

**STOKE ST MICHAEL PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes from the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March in the War Memorial Hall**

Present: Cllrs Amanda Taylor, Keith Hambly (Chair), Matthew Rice, Simon Farnsworth, John McEntee

Also, in Attendance – Kate Egan – Parish Clerk

**1. Welcome by the Chairman**

**2. Apologies for absence**

Cllrs Nick Corbett and Kim Gibson

**3. Absent**

There were no Councillors noted as absent

**4. (a) To receive declaration of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda**

There were no declarations of interest received from Councillors on items on the agenda.

**(b) To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests**

There were no written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests.

**(c) To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate.**

There were no requests for dispensation as appropriate

**5. Public Session**

There were no members of the public in attendance

**6. County and District Councillor Reports**

County Councillor Phillip Ham and District Councillor Alan Townsend were both in attendance, reports were sent prior to the meeting which have been attached to the bottom of the minutes.

**7. To confirm the minutes of the previous meetings held on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022, previously circulated**

The Council **RESOLVED** that the minutes from 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022 be accepted as a true record and were signed by the Chair.

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

**(a)** J Murtagh Tree Services will be chased regarding the reducing of trees on Moonshill Road as the work was supposed to have been carried out late February.

**(b)** Cllr Amanda Taylor will chase Hi-Line to carry out tree work around the lines the Millennium Green. This needs to be completed before the remaining agreed works can commence.

**9. 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) 2022/0036/HSE** Erection of a side extension. East Phippens Farmhouse, Fosse Road, Stoke St Michael **Update** Stoke St Michael Parish Council recommended approval as the extension was in keeping with the rest of the property, it was in an isolated position so would not overlook neighbouring properties.
- (b) WK 202201296** Application to carry out street trading. The Pizza Rocket would like to trade two nights a week outside the Knatchbull Inn. The application would initially be for one year. **Update** Stoke St Michael Parish Council supported the application.

**10. Planning Applications – Responses to be noted from Mendip District Council and others.**

- (a) 2021/2878/PAA** Prior approval for a proposed changed of use of agricultural building to a dwelling house (class 3) and for associated operational development – Great House Barn, Burnt House Lane, Stoke St Michael. **Update** Prior approval by Mendip District Council has been given.
- (b) 2021/1826/FUL** Proposed Stable Block / change of use from agricultural to agricultural and equestrian – Barn Farm, Tadhill Lane, Stoke St Michael **Update** Mendip District Council have granted approval.
- (c) 2021/2909/HSE** Erection of two storey rear and single storey side extension following demolition of existing extension. 1 Field View Cottages, Edford Hill, Holcombe. **Update** Mendip District Council granted approval.

**11. Planning Applications being Monitored**

- (a) ENF/2021/0090** Construction of stoned farm tracks across 35 hectares of agricultural farm land to be used for walking, cycling, and bridleways. Cooks Wood Quarry, Bector Lane, Stoke St Michael. The application was withdrawn on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and an enforcement case was requested due to part of the application was for retrospective planning. The Enforcement Team have confirmed a case has been opened and that discussions are taking place regarding a resubmission.

**12. Grants**

- (a) Stoke St Michael Baby & Toddler Group have applied for £684.00**

The Council **RESOLVED** to grant the Baby & Toddler Group £684.00

- (b) Shepton Mallet Citizens Advice have applied for £300.00**

The Council **RESOLVED** to grant the Citizens Advice Bureau a grant of £300.00

### 13.To Be Resolved/Discussed

**(a) Discussion and update on the traffic issues within the village**

Cllr Keith Hambly met with a representative from Somerset County Traffic Department. Various ideas were discussed which would mostly be at a significant cost to the Parish Council. Due to the elections, this will be brought back to the meeting in a couple of months where hopefully a Councillor will take the lead to develop the ideas.

**(b) Discussion and possible proposal for the installation of an extra dog bin within the village.**

This was discussed by the Council and further research will be carried out as to a possible location, and permission from the landowners will be sought. Mendip District Council will also be contacted to see whether it can be included on their current route.

**(c) Proposal to accept the quote for purchase of power tools, tools recommended would cost £1513.20**

The Council **RESOLVED** to purchase various power tools from George Carr Products for a total of £1513.20 including VAT.

**(d) Proposal to approve the Checklist for the Millennium Green.**

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the weekly Checklist for the Millennium Green.

