

STOKE ST MICHAEL PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes from the meeting held at Stoke St Michael War Memorial Hall on
7th September 2023 starting at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs Keith Hambly (Chair), John McEntee, Matthew Rice, Anna Mearns and Simon Collins

Also, in Attendance – Kate Egan – Parish Clerk

1. Welcome by the Chairman

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Cllrs Nic Corbet, Amanada Taylor and Peter Rhodes.

3. Absent

No Councillors were absent

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

Cllr Keith Hambly declared a declaration of interest in regard to the grant application for Stoke St Michael Community Field (item number 11(b))

(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). Cllr Anna Mearns has a written request for dispensation in relation to the Millennium Wood for four years (expires September 2027)

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

Cllr Keith Hambly was granted a dispensation in relation to the grant application for Stoke St Michael Community Field, he requested to speak but not participate in the voting.

5. Public Session

There were five members of the public in attendance. Questions were asked on the progress of the speed limit on Coalpit Lane and whether there was any progress with Somerset Council. The applicants for planning application 2023/1606/FUL (item 9 (b)) and spoke briefly about the re-submission.

6. Somerset Councillor Reports

Neither Somerset Councillors Barry Clarke and Philip Ham were in attendance and sent their apologies

7. To confirm the minutes of the Annual Council Meeting and the Parish Council Meeting held on 13th July 2023 and 22nd August 2023, previously circulated.

The Council **RESOLVED** that the minutes for the Parish Council Meetings held on 13th July and 22nd August be accepted as a true record and were signed and dated 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

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.

The following two items were taken in reverse order

(b) 2023/1606/FUL Change of use of agricultural land for the erection of 2000 solar array panels and associated equipment. Land at 366731 146471, Burges Hill, Stoke St Michael. **RECOMMENDATION** The Parish Council recommended approval recognising there was minimal change to the previous application and acknowledging the additional documents that had been provided to Somerset Council.

(a) 2023/1593/HSE Conversion of outhouse to ancillary accommodation with alterations. Shelving Close, Mendip Road, Stoke St Michael. **RECOMMENDATION** The Parish Council recommended approval as there would be minimal visible impact on neighbouring properties.

10. Planning Applications – Responses to be noted from Somerset Council

(a) 2023/0976/VRC Application to vary condition 2 (drawings), 3 (materials) of planning approval 2020/1606/HSE (make changes to the roof design to form rooms in the roof. Form dormer windows as drawings. Form extension to front windows) to drawings AK_127_03 and AK_127_04. Beacon House, Old Frome Road, Doultling. **Decision** Somerset Council have granted approval.

(b) 2023/1487/PIP Permission in principle application for Erection of 1no. dwellinghouse – Land at 366487 146920, Church Street, Stoke St Michael. **Decision** Somerset Council refused the application.

11. Grants

(a) Grant Application from Stoke St Michael War Memorial Hall for £2,500.00

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the grant application from Stoke St Michael War Memorial Hall for £2,500.00.

(b) Grant Application from Stoke St Michael Community Field for £2,000.00

The Council **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council would purchase the Bench/Table and donate to the Community Field

12. Approval of Policies / Risk Assessments

(a) Proposal to approve the Risk Assessment for Public Areas owned by the Parish Council

Following a slight amendment, the Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Risk Assessment for Public Areas owned by the Parish Council.

13. To Be Resolved / Discussed

(a) Reappointment of Do the Numbers Ltd as the Internal Auditor for 2023-2024 at a cost of £250.00

The Council **RESOLVED** to appoint Do the Numbers Ltd as the Internal Auditor for 2023-2024 at a cost of £250.00.

(b) Discussion and possible proposals on complying with the Biodiversity Duty and Understanding Biodiversity Net Gain.

The information on Biodiversity Net Gain which comes into effect in November 2023 was noted as it will be the responsibility of Land Managers, Developers and the Local Planning Authorities. The Council noted the Biodiversity Duty which comes into effect in January 2024 and this will be discussed at a future date.

(c) Discussion on possible locations within the village for a Community Notice Board.

This was deferred to the next meeting. Cllr Keith Hambly will look at options for the Millennium Green and Cllr Anna Mearns will talk to the owners of a possible alternative location.

