

**STOKE ST MICHAEL PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes from the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

Present: Cllr John McEntee (Acting Chair), Cllrs. Nicholas Corbett, Keith Hambly, Amanda Taylor, Matthew Rice.

Also, in attendance: Kate Egan (Clerk). MDC Cllr Alan Townsend. There were 5 members of the public present.

**1 Apologies for Absence**

County Councillor Phillip Ham, Cllrs Kim Gibson, Keith Holder, David Richardson-Aitken

**2 Absent**

Cllr Kim Gibson, Keith Holder and David Richardson-Aitken

**3 Declarations of Interest**

None

**4 Public Session**

There were several members of the public in attendance in regard to the possible closure of Mill Lane, this will be discussed further under item 12. The response from Somerset County Council was read out and briefly discussed. Some residents would like a map showing where the possible barrier might be situated. The general consensus was that they approved of the idea.

**5 County and District Councillors Reports**

County Councillors' Report

No County Report was received for this month

District Councillors' Report

This was a verbal report following a Full Council Meeting of Mendip District Council earlier this week. Copy of the report is below: -

- Council Tax - It was agreed that the Mendip DC element will increase by £5 a year for the average Band D taxpayer. This is exactly the same sum as last year's increase.
- Capital Strategy - The previous administration had agreed a limit of £80 million for borrowings from the Public Works Loan Board for commercial investment to raise income to make up for the shortfall caused by the reduction in funding from central government. Council were asked to approve an increase to £160M of which £50M would be for regeneration projects in the District. Concern was registered that the £50M must be soundly invested in solid assets that will provide a reasonable return.
- Corporate Plan - The new Plan was formally launched. It's stated key Aim is "To build a fairer, greener and more vibrant Mendip that values our distinctive towns and rural communities".
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- Climate Emergency - The public presentation on the County led programme for carbon neutrality by 2030 was held at Mendip on 15th February. Many questions arose, including the assertion that farming contributed a third of the greenhouse gasses in the county, and why was the carbon free electricity produced by Hinkley B not included in the equation? We were encouraged by Council to use green energy suppliers and promote tree and hedge planting. Involvement of Parish Councils will be promoted. Also measures to discourage car parking with engine idling are being pursued.
- Council Restructuring - In addition to the County led Unitary structure, Mendip wanted to look at the savings that could accrue simply from the 4 Districts working even more closely together. Council were persuaded that other options should also be explored including for example a relationship with BANES as Frome is clearly looking towards Bath rather than Taunton. There was much suspicion about the reality of the projected savings.
- Anti-Semitism - We have been asked by Central Government to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition and include the principles in its way of working. Councillors were happy with the principle but without negating it in any way were concerned that to do so would put Anti-Semitism on a different plane from other forms of discrimination and voted to action the Equalities Board to review it in a wider context.”

In addition to the Mendip issues above, his attention was drawn to the poor state of the road, particularly on Stoke Hill, as a result of the poor quality of the Truespeed backfilling. He has agreed to take a look and report to Highways accordingly.

On a personal note Cllr Alan Townsend is taking part in the Bath Half Marathon on 15<sup>th</sup> March on behalf of Time is Precious and any donations would be welcome. They can be given by using the following link: - [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/alan-townsend1](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/alan-townsend1)

## 6 **Minutes of Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> January and 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

Proposal by Cllr Keith Hambly that they were accurate and should be agreed, this was seconded by Cllr Matthew Rice. Minutes from the meeting were signed by the Acting Chair

## 7 **Matters arising from previous minutes which do not appear on this Agenda**

Co-option of a new Council Member. No-body has yet come forward, this will be brought back to the Agenda once an interested person approaches the Council.

## 8 **Policies**

### Grants Policy

Cllr Keith Hambly proposed that this policy be approved and adopted by the Council, it was seconded by Cllr John McEntee and unanimously agreed.

### Publication Scheme

Cllr Keith Hambly proposed that the Publication Scheme be approved by the Council, it was seconded by Cllr Nicholas Corbett and unanimously agreed.

### Parish Council Risk Schedule

Cllr Matthew Rice proposed that the Risk Schedule be approved by the Council, it was seconded by Cllr Amanda Taylor and unanimously agreed.

#### 9 **Grants to Village Organisations**

There were no current requests

#### 10 **Quotes for repairing the Notice Board**

Several carpenters were approached to quote but only one responded at a cost approximately £424. This included replacing the cork board and making 2 x oak doors which will lock and include safety glass. The oak will also be treated with preservatives. The carpenter will be contacted and asked to proceed with the repair.

