



Minutes of the Parish Meeting held at the Village Hall

Wednesday 28th August 2019

Present Sue Isherwood, Chair
Marie Scriven, Councillor
Sue Reece, Councillor
Peter Bright, Councillor

In attendance Chris Harris, Clerk
1 member of the public

Prior to commencement of the meeting, a member of the public requested that the Council formally write to James Heapey, MP for Wells, to support constitutional government as enshrined in the principles of local governance. The Council agreed.

Action: Clerk

1. Apologies for absence

Ros Wyke

2. Declarations of Interests and Dispensations

In his role as an honorary warden of the butterfly conservation area Cllr Bright declared an interest in planning application 2019/1748/FUL, erection of an agricultural building, Broad Road.

3. Minutes of the Meetings held on 3rd July 2019 and 14th August 2019

The minutes of both meetings were reviewed, agreed and signed as a correct record.

4. Report from the Somerset County Council and Mendip District Councillors

In the absence of the Councillors, no reports were available.

5. Clerk's Report

The Clerk having only very recently been appointed, a general overview of outstanding activities was presented.

5a Actions from previous meeting

i) Dog waste bins:

Recommendations have been received from MDC regarding the preferred type of bin; MDC has agreed to empty them; WSM PC must now decide on location. Two locations South of the A371 were suggested; there was also support for one location to the North.

Action: Council to confirm bin locations.

ii) Report on Condition of Westbury Cross:

In response to concerns raised by a member of the public, it was agreed that the Clerk contact Bob Croft/SW Heritage Trust with a view to having a formal archaeological assessment made of the Cross's condition and suggest actions for maintenance.

Action: Clerk

iii) AutoSpeedWatch pricing:

Clerk to investigate the financial viability and/or the option of sharing costs with other Parishes.

Action: Clerk

v) Road safety issues:

a) Vehicles have been seen driving on the wrong side of the Westbury Cross at the junction of School Hill and Stoke Road (A371), putting pedestrians and other road users at risk. Worn road markings have been noted which may be a contributing factor. Clerk to contact MDC Highways for an opinion. Photographic evidence of the markings will be required.

Action: Clerk

b) To acquire a copy of the recent Rodney Stoke speed reduction survey with a view to possible implementation of a 20 mph speed limit on some village roads.

Action: Clerk

vi) Footpath report:

Clerk to liaise with Colin Booth regarding the latest footpath report and possible presentation at a later Council meeting. Update: An updated footpath report has been submitted to the Council for review, but a formal presentation is not possible at this time.

vii) Updating Neighbourhood Planning Group List:

The Chair and Councillor Wyke to liaise and update.

Action: Chair and Cllr Wyke

viii) Extra Parking at Stoneleigh:

Cllrs Scriven and Bright have been investigating the options for this and have identified an area which could be converted, although ownership has yet to be established. A map delineating the relevant area needs to be acquired. Cllrs Scriven and Bright to continue their research and report back to the next Council meeting.

Action: Cllrs Scriven and Bright

ix) Interpretation Panel Refurbishment:

This has not progressed due to the ill-health of the original designer. The Chair and Cllr Wyke to investigate further.

Action: Chair and Cllr Wyke

x) Bus Shelter Proposal:

Concerns had been previously raised regarding the siting, size and maintenance of the bus shelter, particularly in view of the fact that groups of schoolchildren do not use it even if the weather is inclement. Clerk to investigate ownership, upkeep and possible options for resiting. Update: it appears that MDC own the shelter and are responsible for maintenance but will no longer provide new shelters. Cllr Wyke also confirmed that MDC consider that the existing site is too small to accommodate a larger shelter; other options for resiting elsewhere in the village continue to be explored.

Action: Council

xi) 2019/1240/FUL Redevelopment, Stancombe Lane:

It appears that the Council's objections to this development were not submitted before the deadline. The Chair to contact MDC Planning to discuss mitigation and possible late submission.

Action: Chair

5b Other Matters Arising

The Clerk has completed the following:

- Outstanding VAT return
- Outstanding pensions re-declaration
- Outstanding defibrillator report
- MDC and other authorities have been informed of change of Clerk
- Clerk training has been applied for and is in progress

Contact with HMRC is still to be done.