**(e) Update on the Village Design Code Working Party**

Cllr Keith Hambly gave a progress update on the Village Design Code. The next step is to hold a launch event with the public which will potentially be included at the Annual Parish Meeting. **Update** Due to the elections, the launch event will be delayed until the week commencing 23<sup>rd</sup> May. Details will be well advertised around the village.

**(f) Proposal to hold the Annual Parish Meeting on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April before the monthly Parish Council Meeting.**

The Council **RESOLVED** to hold the Annual Parish Meeting on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April at 7pm before the regular Parish Council Meeting.

### 14.Clerk's Report

- (a)** Further to the request for installation of storm drain, the information was passed to Somerset Highways and an inspection of the site has been arranged. An assessment of the site will be undertaken and consider if additional drainage is required/feasible. The Parish Council will be kept up to date with developments once known.

- (b) The road signs that had been left in the village was referred to Somerset Highways. The ones situated by “The Bridge” were still necessary as some structural work still needed to be carried out, but the signs on Mendip Road should have been removed.
- (c) A meeting is being held just before the Parish Council Meeting with Somerset Traffic Management and an update should be available on the installation of the bollards at Mill Lane and the replacement village sign. **Update** The locations for the bollards have been agreed with Traffic Management and have been marked in Mill Lane but they will not be installed until after April.
- (d) A new gate has been fitted to the main Slocker entrance at Stoke Lane Slocker. The gate has the facility to be locked but it currently has no lock fitted.
- (e) The identification of trees on Parish Council owned land is awaiting the return of various Council documents which hopefully will clarify the boundaries.
- (f) The parking situation at Moonshill Green is still being monitored.
- (g) The Parish Council were successful in the application for grant funding on behalf of the Village Hall for £800 towards a new gazebo.
- (h) Cllr Keith Hambly and the Parish Clerk attended the Town and Parish Conference via Teams on 17<sup>th</sup> February. **Update** Cllr Keith Hambly gave a verbal report from the Conference. Further information and copies of the presentations are available on the New Somerset Council website [www.newssomersetcouncil.org.uk](http://www.newssomersetcouncil.org.uk)

## 15. Finance

**Bank Balances as at: - 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022**

**Reserve Account - £36,440.13**

**Current Account - £3,653.05**

### Receipts

(a) Bank Interest - £0.30 – received 09.02.22

### Payments

(b) Purchase of ink and Paper - £25.16

(c) Clerks’ salary – February - £293.76

(d) Stoke St Michael Memorial Hall – Hall Hire - £100.00

(e) Simon Scotting Tree Consultancy - £275.00

(f) Meadowmania – Seeds and Plant Plugs - £542.00 – Pd by Paypal on 08.02.22

(g) Purchase of hedge mix - £384.65 – Reimbursement to Cllr Keith Hambly

(h) Hedge nursery – Tree guards and bamboo canes - £440.43 – pd by Paypal on 08.02.22

(i) Ionos – website hosting – pd by DD - £12.00

(j) SALC – Councillor Training - £50.00

The Council **RESOLVED** to accept the above payments and receipts and also **RESOLVED** to accept the two additional payments below

- (k) Grant for Baby and Toddler Group - £684.00
- (l) Grant to Citizens Advice Bureau - £300.00

#### **16. Correspondence**

- (a) Registration for Town & Parish Council Conference – Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> February – forwarded 02.02.22
- (b) Webinar on the relationship between local councils and village halls – Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> February – forwarded 02.02.22
- (c) Frome Area LCN Development Work Brief – forwarded 04.02.22
- (d) Frome Area LCN Upcoming Meeting Dates – forwarded 11.02.22
- (e) Nomination packs for County, Town, City and Parish Councillors are now available – forwarded 14.02.22
- (f) Mendip District Council Health and Wellbeing Bulletin February 2022 – forwarded 15.02.22
- (g) Frome Area LCN Link and Agenda for 8<sup>th</sup> March – forwarded 18.02.22
- (h) Mendip Parish Forum 8<sup>th</sup> March 6pm via Team – forwarded 02.03.2022

#### **17. Matters to report / items for next agenda**

- (a) Cllr Simon Farnsworth attended the recent quarry liaison meeting and gave an update to the Councillors. The Quarries are currently recruiting and looking for places to advertise locally. Issues raised prior to the meeting were discussed and are being dealt with.

