

CREECH ST MICHAEL PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes for the Meeting of Creech St Michael Parish Council held at Creech St Michael Village Hall on **2 December 2024 at 7.00pm**

Councillor Attendance

Cllr. Annabelle Peters – Chair	AP	Present	Cllr. Neil Davidson – Vice Chair	ND	Present
Cllr. Adrian Birch	AB	Present	Cllr. Paul Tucker	PT	Present
Cllr. Corinne Giles	CG	Present	Cllr. Stephen Greenhalgh	SG	Present
Cllr. David Griffin	DG	Present	Cllr. Barbara Williams	BW	Present
Cllr. Martyn Willis	MW	Present	Cllr. Kieran Roe MBE	KR	Present

Also Present: Six (6) members of the public and Cllr. David Fothergill (Somerset Council) and Cllr. Norman Cavill (Somerset Council) and Andrew Williams, Creech St Michael Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer.

Meeting started at 7.00pm

1.0	Chair's welcome
	The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting and invited members of the public that were present to speak if they wished to do so.
2.0	Public Question time - Questions asked by the Public and Press will be noted.
	<p>A resident asked for an update on the actions taken by Somerset Council Planning Enforcement following the report of a potential breach at Whiteleaze Lane, Thurloxtan. The Clerk and RFO responded by confirming that the Planning Enforcement team had confirmed that the applicant had requested a pre-application meeting and therefore it was expected that an application was due to be submitted in the near future. The Clerk and RFO also reported that the Planning Enforcement team had confirmed to him that in future they would be addressing "serious high harm/risk breaches of planning" in the future because of budget constraints. Cllr. Fothergill agreed to take the matter up on behalf of the resident.</p> <p>A resident provided an update on the progress being made by a local community group to establish a religious meeting place within Creech Heathfield. They had conducted a traffic survey and were planning to contact residents in the nearby area to consult on proposals.</p>
3.0	To receive Somerset Council Councillors' Reports
	<p>Cllr. Fothergill provided an update on key issues.</p> <p>Boundary Commission Review. The data being used has been questioned as it shows only a small rise in population in the Parish.</p> <p>Online Portal. A new portal is going live which will allow people to pay their council bills online.</p> <p>Council Tax Reduction Scheme. The savings that will be delivered on this scheme have been reduced to £3.9 millions.</p>

	<p>Consultation of County-Wide Pharmacy. The consultation is now live.</p> <p>Cllr. Norman Cavill added that following the establishment of the unitary authority there were a number of years worth of accounts to sign off from the District Authorities. After a lengthy process the accounts have been “accepted” by auditors.</p>				
4.0	<p>Apologies for absence</p> <p>4.1 To receive any apologies for absence An apology had been received from Cllr. Charlie Cudlip.</p> <p>4.2 To approve any apologies for absence. The absence of Cllr. Cudlip was approved.</p>				
	Prop:SG	Sec:AP	In Favour:10	Against:0	Abstain:0
5.0	Declarations of Interests				
	<p>5.1 Declarations of Individual Members None.</p> <p>5.2 Dispensation Request None.</p>				
6.0	<p>Minutes To Review and Approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2024. [M]</p> <p>The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair for the record.</p>				
	Prop:AP	Sec:MW	In Favour:8	Against:0	Abstain:2
7.0	Review and Monitor the Actions Outstanding from Past Meetings – See Appendix A for details of action points and progress toward the completion of each action.				
	Items for Decision				
8.0	<p>Budget for the 2025/26 Financial Year – to approve the draft budget for the 2025/26 financial year. [M]</p> <p>The Clerk and RFO set out the draft budget for the 2025/26 financial year. This had been considered by the Finance Committee and recommended by the Committee for approval by the Parish Council. ND expressed his concern about the budget, but warned that there were many unknowns ahead because of the situation at Somerset Council and that the Parish Council needed to be prepared for this. SG expressed concern about the sum of money set aside for the Rec. Park project.</p> <p>KR indicated that the current reserves held were adequate and didn’t justify the significant increase in the precept request and the Parish Council should use reserves first.</p> <p>The budget for the 2025/26 financial year was approved.</p>				
	Prop:AP	Sec:PT	In Favour:6	Against:4	Abstain:0
9.0	Precept Request – to approve the Parish Council Precept request for the 2025/26 financial year. [M]				