#### 11 **Change of date for the Annual Parish Meeting**

Due to the Memorial Hall being used on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> May for local elections, the Annual Parish Meeting is being moved to Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May. Further details will be published soon.

#### 12 **Mill Lane – Results from meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

The two options were discussed and the comments from the members of the public were taken into consideration.

Cllr Keith Hambly proposed that Somerset County Council are contacted and that we would like to proceed with obtaining a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for the prohibition of motor vehicles travelling down Mill Lane, together with the appropriate signage and a physical barrier. This was seconded by Cllr Nicholas Corbett and unanimously agreed.

Somerset County Council will be contacted and asked how to proceed.

#### 13 **Parish Path Liaison Officer –**

A request was received from Somerset County Council for a Parish Path Liaison Officer within the village. None of the Councillors put their name forward so this will be advertised on Facebook, the website and the Notice Board to see if anyone is interested.

#### 14 **Consultation regarding the modifications suggested by the Inspector regarding the Local Plan II.**

The Inspector has called for the deletion of all Local Green Spaces in the Local Plan II and a minimum of 30 dwellings to be built, making provision for affordable housing in line with relevant policies. The Councillors decided that no formal response was required.

#### 15 **Community Payback Scheme**

It was felt that it wasn't something the Parish Council could use as a Council, so the information will be passed onto other community group within the village.

#### 16 **Annual Quote from Primrose Garden Maintenance**

Cllr Amanda Taylor proposed that the quote for the contract for Stoke St Michael Parish Grass Cutting be accepted for 2020, this was seconded by Cllr Matthew Rice and unanimously agreed. Primrose Garden Maintenance will be contacted and awarded the contract for 2020.

17 **Quotes for clearing an area in the Graveyard**

Two quotes were received for clearing an area of brambles and removal of an elder tree. Firm A quoted £200 including VAT and Firm B quoted £110. Cllr Amanda Taylor proposed that the Council accept the quote from Firm B and this was seconded by Cllr John McEntee. The company will be contacted in order to proceed.

18 **Millennium Wood**

**a) Adoption of the CIO**

The solicitors are in the process of drafting the constitution for the new organisation and hopefully this will be finalised by the next meeting.

**b) Approval of invoice for advertising the Activity Day in January**

Cllr Keith Hambly that the Council approve this invoice, it was seconded by Cllr John McEntee and unanimously agreed.

**c) Risk Assessments**

Copies have been requested from the Millennium Wood Working Party.

**d) Improving Lives Councillor's Grant**

An application was submitted under the Improving Lives Councillor Grant scheme run by Somerset County Council and it was successful, and the Parish Council have been awarded £750. This will be ring fenced for the Millennium Wood and go towards the creation of a Forest School area, tools and materials.

19 **Finance**

**a) Addition of new signatures to the bank account**

Cllr Matthew Rice was happy to propose himself to become a signature for Stoke St Michael Parish Council, this was seconded by Cllr John McEntee and unanimously agreed.

**b) Account Balances –**

Current Account as at 30<sup>th</sup> January 2020 - £24,714.93

Reserve Account as at 30<sup>th</sup> December 2019 - £50.43

**c) Payments and Receipts: -**

Receipt – Improving Lives Councillor's Grant - £750.00

First Aid Box for Millennium Wood – £50.76

Purchase of postage stamps, ink cartridge, web hosting – £30.60

Advertising for Activity Day in Millennium Wood – £48.00

Clerks salary – January and February – £517.92

Annual membership to ICO (Information Commissors Office) - £40

Annual fee for the Lychgate Cleaner – £750

Simon Scotting Tree Consultancy and Training - £275.00

Hall Hire for PC Meetings and Millennium Wood Meetings - £148.00

All agreed and signed by Cllr John McEntee and Cllr Keith Holder (who signed them the following day)

20 **Correspondence**

a) Parish Forum Meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> January – forwarded 16.01.2020

b) Chris Ingram – Repairing the finger posts in the parish – forwarded 04.02.2020

c) Briefing on housing land supply in the District – forwarded 04.02.2020

d) Parish Bulletin for February – forwarded 14.02.2020

21 **Matters to report/Items for next agenda**

- a) Finger post repairs
- b) Format of Annual Parish Meeting
- c) Parish Council Representative on the Memorial Hall Committee as John McEntee is stepping down.
- d) Abandoned cars around the village

Date and time of next meeting: **2<sup>nd</sup> April at 19.30 hrs.** in the **War Memorial Hall**

The meeting concluded at 9.20pm