**18. Date and time of next meeting:** Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2022 in the War Memorial Hall starting at 7.30pm, this will follow the Annual Parish Meeting being held at 7pm on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April.

Meeting closed 9.25pm

# SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL

## BRIEFING SHEET FOR PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS

### MARCH 2022

**Coronavirus infection rates:** The Government published its Living with Covid-19 report on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2022. Under the plan

- people with Covid are not legally required to self-isolate
- however, guidance recommends that those who test positive stay at home and avoid contact with others for at least five full days
- self-isolation support payments of £500 for those on low incomes have stopped
- routine contact tracing has ended - people in contact with someone with Covid will no longer be advised to self-isolate or take daily tests
- workers are not required to tell their employer if they need to self-isolate
- face coverings are not mandatory but they are still "strongly encouraged"

From 1 April:

- PCR and lateral flow Covid tests will no longer be free for most people
- Covid passports will no longer be recommended, except for international travel
- employers will no longer have to consider Covid as a separate risk when working out how to keep employees safe

Over-75s and people with a weakened immune system are also being offered an extra Covid booster jab this spring, six months after their previous dose.

**Somerset Coronavirus Support Helpline:** A single phone number continues to be available for anyone in Somerset who needs Coronavirus-related support. **0300 790 6275**, is open seven days a week from 8am to 6pm.

**Local Government Reorganisation:** Following the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) decision to support the move to a single Unitary Council across Somerset the Structural Changes Order were approved by the House of Commons Committee on 23<sup>rd</sup> January and will now go before the Lords on or before 14<sup>th</sup> March. The first elections to the new authority together with Somerset Town and Parish elections will be held on 5th May 2022.

**County Council Revenue Budget:** Highlights of the 2022/23 Somerset budget include: An extra £18 million investment in Adults Social Care (13% increase), an extra £12 million invested in Children's Services (13% increase), an additional £8.4 million identified to invest in schools and £48 million in capital projects, including roads. Additionally there is a major

investment in supporting the commitment to create a zero carbon Somerset by 2030 with £7.8 million allocated to reduce energy use in council buildings and £1 million invested in the electrifying the council fleet and building a charging infrastructure in the county. The County Council's share of Council Tax is proposed to rise by a two per cent with a further one per cent rise under the social care precept. For a home rated Band D for Council Tax this is equivalent to a rise of 78p a week.

**iAero:** A new £10m aerospace centre in Yeovil dedicated to innovation, collaboration and sustainable aviation has officially opened. The iAero project, led by Somerset County Council, is a hub for collaboration and innovation on new products. It stands next door to world-leading aerospace company Leonardo UK Ltd, a key partner in the project. The centre will be the gateway for the aerospace industry to access small and medium enterprises who are looking to collaborate and innovate on new products.

**Opportunity Boost Scheme:** A new grant has been launched to help people in Somerset overcome financial barriers when seeking employment and returning to work. The Opportunity Boost Scheme will provide grants worth up to £500 to help with the cost associated progressing into work, such as transport costs, childcare, work clothes, learning resources and training courses. The funding for the scheme has been provided through the Somerset Recovery Fund, and the initiative is being delivered in partnership between Somerset County Council and Citizens Advice Somerset. To qualify, applicants must be aged 16 or over, not be entitled to any other financial assistance for job seeking, and had a pre-Covid salary of less than £25,000. For More information visit [www.westsomersetadvice.org.uk/?p=1380](http://www.westsomersetadvice.org.uk/?p=1380)

**Half Term and Easter food support:** Somerset County Council is again working with schools to provide food vouchers to families eligible for Free School Meals to combat holiday hunger over the February half-term and Easter holidays. The Council has helped provide food vouchers to those children in need of support during the school holidays since October 2020, providing a much-needed boost to families who have felt the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic. The allocation for February half-term and Easter provides vouchers worth £15 per pupil for the week and includes additional funding so that schools can also allocate vouchers to families who are in need of support but do not qualify for Free School Meals.

**Ukraine:** In addition to flying the Ukrainian flag and lighting County Hall in Yellow and Blue the County Council are offering extra support to Ukrainian members of staff and residents in Somerset. The Council stands by, ready to support the national humanitarian aid effort to relocate refugees displaced by Russian aggression.