	Prior to a vote being taken CG stated that she felt that the budget had not been scrutinised adequately and more time to do this was required. The Clerk and RFO confirmed that the budget had been approved by a majority of members and as a result a decision on the precept request should be taken. It was agreed to delay the decision on the precept request until the January meeting.				
10.0	Letter to the Minister for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs – to approve a draft letter sent in support of the Ham Village Flood Committee. [P] [M] The letter was approved and was signed by the Chair and the Clerk.				
	Prop:SG	Sec:ND	In Favour:10	Against:0	Abstain:0
11.0	Somerset Council Local Plan Consultation - to confirm and approve a response to the initial consultation exercise on the Somerset Council Local Plan. It was agreed that the Clerk and RFO would seek a further deferment of the deadline for the consultation and members would provide feedback on the key questions by Thursday 5 December 2024.				
	Prop:PT	Sec:MW	In Favour:10	Against:0	Abstain:0
12.0	Citizen's Advice Somerset – to consider a request to support Citizen's Advice Somerset with a grant of £500.00. SG proposed that the donation be £250.00 and this was approved.				
	Prop:AP	Sec:SG	In Favour:10	Against:0	Abstain:0
13.0	Financial Transactions Report – to review and approve the Financial Transaction Report for the period between 26 October 2024 and 25 November 2024. [M] The Financial Transaction report was approved. See Appendix B for a list of all payments. The Chair signed a copy of the report for the records.				
	Prop:AP	Sec:ND	In Favour:10	Against:0	Abstain:0
	Items for Discussion				
14.0	Somerset Parishes Conference – feedback from the event. The Clerk and RFO reported that the event had not provided any further insight in to the likely changes in services or provisions for next year.				
15.0	Langaller Park Development Planning Application 14/21/0047 – update following the meeting with the Developer and Lead Planning Officer. Members who attended the meeting provided an update on the discussions that took place with the developer's representatives, including progress on the application and that there remained concerns that the school provision for the site would not be fully delivered.				
16.0	LCN Children & Young People Working group – feedback from recent LCN working group meetings. No further update was required as the topic had been discussed during item 8.0				
	Updates from Committees, Panels and Working Groups				
17.0	Finance Committee 17.1. Budget report year-to-date The year-to-date budget report was shared and no concerns were highlighted.				

18.0	Planning Committee 18.1. Planning Log. The Planning Log was shared and recent updates noted.
19.0	Traffic Working Group 19.1. Update. MW provided an update on outline plans to improve traffic management with the village of Creech St Michael, including the completion of a survey of signage to establish what needs to be changed and cleaned and the installation of new poles for sites to locate the Speed Indicator Devices. MW also identified the need for a review of speed limits across the Parish and neighbouring parishes in light of the major developments at Langaller Park.
20.0	Canal Working Group 20.1. Update. ND reported that the locking rota had been working well and thanked everyone for their help. The site is now being locked at dusk each day to ease the burden of the process and to ensure the site is closed before dark.
	Other Matters
22.0	Correspondence
	22.1 To consider any correspondence received that Councillors wish to raise that has already been circulated. None.
	22.2 To note items of correspondence received by the Clerk and RFO deemed appropriate to be brought to the attention of the Parish council. Two items were shared and noted from residents regarding concerns over traffic speeds and volumes, including the North End area and the Railway Bridge in Creech St Michael. A resident who was present explained the issues affecting North End and the impact of traffic on the area of the Village. A communication from Connecting Devon and Somerset was also noted.
23.0	New Matters to be Carried Forward None.

The meeting ended at 8.59pm

[V] = Where a resolution (vote) is expected

Andrew Williams, CSM PC, Clerk and RFO, 07708 680797, email clerk@creechstmichael.net

The next Creech St Michael (CSM) Parish Council meetings are on:

6 January 2025

at 7pm in the CSM Village Hall

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Date of Original Meeting Action Raised	Minute Ref.	Action Point	Responsibility & Timeframe	Date Completed	Outcome/Further Actions	Complete
14.10.2024	2.0	Clerk and RFO contact the Rights of Way team to encourage them to progress the issue of the footpath concerns at Whiteleaze Lane, Thurloxtan.	Clerk and RFO 04.11.2024		16.10.2024 Request made to Rights of Way team to review the situation and update on progress.	
14.10.2024	9.0	Contact to be made with landowner of public open space off Derham Close, to determine if a waste bin can be installed.	Clerk and RFO 04.11.2024		<p>18.10.2024 Site is owned and managed by Allison Homes.</p> <p>22.10.2024 Somerset Council confirmed that the S106 agreement did not make reference to waste bins being installed.</p> <p>24.10.2024 Allison Homes contacted and request made to install bin.</p> <p>16.11.2024 Follow up email request made to management company for a response.</p> <p>05.12.2024 Contact received from management company confirming that they are seeking quotations for the installation of a bin.</p>	