(d) Proposal for the Parish Council to contribute £100 towards costs for the Clerk to attend the National Conference in October.

The Council **RESOLVED** to contribute £100 towards costs for the Clerk to attend the National Conference in October.

(e) Proposal to request the War Memorial Hall Committee to remove the Parish Council who are currently listed as a Trustee on the Charity Commission Website as the Parish Council are not trustees.

The Council **RESOLVED** to request the War Memorial Hall Committee to remove the Parish Council who are currently listed as a Trustee on the Charity Commission Website as the Parish Council are not trustees.

(f) Discussion on residents parking on the Green Space within The Mead and how to stop the boundary fence being moved.

Cllrs Anna Mearns and Matthew Rice will speak to the residents concerned to see how the issue can be resolved.

(g) Discussion on the ideas and costs to stop cars parking on the Green at Moonshill

Various ideas were discussed and an evening will be arranged for the beginning of November for a public consultation

(h) Discussion and possible proposals to the repairs or replacement of the Bridge

This was deferred to the next meeting as not all prices had been received

14. Clerk / Councillors Report

(a) Update from Cllr Simon Collins on the Local Community Network meeting held on 31st July 2023. **Update** Cllr Simon Collins gave a verbal update and a short discussion followed

(b) Update as to whether any volunteers came forward to join the Community Speedwatch Group, otherwise the Group will be disbanded and the equipment returned. **Update** No volunteers have yet come forward but it was agreed to have one final push.

(c) Large vehicles are ignoring the road signs and driving over the damaged culvert, this has been reported to Highways and a request for more signs. A temporary 7.5 tonne maximum gross weight restriction came into operation on 25th of August 2023 and will remain in force for a maximum of 21 days. Cllr Anna Mearns is dealing with the reporting of vehicles that continue to ignore the restrictions. Options for future routing of HGV's are being discussed with our Somerset Councillors.

(d) Councillors held a working party on 17th August to tidy up the Millennium Green and carry out temporary repairs to the Bridge.

15. Finance

Bank Balances as at: - 30th August 2023

Unity Account - £55,098.39

The External Auditors Report and Certificate for 2022/2023 has been received with the following matters – The figures in Section 2, Boxes 3 and 6 of the prior year comparative column do not agree to the prior year final signed AGAR and the ‘except for’ matter raised by the external auditor when qualifying the prior year annual return. Section 2, Box 9 for the prior year has not been restated to account for assets purchased in 2021/2022 which were not added to the fixed asset register until 2022/23

Receipts

(a) Burial Fees - £135.00 – received a cheque and banked on 25.07.23

(b) Burial Fees - £332.00 – received a cheque and banked on 25.07.23

(c) Memorial Fees - £142.00 – received by bacs 21.08.23

(d) National Grid - £30.15 – cheque received 06.09.23

(e) Burial Fees - £33.00 – cheque received 06.09.23

Payments

(f) Ionos – Web Hosting - £12.00 – pd DD 26.07.23

(g) Ionos – Web Hosting - £12.00 – pd DD 26.08.23

(h) Clerks Salary and Expenses – £680.68

(i) Wellers Hedley – Legal Fees – 1440.00 – pd 03.08.23

(j) Primrose Garden Services - July and August- £1360.46

(k) War Memorial Hall – hall hire - £30.00

(l) PKF – External Auditors - £252.00

(m) Alun Stewart – refund for repair to strimmer - £31.35

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the above Payments and Receipts

16. Correspondence

(a) Briefing Sheet from Somerset Council – forwarded 01.08.23

(b) Draft Minutes from the Local Community meeting held on 31st July – forwarded 15.08.23

(c) Briefing Sheet for Parish & Town Councils September 23 from Somerset Council – forwarded 31.08.23

17. Matters to report / items for next agenda

There were no matters to report / items for the next agenda

18. Under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business because publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

The Council **RESOLVED** that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item.

(a) Discussion on the possible acquisition of land by the Parish Council

The item was discussed and no firm resolution was made.

19. Date and time of next meeting: Thursday 19th October 2023 starting at 7.30pm, Stoke St Michael War Memorial Hall.

Meeting closed 10.15pm