

STOKE ST MICHAEL PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes from the meeting held at Stoke St Michael Primary School on
23rd February 2023

Present: Cllrs Nick Corbett, John McEntee, Keith Hambly (Chair), Amanda Taylor, Peter Rhodes and Anna Mearns

Also, in Attendance – Kate Egan – Parish Clerk

Items were taken out of order from the agenda

1. Welcome by the Chairman

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

2. Apologies for absence

Cllr Matthew Rice

3. Absent

No Councillors were absent

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

No declarations of interest were received from Councillors on items on the agenda

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

Cllr Nick Corbett has a written request for dispensation in relation to War Memorial Hall Matters for four years (expires June 2026) and Cllrs Amanda Taylor and Keith Hambly have written requests for dispensation in relation to the Community Playing Field for one year (expires June 2023)

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

There were no requests for dispensation as appropriate

5. Public Session

There were six members of the public in attendance. One resident spoke about the speed of vehicles along Coalpit Lane and whether the speed limit could be reduced. They would like speed indicator devices placed within the village, they also reported the faded white lines at the top of Mendip Road / Long Bottom and queried the lack of visibility of community policing in the village.

Others were concerned about the development off Coalpit Lane and whether the Parish Council could appeal further. A letter will be sent to the Chief Executive of Mendip District Council regarding the lack of the five-year plan on housing.

6. County and District Councillor Reports

District Councillor Alan Townsend was in attendance and has sent his report prior to the meeting, this is attached as appendix A. Alan was also thanked for all his work as a District Council as this was his last meeting due to Mendip ceasing to exist at the end of March. Alan was presented with a small token of gratitude and the Chair said he had been a great asset to the Parish Council and very supportive of all the issues raised.

County Councillor Barry Clarke was in attendance and gave a verbal report, covering items such as highways issues, funding, Local Community Networks and the new planning board. The Parish Council have been asked to compile a list of highways issues in the village by the end of the month to be discussed with Somerset County Council

County Councillor Phillip Ham sent his apologies

7. To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 12th January, previously circulated

The Council **RESOLVED** that the minutes for the Parish Council meeting held on 12th January be accepted as a true record and were signed by the Chair.

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

There were no matters arising from the minutes but not on the agenda

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

(a) 2020/0580/OTS Residential development of up to 47 no. dwellings, public open space, ecological mitigation land, landscaping and associated works with access from Coalpit Lane, at Land East of Coalpit Lane, Stoke St Michael, BA3 5JT. **Update** Following the appeal at the beginning of November 2022, a decision was published on 27th January overturning the refusal decision from Mendip District Council so allowing the development. **Update** This was discussed and it was felt that, as with similar cases in the district, there were no identifiable ground for a legal challenge and the considerable expense of taking the case to judicial review could not be justified. The Council will still be proactive and will be focused on the plans and reserved matters when they are released.

(b) 2022/2098/LBC Internal alterations to dining room to remove cupboards and panelling either side of chimney breast and replace with carpentry, replace textured over boarding on ceiling with boards, replace stud wall and add door to enclose boiler. The Manor House, Church Street, Stoke St Michael. **Update** Mendip District Council granted approval

(c) 2022/2273/FUL Convert office space (b1) to a holiday let (C1) with internal alterations, installation of car port / terrace and creation of openings to allow for a new door, windows and enlargement of windows. 3 Moonshill Barns, Frog Lane, Stoke St Michael **Update** Mendip District Council granted approval

(d) 2022/1641/FUL Conversion of barn to dwellinghouse with a side extension. Field Barn, Limekiln Lane, Midway, Stoke St Michael **Update** Mendip District Council refused the application.

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) 2023/0142/FUL Erection of new storage / workshop building. Combe House, Giddy Lane, Stoke St Michael. **Update** The Council recommended refusal as the building is too disproportionately large for the purpose intended.

(b) 2023/0200/HSE Proposed internal alterations and rear extension. 20 St Michaels Close, Stoke St Michael. **Update** The Council recommended approval as it is an impressive use of the space.

- (c) **2023/0215/HSE** Demolish existing single storey extension and replace with a two-storey side and rear extension with balcony / bridge access to rear garden. 1 Oak Cottage, Mendip Road, Stoke St Michael **Update** the Council recommended approval as it is a significant improvement and within keeping with the original building.

12. Clerk / Councillors Report

- (a) Update on the signage on Fosse Road regarding weight restrictions from Stoke to Michael towards Oakhill **Update** There is no further update but these will be included on the list being sent to County Councillor Barry Clarke
- (b) St Michael's & All Angels Church are currently re-applying for the Churchyard to be closed as it was not finalised in 1975. In due course the Parish Council will be asked to take responsibility for maintenance.
- (c) The Parish Council have been asked to put together a list of potholes, poor road markings, signs obscured by vegetation, etc to be passed to Highways by the end of the month.
- (d) Enforcement officers have visited the abandoned cars around the village upon referral from the Environmental Health and taken photographs and carried out an audit of the sites.
- (e) Unfortunately, all work on the Design Code this has ceased due to resource issues at Mendip. District Councillor Alan Townsend will speak to the planning department to see whether a draft code was written.

11. To Be Resolved / Discussed

(a) Proposal to approve and sign the Lease for the Woodland Group

This was deferred to the next meeting.

(b) Proposal for the Parish Council to pay the Parish Clerk a home allowance of £6.50 a month from 1st April 2023.

The Council **RESOLVED** to pay the Parish Clerk a home allowance of £6.50 a month starting from 1st April 2023.