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02.09.2024	8.0	The creation of a secure record of key accounts and passwords to be accessed in an emergency by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Parish Council or Chair of the Finance Committee.	Clerk and RFO 04.11.2024		28.10.2024 See agenda item 12.	
02.09.2024	13.0	To write to the PCC regarding traffic management issues.	Clerk and RFO 01.10.2024	05.09.2024	Response received and date arranged for site visit. Meeting to be rearranged to accommodate availability of councillors.	
13.05.2024	15.0	Prepare quotations for the installation of CCTV at the Rec. Park.	Clerk and RFO 03.06.2024		25.05.2024 See agenda item 15 03.06.2024 Proposal approved and purchase of hardware completed. 31.07.2024 Equipment purchased, delivered and installation commenced.	
06.11.2023	29.2.1	Clerk and RFO to contact West Monkton Parish Council to collaborate on a submission to Somerset Highways to address the issues with large vehicles using Coombe Lane.	Clerk and RFO 04.12.2023		27.11.2023 Contact with West Monkton Parish Council made and details of the issue shared. West Monkton Parish Council to consider and respond. 13.12.2023 Email sent to Somerset Roads requesting that the Lane be designated with a maximum weight of 7.5 tonnes. 15.12.2023 response received and request for more evidence received.	

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02.10.2023	9.0	Members to identify risks that are not listed on the draft Risk register and forward these to the Clerk and RFO.	All members 06.11.2023		23.05.2024 See agenda item 14 03.06.2024.	
05.06.2023	2.0	Clerk and RFO to contact the relevant parties to request that the issue of overgrown hedges be dealt with on the lane between Hyde Lane and Leighton Drive.	Clerk and RFO 03.07.2023		<p>20.06.2023 Managing Agent contacted and confirmation received that they are not responsible for Hyde Lane vegetation. Response awaited from David Wilson Homes.</p> <p>07.11.2023 Letter written to David Wilson Homes requesting that the vegetation be dealt with.</p> <p>09.11.2023 Holding response received from David Wilson Homes.</p> <p>22.11.2023 David Wilson Homes confirm that a consultant has been appointed to address the outstanding adoption issues.</p> <p>18.12.2023 Chasing email sent and response received to indicate it had been passed to another team to respond.</p> <p>19.01.2024 Chasing email sent and response received to indicate it had been passed to another team to respond. No progress being made on this issue.</p> <p>27.03.2024 Deadline of 08 April 2024 given for resolution of the matter or legal steps to be taken to resolve the matter.</p>	

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					<p>28.03.2024 Response received from David Wilson Homes stating that the delay in resolving the matter sits with Somerset Council.</p> <p>02.04.2024 Request made to Cllr. Fothergill to intervene.</p>	
15.05.2023	15	The Clerk and RFO would confirm the approved sites for the Speed Indicator Devices with Somerset Council Highways.	Clerk and RFO 05.06.2023		<p>23.05.2023 request sent to Somerset Council Highways requesting confirmation of approved sites.</p> <p>05.06.2023 The Clerk and RFO confirmed that the two existing sites were the only that had been fully approved and that a meeting with highways to discuss further sites was being scheduled for late June or early July.</p> <p>04.12.2023 Highways to confirm locations and await the installation of new poles to accommodate solar SIDs. Likely to be delayed until May/June 2024.</p> <p>21.02.2024 Further contact held with Traffic Engineer to arrange a site meeting.</p> <p>30.04.2024 Awaiting further meeting with Speedwatch and Traffic Panel to agree sites.</p> <p>24.12.2024 See agenda item 10 of 06.01.2025 meeting.</p>	
06.02.2023	12.0	Clerk and RFO to pursue the use of the Money Claim service to seek the recovery of the funds paid to Oakleaf Joinery & Design.	Clerk and RFO 06.03.2023	15.02.2023	<p>15.02.2023 Money Claim online started and evidence submitted.</p> <p>16.03.2023 A request to issue a County Court Judgement was made via the Money Claim service.</p>	