The Clerk begs the Council's continuing patience while addressing the backlog of outstanding matters and acclimatising to the role.

6. Planning

6a Neighbourhood Plan Update

This has been in abeyance of late but, given pressures from MDC regarding future housing development in the village, needs to be revisited with some urgency, particularly with regard to design and environmental statements. The Chair to liaise with Burnham-on-Sea Council and ascertain possible dates for a visit from the person who created their housing needs survey.

Action: Chair

6b Planning Applications

2019/1549/FUL	Erection of agricultural building and alterations, Top Road
This application was discussed at the extra meeting on 14 th August. The Council unanimously agreed to reject the application on a number of issues and a letter has been sent to MDC Planning to this effect.	
2019/1748/FUL	Erection of agricultural building Westbury Drove
While the Council recognises the need for a replacement agricultural building on the site, it resolved to object to the application, as concerns were raised on a number of issues including the significant increase in footprint, location within the AONB and proximity to both an important butterfly conservation area and the gliding club, and no mention of the AONB Dark Skies policy of lighting were to be included. Any conditions of development should include the adopted Agricultural Building Design Guidelines for the Mendip Hills AONB SPG.	
2019/1940/VRC	Removal of conditions East Lodge Station Road
2019/1945/HSE	Erection of greenhouse East Lodge Station Road
These applications were considered in tandem. It was unanimously resolved that there were no objections to either planning application, on the understanding that any further planning requirements concerning substantive structural alterations to accommodate new French windows be submitted separately for further review.	
2019/2086/TCA	Tree reduction Station Road
It was unanimously resolved that there were no objections to this application.	
2019/1689/FUL	Engineering works/bridge installation, Free Hill Farm
The Council recognises that this site is a designated local green space (Mendip Local Plan Part II Background Paper - Local Green Spaces (v1), LGSWM002, Field between Old Ditch and Free Hill, page 39), and the historical importance of the terracing in the field. Two points of concern were raised regarding vehicular sight lines at the point of access onto Ditch Road, and an unmarked tree at or near the point of construction which needs clarification. The Council resolved to object to this application while these points were outstanding.	

6c MDC Planning Decisions

2019/0452/CLE Shamrock Stables Animal Shelter

The Council unanimously resolved to register its profound disagreement with this decision, and that in making this decision, MDC Planning Department appear to have shown little or no regard for the welfare of an entire village or the wider local environment.

Action: Clerk

7. Finance

7a Payments to Approve

- i) Returning Officer Fee, Election Services MDC £101.00 Approved
- ii) Purchase of 'Local Council Administration (11th Edition)'
via SALC @ £103.99 (plus postage) Approved

Action: Clerk

iii) Purchase of new PC laptop

The Clerk reported that an increasing number of difficulties were arising with the existing laptop, both hardware and software issues. Given that it is approximately 10 years old, it was unanimously agreed to fund the purchase of a new/refurbished machine, to the value of around £350.00. Clerk to investigate.

Action: Clerk

7b Audit update

The AGAR process for 2018/19 has been completed; to meet regulatory requirements the forms will be uploaded to the website shortly.

Action: Clerk

7c To Confirm and Approve the Updated Bank Signatories and Internal Financial Controls

The Council unanimously approved the removal of the previous Clerk's details and the addition of the new Clerk's details to the Council's banking mandate.

8. Co-Option for Parish Council Vacancy

There are a number of individuals who have expressed an interest in becoming a Councillor to fill the current vacancy. Clerk to initiate the process for recruitment, including advertising and sending out applications. A vote will take place at the next council meeting on 2nd October 2019 at 7.30 in Stoneleigh Community Hall, following presentations by each applicant.

Action: Clerk

9. Monthly Correspondence

No additional monthly correspondence was submitted.

10. Notices

Cllr Bright reminded the Council that the deadline for Parish Council grants should be made by the end of September and that interested parties should be made aware.

Action: Clerk

11. Items for Next Agenda

No additional items were raised.

12. Date, Time and Location of Next Meeting

Wednesday 2nd October 2019 at 7.30 p.m. in Stoneleigh Community Hall, WSM.