

## Stoke St Mary Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of Stoke St Mary Parish Council held on Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023, at Stoke St Mary Village Hall at 7.30pm

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### 23.54 Attendance and Apologies

**Councillors Present :** Cllrs Colin Fisher (Chair), Dan Fallance, Patricia Fallance (Vice Chair), Tania Watt.

**Apologies:** Cllr Rob Hossell (accepted)

**In attendance:** Cllr Sarah Wakefield (Somerset Council)  
Sarah Fisher, Clerk  
Two members of public

### 23.55 Declarations of Interest – Cllr Watt ref Item 23.62 c)

### 23.56 Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023 were circulated in advance of the meeting and these were approved and signed by the Chair.

### 23.57 To receive reports from County Councillors

Cllr Wakefield briefed the Parish Council on the financial difficulties facing the new Unitary Council, and their intention to devolve the operation and funding of some services to Parish Councils. The Parish Council stressed the need for clarification of which services might be devolved, their scope and current costs.

The Parish Council thanks Cllr Wakefield for her contribution.

### 23.58 Finance

#### a) Balances (as at 10/11/2023):

Current a/c: £2533.79

Deposit a/c: £9570.08

Cllr Watt confirmed these balances as correct.

#### b) Expenditure approval:

All items listed under 23.58 b) on the Agenda were approved for payment.

### 23.59 Play Area

The Parish Council approved the following requests from the Play Area Working Party (PAWP);

- To delegate authority to PAWP to remove the condemned wooden fort and sell any appropriate parts to contribute to the project
- Apply for grant funding on behalf of the Parish Council in relation to replacement and installation of equipment in the play area as and when the tender process is defined.
- A contribution towards the refurbishment project - £2000
- To reclaim VAT on the work carried out by the approved contractor
- To maintain, on behalf of the village, the play area and its equipment for the foreseeable future.

Signed:  (Chair)

Date: 18/11/2024

In addition, Cllr Dan Fallance proposed a motion:

**Any funds raised from the removal of the fort are to be held by the Parish Council and ringfenced for the play area.** Seconded by the Chair.

**23.60 Devolution of Services from SC**

This item was discussed under 23.57

**23.61 Budget Planning for 2024/25**

The draft budget was approved but it was noted that the Precept would need to be determined at a later date in December/January when we have a better understanding of devolution (see 23.60)

**23.62 Clerk's report/action list from previous meeting:**

- a) Defibrillator/1<sup>st</sup> aid training – Cllr Pat Fallance has found a provider of training and this is to be arranged
- b) Debit card – ongoing
- c) Allotments – an application for the vacant plot was approved
- d) The replacement part for the broken slide has been installed. The Parish Council thanks Jon Tarr for carrying out the work
- e) Drone activity – Clerk reported Taylor Wimpey had commissioned Sensat to carry out surveying of the ex Crown Estate land.
- f) Information Commission Office – Clerk is appointed Data Protection Officer
- g) Savills have approached the Parish Council to discuss Higher Broughton Farm and a meeting will be organised.
- h) The Clerk is sourcing quotes for next year's ground maintenance contract

**23.63 To receive reports from Parish Council Portfolios**

**Chair – LCNs** seem to be more about “parish pump” operational issues (such as organising a “lengthsman”) and less about strategic issues.

**Traffic** -a traffic survey carried out between 7-15<sup>th</sup> October through Haydon showed just under 20,000 vehicle movements during the week, with 63% travelling over 30mph. Mean speed was 31.5mph through working day. This supports a case for a Speed Indicator Device, and we will apply to Somerset & Avon Police for funding. However, applications are now closed until April 2024, so we will build a case in the meantime. We also need to sign a Memo of Understanding with SC. Est cost of project: £4,000.

**Lines/Signs** – Contractors have been instructed, awaiting work

**Cllr Pat Fallance** – footpaths and bridleways have been affected by heavy rain

**Cllr Dan Fallance** –

**Village Hall** – bookings are good

**Police/traffic** – nothing significant to report. Some rural/equine thefts.

Signed:  (Chair)

Date: 18/01/2024

**23.65 Planning – Cllr Rob Hossell**

In his absence, Cllr Hossell's report was received. In summary:

**Highways;**

**A358** – meeting with National Highways on 30<sup>th</sup> November (re position statement)

**Speed limits/road signs/markings** – no further progress

**Somerset Plan** – no response received to our letter to SC re concerns for new local plan

**Planning;**

No New applications received.

**23.66 Clerk's hours**

Nothing to report

**23.67 Date of next meeting:** Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 7.30pm

Signed:  (Chair)

Date: 18/01/2024