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					<p>24.03.2023 County Court Judgement issued and received.</p> <p>15.05.2023 Request to be issued for a Warrant of Control.</p> <p>12.07.2023 case transferred to Yeovil Crown Court and a warrant issued.</p> <p>28.10.2024 New information on location of individual passed to the Court.</p>	
09.01.2023	3.0	Update the Neighbourhood Plan in light of the changes being brought about by local government reorganisation.	TBC		<p>15.05.2023 To be considered at the next Planning committee meeting.</p> <p>05.06.2023 See agenda item 20.1.</p> <p>27.11.2023 To be discussed by the Planning Committee.</p>	
COMPLETED ACTIONS						
08.01.2024	12.0	Clerk and RFO to submit a request to the DHSC for funding for two defibrillators, one to be sited at the Recreation Park and one at or near to Adsborough.	Clerk and RFO 05.02.204		<p>08.01.2024 Resident at Adsborough contacted and asked to assist in finding a suitable location for the Defib.</p> <p>25.01.2024 Defibrillators shipped and arrived and now in storage.</p> <p>16.02.2024 Defibrillator installed at the Recreation Park. Second location under discussion.</p> <p>17.06.2024 Offer of site for installation made from Adsborough resident. Site being investigated for suitability.</p> <p>18.11.2024 Defibrillator installed and added to the national network.</p>	✓

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01.07.2024	17.0	Proposal to undertake works to trees within the Recreation Park to be provided.	Clerk and RFO 02.09.2024		See agenda item 11 of meeting agenda 02.09.2024. 09.09.2024 contractor appointed and work scheduled for completion in November 2024. 11.11.2024 Initial works now complete.	✓
04.11.2024	11.0	Clerk and RFO to contact Ruishton, Henlade and Thurloxtton Parish Council to seek approval to submit feedback on the reorganisation of Somerset Council divisions.	Clerk and RFO 02.12.2024	12.11.2024	13.11.2024 Agreement between two Parish Councils confirmed and feedback submitted. Voting age population as of 2021 census 4,567.	✓
01.07.2024	10.0	Purchase and installation of new signage for the Recreation Park.	Clerk and RFO 02.09.2024	13/09/2024	02.07.2024 Purchase order submitted to Blake Signs. 12.08.2024 Main signs installed. Other signs in the process of being installed.	✓

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					13.09.2024 All signs installed.	
13.05.2024	15.0	Hold discussions with Ruishton Rhinos Football Club to seek their support for maintaining the grass pitch.	Clerk and RFO 03.06.2024		<p>26.05.2024 Contact made with Chair of Ruishton Rhinos Football Club and meeting to be held to discuss plans for the club to use the Rec. Park as a base.</p> <p>12.05.2024 Meeting held and proposal being progressed to Finance Committee to consider prior to approval by Parish Council.</p> <p>16.08.2024 See agenda item 9 of meeting 02.09.2024.</p> <p>29.09.2024 Agreement shared for approval by both parties.</p> <p>07.10.2024 Signed agreement received and purchase of mower initiated.</p>	✓
05.02.2024	8.0	Implementation of budget proposals.	Clerk and RFO 31.03.2024		<p>12.02.2024 Notice given of cessation of service to Walford Security.</p> <p>13.02.204 Notice given of cessation of funding to the Community Youth Project. Dialogue opened with Community Youth Project and Somerset Youth Alliance to explore external funding opportunities.</p> <p>13.02.2024 Contact made with West Monkton Parish Council to explore viability of sharing use of their mower.</p>	✓

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					26.03.2024 A positive response from West Monkton Parish Council received, subject to insurance and agreement of a schedule and financial contribution. 01.10.2024 All matters completed.	
02.09.2024	2.0	Attend to overgrown vegetation at the cut through path at the junction of Ryesland Way and St Michael Road.	Cllr. Willis + other Cllrs.	14/09/2024	Task complete.	✓
05.06.2023	23.2	To request that the markings for the virtual pavement at North end are reinstated to improve visibility.	Clerk and RFO 03.07.2023	17.07.2024	03.07.2023 A recent meeting with the Highways Officer from Somerset Council had confirmed a commitment to reline the Virtual Footpath. 17.07.2024 Lines reinstated by Somerset Council.	✓
09.01.2023	3.0	Clerk and RFO to respond to Cllr. Fothergill's enquiry about a bus shelter for Creech Heathfield.	Clerk and RFO 06.02.2023		27.01.2022 See item 22.2 on the agenda for meeting held on 06.02.2023. 16.03.2023 Awaiting a response from Somerset Council Highways. 25.11.2023 Cllr. Peters in contact with resident about the issue. 11.12.2023 Contact with Roads Records initiated following advice from Somerset Highways. 12.12.2023 Request submitted to First Bus Group for data on bus stop use for the previous 12 months. 12.01.2024 response received from Somerset Road Records received outlining process. Initial costs of	✓

