

**STOKE ST MICHAEL PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes from the meeting held at Stoke St Michael War Memorial Hall on**  
**21<sup>st</sup> March 2024 starting at 7.30pm**

Present: Cllrs John McEntee (Chair), Peter Rhodes, Simon Collins, Amanda Taylor, Anna Mearns and Matthew Rice

Also, in Attendance – Kate Egan – Parish Clerk

Items were taken out of order from the agenda.

**1. Welcome by the Chairman.**

Cllr John McEntee acting as Chair for the evening welcomed everyone to the meeting

**2. Apologies for absence**

Cllr Keith Hambly

**3. Absent**

No Councillors were absent

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

There was no declaration of interests from Councillors on items on the agenda.

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

Cllr Anna Mearns has a written request for dispensation in relation to the Millennium Wood for four years (expires September 2027). Cllr Keith Hambly has a written request for dispensation in relation to Stoke St Michael Community Field for one year (expires September 2024). Cllr Amanda Taylor has a written request for dispensation in relation to Stoke St Michael Community Field, Stoke St Michael Community Events and Stoke St Michael Woodland Group for four years (expires January 2028)

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

There were no requests for dispensation as appropriate

**5. Public Session Presentation from Cllrs Peter Rhodes and Simon Collins on the Auto Speed Watch Cameras and the data being obtained.**

There were five members of the public in attendance. The major topic was the concerning the weight limit currently in the village and whether it could be extended.

A question was raised as to whether any further information had been received regarding the quarry expansion, there were no new updates.

Cllrs Peter Rhodes and Simon Collins gave a verbal presentation on the data being collected from the two Auto Speed Cameras, a written report is attached to the bottom of the minutes.

**6. Somerset Councillor Reports**

Somerset Councillor Phillip Ham was not in attendance and sent his apologies. Somerset Councillor Barry Clarke was in attendance and gave a verbal report. Somerset Council have approved the annual budget, free blood pressure monitoring and thermal imaging cameras are available for a short loan from Frome library. Any highways issues such as potholes should be reported to Somerset Council and the Hardship fund offered by Somerset Council has been extended.

**7. To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February, previously circulated**

The Council **RESOLVED** that the minutes from the Parish Council Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February be accepted as a true record, these were signed and dated by the Chair of the meeting.

**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.**

**(a) 2023/2345/LBC** Installation of Main Gas, Fosse House, Fosse Road, Oakhill.  
**Recommendation** Stoke St Michael Parish Council recommended approval.

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

**(a) 2023/2331/APP** Approval of details reserved by condition 15 (drainage) and 16 (oil interceptor) on planning consent 067818/010. Cooks Wood Quarry, Bector Lane, Stoke St Michael. **Decision** Somerset Council refused the application.

**(b) 2024/0091/PAA** Prior approval for a proposed change of use of agricultural building ton2no. dwellinghouses (Class C3) and for associated operational development. Barn at Blue Cedar Farm, Susannas Lane, Stoke St Michael. **Decision** Somerset Council have given prior approval.

**11. To Be Resolved / Discussed**

**(a) Proposal to approve the Asset List for the financial year of 2023-2024**

The Council **RESOLVED** to dispose of the Notice Board on Mendip Road and following a few amendments the Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Asset List for 2023-2024.

**(d) Proposal to formally request from Somerset Council a permanent weight limit throughout the village.**

The Council **RESOLVED** not to formally request a permanent weight limit throughout the village from Somerset Council, it was felt that it would be stronger coming from the Somerset Highways and Traffic Working Group where all the neighbouring parishes can work together and feedback can be brought back to the parish council meetings.

**(b) Discussion and any proposals to cars blocking junctions within the village as a result blocking access to delivery vehicles and emergency vehicles.**

The Council **RESOLVED** that Cllr Anna Mearns would compose a leaflet raising the concerns, these will be distributed throughout the village and left at community hubs.

**(c) Proposal to confirm the date of the Annual Parish Meeting – the proposed date is Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May at 7.00pm**

The Council **RESOLVED** the Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May starting at 7pm in the War Memorial Hall.

**12. Clerk / Councillors Report**

**(a) Update from Cllr Amanda Taylor on the donation of boulders for the edges of the open space at Moonshill**

Cllr Amanda Taylor gave a verbal update, Wainwrights have very kindly offered to donate the stones. Cllrs Keith Hambly and Amanda Taylor will visit the quarry to select the stones. Cookswood Quarry and J Pearce & Sons have offered to move the stones into position. The date of installation will be published in advance once known.

**(b) Update from Cllr Amanda Taylor regarding the structural surveyor regarding maintenance of the Bridge on the Millennium Green.**

Cllr Amanda Taylor gave a verbal update, the original designer has been contacted to find out the weight restrictions. Funding has been offered for a replacement bridge.