(c) Proposal for the Parish Council to purchase fixings so the bench recently purchased can be installed within the Millennium Wood. Cost £22

The Council **RESOLVED** to purchase some fixings for about £22.00 so the bench can be installed within the Millennium Wood. Cllr Nick Corbett will purchase the items.

(d) Proposal to hold a separate Annual Parish Meeting inviting organisations from the village.

This was discussed and in principle thought it was a good idea to publicise the village and the community groups. Community groups will be approached to see if they are interested. This will be brought back to the next meeting.

(e) Proposal to approve the annual Asset List

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the updated Asset List

(f) Proposal to purchase two new grit bins for the village to be placed on Dark Lane and Tadhil Lane.

The Council **RESOLVED** to purchase two new grit bins to be placed on Dark Lane and Tadhil Lane

(g) Discussion and possible proposals regarding the issues of parking on the green on Moonshill Road

Following a request to widen the road and create parking spaces, this was discussed along with other ideas. Cllrs Anna Mearns and John McEntee will visit the area and look at possibilities, this will be reported back to the next meeting.

(h) Proposal as to whether the Parish Council have any objections to the closure of St Michael's Churchyard.

This was deferred to the next meeting as some research would need to be carried out as to the ramifications of closing the churchyard and the transfer of maintenance to the Parish Council.

(i) Discussion and possible proposal on the ownership and maintenance of the community defibrillator currently situated outside the War Memorial Hall.

This was discussed and it was confirmed that the Parish Council had transferred ownership of the defibrillator to the War Memorial Hall in 2018. The Parish Council are happy to financially support the defibrillator.

(j) Proposal to accept the Terms and Conditions for the Annual Booking Contract between Stoke St Michael War Memorial Hall and the Parish Council.

This was deferred to the next meeting as the Parish Council thought it was unacceptable that organisations seemed to have different clauses within their contracts and it would be beneficial to have a standard contract for everyone.

(k) Discussion on how communication from the Parish Council can be passed onto residents

Due to the length of the meeting, this was deferred to the next meeting.

13. Finance

Bank Balances as at: - 16.02.2023

Unity Account - £39,793.28

Receipts

Payments

(a) Land Registry – Copy of Title Deeds - £6.00

(b) ICO – Annual Subscription - £35.00 – pd by DD

(c) Clerks Salary – January - £273.64

(d) HMRC – January - £54.20

(e) Gaits Gardening Services - £71.00

(f) Ionos – Website Hosting - £12.00 – Pd by DD on 31.01.23

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the above payments and also **RESOLVED** to approve the additional payments below

(g) Donation to the School for use of the school hall - £30.00

(h) Ionos – Website Hosting - £12.00 – Pd by DD

14. Correspondence

(a) Member briefing and invitation to a District Council meeting on 25th January to discuss the Local Plan II and any implications following the recent court decision

(b) Somerset Statement of Community Involvement – Consultation on Planning running from 1st February to 16th March – forwarded 03.02.23

(c) Invitation to the next Parish Forum on Tuesday 21st February, the subject will be Health and Wellbeing – forwarded 03.02.23

15. Matters to report / items for next agenda

(a) A quote was received for hedge laying in the Cemetery along Mill Lane at £13.40 per metre, this was approved in principle and will be ratified at the next meeting so that the works can be carried out.

16. Date and time of next meeting: Thursday 13th April 2023 starting at 7.30pm, location to be decided.

Meeting closed 9.55pm

APPENDIX A

STOKE ST MICHAEL PC REPORT 23 FEBRUARY 2023

PLANNING

Yellowgate Field – the appeal against Mendip’s refusal of 47 houses on Coalpit Lane has been allowed. Despite not being an allocated site in the Local Plan it has been allowed because Mendip do not have a future 5 year housing land supply identified in the Plan. Highway safety, harm to the landscape and impact on the setting of the listed buildings at the Mill were not deemed to be Significant and Demonstrable Harm to justify refusal in the Planning Inspector’s opinion. The decision reflects that made by the same Inspector at Coleford, but contrasts with that made last week at Marston Lane, Frome where harm to the countryside and lack of access to facilities were cited as the main reasons for refusal.

Local Plan – an Extraordinary Meeting of Full Council was called on 9-2-23 by the Opposition to request an explanation of the circumstances which have cost the Council some £60,000 in its unsuccessful defence of a Judicial Review of its failings on Local Plan Part 2. The JR specifically related to the mis-handling of the allocation of 505 dwellings in the north east of the District. Additional questions were asked about the failure to produce a 5 year housing land supply and what the programme is to rectify the shortfall. As we all know, the effects of this failure are all too painfully evident with 3 sites within a few miles of here , Gladman at Coleford, White Post and now Stoke, all being approved on greenfield sites not designated in LPP2 despite massive opposition. The recently launched Consultation on Community Involvement states that a new Local Plan has to be in place by 31-3-2028 - that’s 5 years away, does this mean another 5 years exposure to unwanted development? Mendip have no programme yet. Also we asked how the Council is handling the Government’s Open Consultation on reforms to national planning policy which was launched on 22 nd December. A Briefing was held on 22-2-23 and a draft response will be available by 28 th February with 2 days to review.

Design Code – all work on this has ceased due to resource issues at Mendip. This will have weight in the new Local Plan.

Enforcement – Mendip Enforcement reacted rapidly to the report of extensive groundworks being carried out to the west of Great House Farm at Leigh. Contact was made with the landowners who agreed to halt work pending the submission of a planning application.

HIGHWAYS

County Highways were given a guided tour of issues at Coleford, Holcombe and beyond. We were advised that Stoke Bottom is due for surface dressing in the summer but urgent issues are being addressed now, particularly the worst edge erosion, a number of potholes, and the flooding at the Fairy Cave junction.