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					£765.00 to cover application, licenses and legal costs. Planning Application may also be necessary. 14.05.2024 Resident informed that this project has been put on hold for a period of 12 months.	
04.12.2023	8.0	Clerk and RFO to contact Somerset Bus Partnership to obtain more information on the scale of funding required.	Clerk and RFO 08.01.2024		05.12.2023 Contact made with Somerset Bus Partnership and request made. Response received and awaiting further information. 31.12.2023 Information shared that 4 decals had been sited within Creech St Michael. 500 decals have been printed to cover Somerset.	✓
05.09.2022	18	Clerk to contact Somerset West and Taunton Council to arrange for the installation of the small combined bin and to enquire of the cost of moving the dog waste bin on the site.	Clerk & RFO 03.10.2022		22.09.2022 Request submitted to Somerset West and Taunton Street Scene team. 23.09.2022 Response received – cost of relocating dog waste bin £100.00 + VAT. 03.10.2022 Plan to be drawn up to locate larger bin and replace dog waste bin. 07.11.2022 Site meeting to be arranged for councillors by the Clerk and RFO. 15.06.2023 Clerk and RFO contacted the Street Scene team at Somerset Council to approve installation. 20.07.2023 Contact with Street Scene Manager made. Awaiting quotation for costs of installation and supply of waste bin.	✓

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					<p>25.07.2023 Costs confirmed as previously agreed and purchase order issued. Lead time likely 7 to 8 weeks.</p> <p>30.10.2023 A further update has been requested from the Street Scene team on the likely installation date.</p> <p>06.11.2023 Telephone call with Somerset Council Street Scene team. Installation committed to within 14 days.</p> <p>11.12.2023 Bin installed.</p>	
06.11.2023	14.0	ND would seek a meeting with the local store manager to discuss the issues with the opening times of the Post Office.	ND 04.12.2023		ND spoke with store staff and received assurances that the issue was being addressed with the addition of more trained staff members.	✓
02.10.2023	14.0	Contact to be made with the Woodland Trust to explore the offer of free trees for planting within the community.	Clerk and RFO 06.11.2023	10.10.2023	90 small hedge plants and 30 small copse trees will be delivered in March 2024.	✓

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03.07.2023	20.0	The Clerk and RFO to obtain a quote from Walford Security for a locking and call out service for the car park.	Clerk and RFO 04.09.2023		02.10.2023 No longer required.	✓
04.09.2023	4.0	Clerk and RFO to present a proposal to implement a member attendance policy.	Clerk and RFO 02.10.2023		02.10.2023 See item 7 on the agenda.	✓
03.07.2023	3.0	Cllr. Cavill asked that the Parish Council write to the owner of the property on the corner of Paddock Close to request that their hedgerow be cut back as it was causing pedestrians to have to walk in to the road.	Clerk and RFO 04.09.2023		07.08.2023 Letter written to the resident. 25.08.2023 No response received and no action taken by the resident. 04.09.2023 vegetation has been reduced and no longer presents an issue.	✓
15.05.2023	14	It was agreed that CC and ND would contact the landowner and arrange to meet and discuss the proposed allotment site lease.	Cllr. Cudlip and Cllr. Davidson 05.06.2023		05.06.2023 Cllr. Davidson confirmed that he had spoken to the landowner and confirmed that he was willing to sign an agreement on the terms proposed. The Clerk and RFO to send an agreement to the landowner. 13.06.2023 Lease agreement sent to landowner.	✓

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					20.07.2023 Signed lease agreement received from the landowner.	
03.07.2023	8.0	Clerk and RFO to contact Somerset Council to seek a formal arrangement for the disposal of waste from the Recreation Park.	Clerk and RFO 04.09.2023		23.08.2023 No such service available from Somerset Council. Advice from SC is that "All businesses producing any waste should have a trade waste agreement with a registered waste carrier or take their refuse to a site licensed to accept trade waste."	✓

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Item 8.