**(c) Update from the Somerset Highways and Traffic Working Group that was held on 26<sup>th</sup> February and the LCN meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> March.**

A verbal update was given from the Somerset Highways and Traffic Working Group, this still in the early stages but will be a valuable resource. This was also previously mentioned under item 11 (d).

A verbal update was given from the LCN meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> March, this is still evolving and presently there was not much relevant to Stoke St Michael.

**(d) Update from Councillors who attended the “Come Meet Us” with the Local PCSO on 29<sup>th</sup> February.**

This was touched on earlier in the meeting during the public session and the presentation on the Auto Speed Cameras. They were open, proactive, and ready to listen. The next one is on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March at the Knatchbull Arms starting at 8pm

**(e) Update from Somerset Council regarding the abandoned vehicles in the village.**

A verbal update was given regarding the abandoned vehicles.

**(f) Notice has been received for the closure of St Michael and All Angels Churchyard, Stoke St Michael. The closure of will be taken into consideration by a Committee of the Privy Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2024.**

**(g) The new Community Noticeboard has been ordered and once delivered will be installed to the side of the village shop.**

### 13.. Finance

Bank Balances as at: - 13.03.24

Unity Current Account – £20,016.68

Unity Savings Account - £20,000.00

#### Receipts

**(a)** Burial Fees - £332.00 – paid via cheque

#### Payments

**(b)** Stoke St Michael War Memorial – Hall Hire - £30.00

**(c)** Ionos – website hosting - £13.80 – pd by DD on 28.02.24

**(d)** Ionos – website hosting £13.80 – pd by DD on 28.03.24

**(e)** Unity Trust Bank – Bank Charges – £18.00 pd by DD 31.03.24

**(f)** Signscape and Sonex – Notice Board - £1632.00 – pd on 21.02.24

**(g)** Clerks Salary and Expenses – February - £365.30

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

**(h)** Extra expenses for the Clerk incurred during March - £60.80

**(i)** SLCC – Contribution towards the Clerks community governance - £499.96

### 14. Correspondence

**(a)** Audit Training for Councillors on 25<sup>th</sup> March – forwarded 27.02.24

**(b)** Invitation to the next Shepton LCN Meeting – 11<sup>th</sup> March starting at 7pm – forwarded 27.02.24

(c) Public Consultation on the Local Plan II Limited update to 12<sup>th</sup> April – forwarded  
01.03.24

(d) Update from Somerset Council regarding the new policy on sandbags – forwarded  
13.03.24

(e) Highways Devolution Letter – forwarded 27.02.24

**15. Matters to report / items for next agenda**

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

**16. Date and time of next meeting:** Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024 Annual Council Meeting starting at 7.30pm, Parish Council Meeting starting at 8.00pm. Stoke St Michael War Memorial Hall.

Meeting closed 9.23pm

Initial report on implementation of AutoSpeedWatch Cameras in the village

### **Background**

Following ongoing complaints about speeding vehicles on village roads and the difficulties in maintaining an active and reliable Community Speedwatch Group, the Parish Council decided to purchase and install two AutoSpeedWatch cameras.

### **Installations**

The cameras have been installed on BT poles on two of the main four routes into the village centre; both around 60 metres from the start of the 30mph limit.

Locations are:

Coalpit Lane Southbound. The camera is set to trigger over 35 mph.

Long Cross Bottom Northbound. The camera is set to trigger over 38 mph.

The cameras only record during daylight hours. They take a picture of the rear of vehicles exceeding the trigger speed. The system also flags vehicles with lapsed tax and / or MOT.

### **Monitoring**

Councillors Simon Collins and Peter Rhodes have access to the data and are responsible for verifying pictures taken of individual vehicles.

### **Results to date**

Since installation at the end of January 2024 the cameras have recorded 162 instances of speeding above the camera trigger speeds including:

- 44 instances over 40mph (one at 50mph)
- 52 instances at 37mph and 38mmph

10 vehicles have been recorded more than once (listed as persistent). Most twice but one three times.

The busiest times for speeders is mainly weekday afternoons.

### **Police**

Councillors, Rhodes & Collins met the local PCSO's, the local Frome-based policeman and Ashley Reay who is the main coordinator of Community Speedwatch at the Knatchbull Arms recently.

It turned out they were all aware of our purchase of the cameras and in fact the PCSO and Ashely Reay had already been monitoring our data via AutoSpeedWatch.

### **Conclusions**

Realistically, compared to other installations in our area, the feedback we received is that the numbers of speeding vehicles we are seeing is relatively low. However, that doesn't mean that the Police Speed Enforcement Unit will not take an interest if as we continue to collect data it shows speeding is a real problem in the village.

The advice is to collect and monitor the data for the coming months and build a concrete picture of the speeding levels in the village.

**Speed Indicator Devices**

Ashley Reay told us that from time to time there may be money available to fund SID's. He promised to let us know the next time that happens and I've emailed to remind him.