## **SSM PC REPORT – MARCH 2022**

Council Tax – At the meeting of Full Council on 21-2-22 the motion to agree an increase of 3%, representing £5 a week for a Band D tax payer was agreed after much political grandstanding. The Special Expenses Rate is to be unchanged at £12.50.

Planning - Our worst fears over the potential open door to any speculative housing application were only slightly calmed by the refusal at appeal for 95 houses at Chilcompton. Mendip's A Team were able to convince the Inspector that Significant and Demonstrable Harm would have been caused by the impact on the character and appearance of the area as it would appear as an incongruous addition to the village – an important pointer. For some inexplicable reason he argued that this was not the case at Coleford. The public enquiry against Mendip's refusal of 75 dwellings for the site at Beauchamp's Drive just behind the White Post has just finished. Unlike for the Coleford appeal, Mendip have again fielded an A Team. For the Yellowgate Field Appeal we still await details of the Start Date and the type of appeal.

Mendip have issued a public consultation on the placing of Public Space Protection Orders to try to control the invasion of encampments around Glastonbury. In December 2021 there were close to 200 such illegals.

Mendip are requesting Council Tax payers to ensure there have direct Debits set up to make the payment of the energy rebate easier for Mendip to manage.

Audit Committee – AT is only able to be here this evening because the scheduled meeting of the Audit Committee has been cancelled. The reason is that the Auditors are still unable to sign off the accounts for the year ending March 2021. We are trying to establish the details of the outstanding issue(s)

Highways – good to see some works done at Stoke Bottom with more drainage work scheduled for later this month. Also the long awaited works on Mendip Road. And finally work has started on the resurfacing of Doultong Hill involving night closures.



## **FOR INFORMATION – Moons Hill Quarry liaison meeting – informal notes covering issues discussed**

I attended a meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022, concerning Wainwright's quarry. The main points discussed/raised were:

### **Traffic issues**

Speeding on the road through Waterlip is alleged to have increased. Wainwrights do monitor their own vehicles via trackers.

### **Support to the local community**

£3,500 in grant funding has been awarded in the last 5 months. Other applications are in the pipeline, and the quarry welcomes more.

Wainwright's are expecting to carry out litter picking in the community later this spring.

### **Update on complaints previously discussed**

(1) Blasting noise and vibration. This has always been within statutory limits, but Wainwright's advise that certain weather conditions (such as cloud cover) can make noise seem more significant.

(2) Early morning noise from reversing vehicle alarms (previously brought to my attention by a parishioner) – Wainwright's have investigated and have modified their 'pre-start' alarms. The parishioner concerned reports that the noise is now less troublesome.

(3) Mud on Mendip Road, in the vicinity of the quarry entrance – a road sweeper has been used more frequently, especially in the winter months.

(4) Quarry contractors' vehicles (predominantly Penny's) using Church Street, Tower Hill and Coalpit Lane, on which vehicles over 7.5 tonnes are banned. Wainwright's have reminded Penny's not to use this route.

### **New complaint**

A parishioner complained to the Environment Agency about the mill stream being dirty, in January. This was investigated but nothing was found to link the water colour to the quarry.

### **Response to climate change and environmental issues**

Wainwright's sustainability co-ordinator gave an update. She has been in post for 6 months, and reports that:

- They are seeking to reduce their carbon footprint (vehicle fuel is a big contributor – a trial is taking place with different fuel)
- Work has started on a sustainability plan
- Lighting is now all LEDs
- Efficiencies have been sought in vehicles, conveyors, etc
- Efforts have been made to engage staff
- Working more closely with Somerset Wildlife Trust
- Hedge-laying has taken place; also focusing on hedgerow wildlife and wild flowers
- Car charging points have been installed on site
- Thousands of solar panels have been installed on quarry buildings

- Work is underway to tackle ash dieback

### **Quarry operations**

Operational levels are as planned. In the coming year the focus will be on maximising the value of extracted products, rather than increasing the quantity sold. Work continues primarily on Stoke Quarry (to the west of Mendip Road) which is of more variable quality, causing the work to be challenging.

The quarry is recruiting (electrician; apprentices; contractors) and is happy to advertise jobs locally. Covid has not significantly affected operations, other than through isolation absences.

### **Next meeting**

This is provisionally set for 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022, at the quarry offices. Please continue to pass any queries or issues to me.

*Simon Farnsworth*  
*14<sup>th</sup> March 2022*