Precept Request

1.0 Proposal

To approve the Parish Council's Precept request for the 2025/26 financial year.

2.0 Introduction

At a meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 2 December 2024, the proposed budget was approved by a majority of members. Subsequently, at a meeting held on Wednesday 18 December 2024, the Parish Council's Finance Committee reviewed the precept request and is recommending approval of the request.

The precept request must be submitted to Somerset Council by the end of January 2025. A failure to meet this deadline may result in the precept payment to the Parish Council being delayed significantly.

3.0 The Request

The precept request to fund the approved budget was set at £123,075.00. Following a review of the request, the Finance Committee is recommending that this be reduced to £118,075.00. This has been achieved by deferring funding for the Recreation Park Review project. It was agreed that efforts to pursue this project would continue, with any expenditure funded through reserves.

A request of £118,075.00 represents a 30.39% increase on the previous year's precept request. This equates to an increase of £22.55 per year on the typical Band D property. The precept for a typical Band D property increases from £77.59 to £100.14 per year.

The Finance Committee recommends that funding allocated to highways and rights of way maintenance of £10,000.00 and the £4,300.00 allocated to funding projects for Children and Young People are retained.

The Finance Committee will prepare a plan for the use of current and incoming Community Infrastructure Levy funds in the Spring of 2025, which will be presented to the Parish Council for approval.

Recommendation

That the precept request is approved.

Andrew Williams
Clerk and RFO
19.12.2024

Item 9.

Railway Bridge Surveillance

1.0 Proposal

To approve expenditure of £1,760.30 + VAT (£2,112.36) to undertake a period of video surveillance to monitor and report on traffic movements crossing the Railway Bridge in Creech St Michael.

2.0 Introduction

The Railway Bridge in Creech St Michael has been identified as a significant concern by the Highways Working group and specifically that vehicles are a risk to pedestrian users of the bridge. A 7 day period of video surveillance will allow for evidence to be gathered to either prove or disprove that this is an issue that needs to be addressed.

3.0 The Surveillance Project and Report

The surveillance project will be conducted by Somerset Council Highways for a period of seven days including a weekend. Each day will cover a period of 12 hours between 7.00am and 7.00pm, providing a total of 84 hours of surveillance.

The survey will be interpreted by Somerset Highways and a report of the analysis will be provided to the Parish Council and will include the following.

- Count of different types of vehicle using the bridge every 15 minutes. Vehicle types are differentiated between car, LGV, PSV, HGV, wide vehicle, Motorcycle, bicycle.
- Count of pedestrians using the bridge every 15 minutes.
- Count of vehicles transgressing the highway on to the footpath.
- Summary of vehicle types by daily AM and PM period.

The survey does not record the speed of any vehicles and neither does it record any means of identifying individual vehicles, drivers or pedestrians.

The report and the data provided will act as a valuable piece of evidence to support a case for improvements to highways and traffic flows within the village of Creech St Michael and the wider impact of traffic on the neighbouring areas.

4.0 Financial Implications

A sum of £3,000.00 is allocated for maintenance within the highways budget for this year. The sum of £2,884.00 remains in the budget and it is proposed to allocate the cost of this project to this cost centre.

5.0 Recommendation

That the proposal is considered and approved if deemed appropriate.

Andrew Williams

Clerk and RFO

17.12.2024



Item 10.

Purchase of Speed Indicator Devices and Installation of New Sites

1.0 Proposal

To approve the purchase of two new solar powered speed indicator devices (SIDs) and the installation of poles to three new sites within the Parish.

2.0 Introduction

The Highways and Public Rights of Way Working group is seeking approval to progress the purchase of two additional SIDs. To facilitate use of the additional units, three additional sites have been identified and agreed with Somerset Highways.

3.0 SIDs

SIDs act as a visual indicator to drivers that they are driving in excess of the designated speed limit. The units also provide the Parish Council with data on the number and speed of vehicles passing the site where the SID is located.

The two existing units in operation are battery powered requiring regular changes and recharges of battery. It is proposed that the two new units will be solar powered, reducing the need to change batteries regularly.

There are a limited number of suppliers from whom SIDs can be purchased. Prices have been sought from three suppliers for their respective units. All three units offer similar specifications unless stated.

