4 or 5 for quick wins in partnership with a housing association.
4. Weed Management Plan - The policy to ban Glyphosate is not proving easy to implement as it is clearly the cheapest most effective solution. The search for alternatives continues, including involving Parish Councils in a community weeding programme.
5. Electric Vehicle Charging Points - Feasibility studies are to be carried out by potential suppliers to establish the best locations from a user and a power supply perspective. Initial plans are to install 4 across Mendip car parks. A wider County strategy is expected to be published in September.
6. Parish Liaison - a new head is being funded to work closely with Town and Parish Councils "to identify ways to work together to address local needs and aspirations" and to help deliver on objectives such as:-
 - creating a network of local walking and cycling routes
 - encouraging carbon absorption, eg tree planting schemes
 - encouraging people to buy local food
 - develop Neighbourhood Plans and Village Design Statements

Annual Full Council 20th July

- Not very satisfactory with 40 plus attendees on Teams,
- a superficial review of things set in motion in the year but short on achievement
 - some £30m of Government grant funds have been distributed to local businesses
 - all but 1 rough sleepers have been found sustainable long term accommodation
 - the purchase of rentable assets to fund revenue spend has stalled
 - we have a new chief finance officer - Richard Bates

Planning Board 22nd July

- developments in Frome behind Macdonalds and in Nunney were approved yielding 230 and 80 houses respectively. Both sites are included in the Emerging Local Plan.