

**STOKE ST MICHAEL PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes from the meeting held at Stoke St Michael War Memorial Hall on**  
**5<sup>th</sup> September starting at 7.30pm**

Present: Cllrs Peter Rhodes, Simon Collins, Amanda Taylor, John McEntee (Chair),  
Keith Hambly and Phil Howard

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 Anna Mearns

**3. Absent**

Cllr Matthew Rice and Dan White

**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**

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.**

There were seven members of the public in attendance. The subject covered was the possibility of reducing the speed limit in Withybrook and the issues it is causing as the stretch of road is national speed limit between two 30mph zones. This was discussed under item 10(f).

**6. Somerset Councillor Reports**

Somerset Councillor Barry Clarke was in attendance and gave a verbal update. Cllr Barry Clarke reiterated the problems of traffic on the narrow lanes within Somerset, he has chased for information on the culvert and when it might be completed but no response has been received. Somerset Council are selling properties to help raise money and the current consultation on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2025/2026. Several redundancies of staff have been made within Somerset Council.

**10. To Be Resolved / Discussed**

- (f) **To consider the request to extend the speed limit to include Withybrook and request a Traffic Regulation Order from Somerset Council, please note that any costs for the works would need to be covered by the Parish Council.**

Cllr Peter Rhodes gave a verbal update on the issues in Withybrook and the various options. Unfortunately, there have been no formal reports of any incidents or accidents at Withybrook. A Traffic Regulation Order will take a couple of years and could cost in the region of £15,000 to £20,000. Traffic calming measures could be introduced and a request has been made for a visit by a Traffic Engineer from Somerset. Signs could be introduced. Further information is required and this will be brought back to the next meeting.

**7. To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2024, previously circulated**

The Council **RESOVLED** to accept the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2024 as a true record, they were signed and dated by the Chair.

**8. Planning Applications – If other planning applications are received between the date of this notice and the date of the meeting, they may be considered.**

No Planning Applications had been received.

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

(a) **2024/0807/FUL** Erection of ground mounted domestic PV solar panels. Plot north of Somers Farm, Burnt House Lane, Stoke St Michael. **Decision** Somerset Council have granted approval.

(b) **2024/1169/HSE** Erection of two storey side extension – Fair View, Stoke Hill, Stoke St Michael. **Decision** Somerset Council have granted approval.

**10. To Be Resolved / Discussed**

- (a) **To consider the quotes for the removal of the tree in the churchyard with the proposal to appoint a contractor to carry out the works.**

The Council **RESOLVED** to appoint J Murtagh Tree Services to remove the tree from the Churchyard at a cost of £2,200.00 + VAT.

- (b) **To consider the proposal to create a working party to create an Emergency Plan for the village**

The Council **RESOLVED** to create a Working party to create an Emergency Plan for the village. The Council will be represented by Cllrs Phil Howard and Peter Rhodes, residents will be asked if they wish to join.

- (c) **To consider the proposal to reappoint Do the Numbers Ltd as the Internal Auditor for 2024-2025 at a cost of £280.**

The Council **RESOLVED** to reappoint Do the Numbers Ltd as the Internal Auditor for 2024-2025 at a cost of £280.00

- (d) **To note the structural survey for the installation of a new bridge and to consider the next steps and the possible proposal to seek tenders for the creation of a new bridge**

The Structural Survey was **NOTED** by the Council, but following a discussion on the shape of the bridge, a choice of designs will be requested so as result this was deferred to the next meeting.

- (e) To note the report on the devolution of services and to consider registering for the volunteer training and to register an interest for the enhanced routine maintenance service.**

The Council **NOTED** the report on the devolution of services and **RESOLVED** to register an interest for the enhanced routine maintenance service and request further information on the training.

#### **11. To consider approval and adoption of the following Policies and Terms of Reference**

- (a) Model NALC Financial Regulations, updated in April 2024**

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the updated Financial Regulations from April 2024 although item 1.7 is to be double checked over the wording as some words appeared to be missing from the end of the sentence.

- (b) Terms of Reference for the Working Party to discuss ideas for Youth Services within the village**

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Terms of Reference for the Working Party to discuss ideas for Youth Services within the village.

- (c) Terms of Reference for the Working Party to create an emergency plan for the Parish.**

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Terms of Reference for the Working Party to create an emergency plan for the village.

#### **12. Clerk / Councillors Report**

- (a)** The replacement bus shelter was replaced in the middle of September following a permit for temporary traffic lights being granted. Thank you to the residents who moved their cars and allowed access.
- (b)** The Parish Council were contacted regarding a small encampment on open space owned by the Parish Council. Local services were involved and the situation is being monitored.
- (c)** All the Grit Bins have been checked within the parish and were found to be full. Somerset Council have been informed and removed Stoke St Michael from the refilling list for this year.

#### **13 Reports from the Working Parties**

- (a) Update from the Youth Services working party**

Cllr Anna Mearns was not in attendance

#### **14 . Finance**

Bank Balances as at: - 28<sup>th</sup> August 2024

Unity Current Account – £13,132.41

Unity Savings Account – £49,098.60

**To note** the Conclusion of Audit from the External Auditor.

“On the basis of our review of sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. Although in the conclusion of their detailed report, the internal auditor has drawn attention to weaknesses in relation to contract approval. The smaller authority must ensure that action is taken to address this area of weakness in a timely manner.”

The Council **NOTED** the conclusion of audit from the External Auditor

**Receipts**

- (a) Burial Fees - £142.00 (cheque) paid into the bank 22.07.24
- (b) Burial Fees - £142.00 (cheque) paid into the bank 23.08.2024

**Payments**

- (c) Clerks Salary and Expenses July and August - £780.58
- (d) And Design – structural survey for the Bridge - £384.00
- (e) Primrose Garden Maintenance - £729.05 – July Invoice
- (f) PKF Littlejohn – External Auditor - £252.00
- (g) SALC – Annual Membership - £280.43
- (h) Stoke St Michael War Memorial Hall – Hall Hire - £120
- (i) GW Shelter Solutions – Replacement bus shelter - £7028.40
- (j) Primrose Garden Maintenance £729.05 – August Invoice

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

- (k) National Grid – receipt of annual wayleave payment - £30.15 – chq received
- (l) Ionas – monthly payment for web hosting - £13.80 – pd by DD

**15 Correspondence**

- (a) Shepton LCN Emergency Planning Workshop August 13<sup>th</sup> – forwarded 19.07.24
- (b) Conservative Group Briefing Sheet for Parish and Town Councils – August 24 – forwarded 01.08.24

**16 Matters to report / items for next agenda**

- (a) The Parish Council have received acknowledgment of their tender submission.
- (b) The War Memorial Hall Committee will be asked for copies of their risk assessments and insurance, if not received they will accept liability in case of any issues.

**17 Date and time of next meeting:** Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2024 starting at 7.30pm. Stoke St Michael War Memorial Hall.

**Meeting closed 9.12pm**