Elan City. 1 unit, including remote data connection £2,299.50 plus VAT when bought as a pair at £4,599.00 plus VAT. Subject to the order being placed before the 31 January 2025.

Automate Systems 1 unit £3,780.00 plus VAT.

Messagemaker Displays 1 unit £3,000.00 plus VAT when bought as a pair at £6,000.00 plus VAT.

4.0 Sites

All three new proposed sites require the installation of new poles to a height of 4m to allow for solar units to be positioned safely. The new sites are:

- Creech Heathfield Road between Crown Lane and the old Police House.
- Hyde Lane on the corner near the entrance to Leighton Drive.
- North End near to the junction with Langaller Lane

These sites have been approved by Somerset Highways.

Installation of the poles can be undertaken by the contractor Kier under the Enhanced Highway Maintenance (EHM) Pilot scheme. This provides two operators for a day at a rate of £684.71 plus VAT plus materials. Alternatively, Somerset Highways can undertake the installation at a cost of £1,050.00 plus VAT plus materials.

Materials costs are estimated at £300.00 plus VAT.

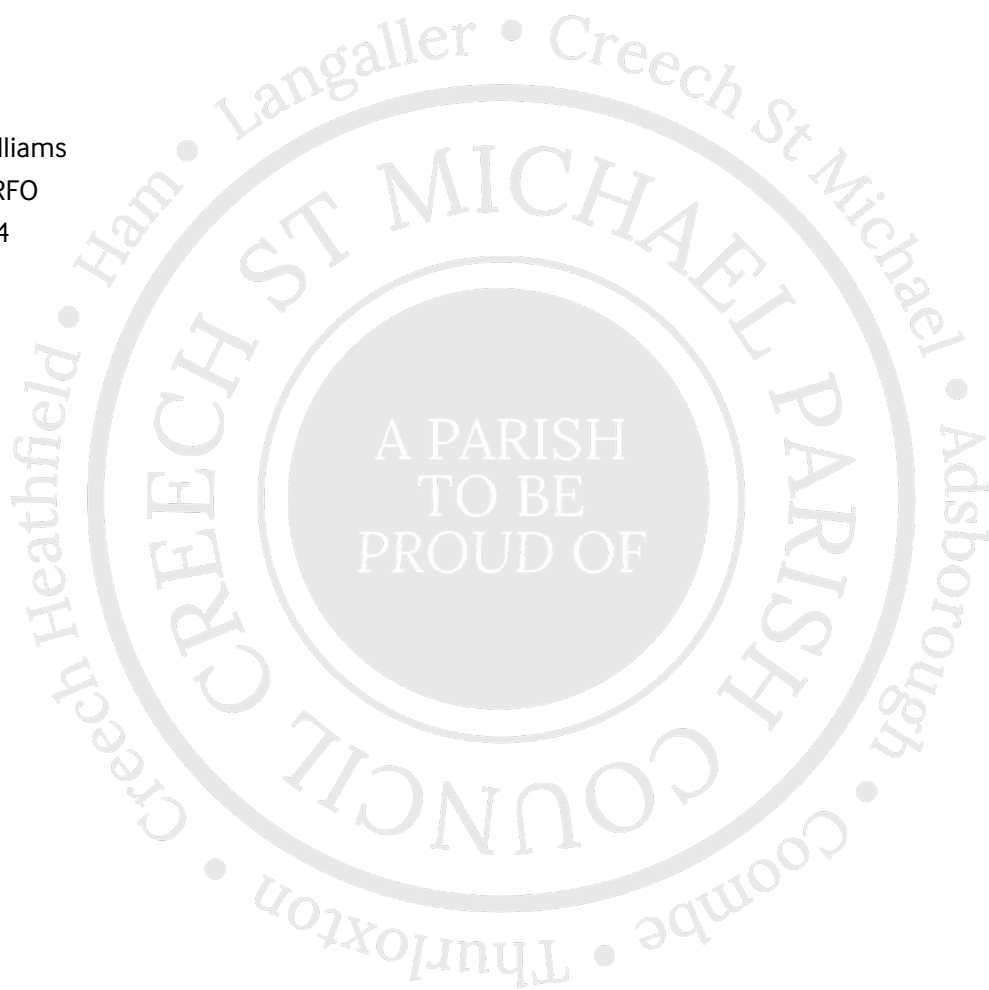
5.0 Financial Implications

A sum of £2,000.00 was allocated in the current year's budget for SID installations and can be used to fund the installation costs. A sum of £10,000.00 was allocated to highways maintenance and has not been used to date. It is proposed that the purchase of the two SIDs be funded from this allocation.

Recommendation

That the quotations for the supply of the SID units are considered and one is selected and approved and an option for the installation work is selected and approved.

Andrew Williams
Clerk and RFO
23.12.2024



Item 11.

Grant Application

1.0 Proposal

To consider an application from Creech St Michael Village Hall Committee for grant funding of £5,000.00.

2.0 Introduction

An application has been received from Creech St Michael Village Hall for grant funding of £5,000.00 to support the development of the Caray Grove play park area to create a space that can be used by the community.

3.0 Community Development Fund

Members are encouraged to refer to the Community Development Fund policy for guidance on the allocation of grant funding. In particular, that any grant should “enable Councillors to work closely with members of the Parish to identify and develop improvements within the community infrastructure, encouraging a greater degree of community cohesion and engagement.”

4.0 Financial Implications

The budget allowed for the current financial year for grant funding is £3,000.00, of which none has been allocated. These funds have been allocated from current reserves. As the application is for an amount greater than the available funds, a number of options should be considered if funds are to be granted.

- To restrict the grant of funds to no more than £3,000.00.
- To allocate additional reserves to increase the available amount.
- To allocate all or additional funds from CIL monies. Available funds are currently £45,131.68.

3.0 Recommendation

That the application is considered against the criteria set out in the Community Development Fund policy and if valid is considered for approval.

Andrew Williams
Clerk and RFO
13.12.2024

Subject: Grant Application Submission

From: Creech St Michael Parish Council <clerk@creechstmichael.net>

Date: 06/12/2024, 14:27

To: clerk@creechstmichael.net

Name of your organisation.: Creech St Michael Village Hall

Name of Councillor: Name of the Parish Councillor supporting this application.

Organisation/Group address.: Ryesland Way

Creech St Michael

TA3 5QQ

Lead applicant name.: Jan King

Lead applicant position.: Chair

Contact email.: csmvillagehallchair@gmail.com

Contact telephone.: 01823442085

Contact telephone (mobile).: 07526532090

Website:

Is Your Organisation/Group a Registered Charity? : Yes

If yes, charity number.: 1068001

Provide a brief description of your organisation/group's activities or purpose.: We provide a local space for groups and charities to meet for social and recreational activities. As well as family parties and functions.

Approximate number or percentage of members that belong to the organisation/group that live within the Creech St Michael Parish area. : 500

Details of any restrictions placed on who can use your organisation/group's services. : None

Details of the project to be funded.: we have recently taken on a 50 year lease of the old play park in Caray Grove, which backs onto the Village Hall. We have now opened up the hedge and blocked the old access so entry is now only via the Village Hall . We are now starting intensive landscaping and planting to make this somewhere to enjoy when the weather is better! The area can then be used by anyone as a quiet reflective space or to enhance local functions ie markets and the flower show

Details of how the project will deliver benefits to the Creech St Michael Parish Community (including how the benefits will be measured).: This area, once the garden has been planted will enhance the area and give people somewhere to sit and enjoy, quietly. Plus we could use the space on occasions for Community functions as there would be sufficient space for a marquee.

Total cost of the project.: 10000

Amount of grant requested.: 5000

Have you received, applied or intend to apply for funding from any other source for this project? : no

How much of the total cost of the project does your organisation/group intend to contribute yourself and from where are these funds being sourced?: over 50%

Confirmation:

Date: December 6, 2024

Time: 2:27 pm

Page URL: <https://creechstmichael.net/grants/>

User Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Windows NT 10.0; Win64; x64) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko)

Chrome/131.0.0.0 Safari/537.36 Edg/131.0.0.0

Remote IP: 86.159.10.157

Powered by: Elementor

Creech St Michael Parish Council

Policy Title	Community Development Fund
Policy Reference	B14
Applies to	All Councillors and Employees
Date Created	23 rd March 2023
Date Approved by Council	11 th April 2023
Minute Reference	10
Author	Clerk and RFO
Review Cycle	Annual
Review Dates	



1.0 Introduction

Creech St Michael Parish Council is committed to supporting and strengthening community participation, activities and events and helping to develop a sustainable welcoming community.

The aim of the Community Development Fund is to enable Councillors to work closely with members of the Parish to identify and develop improvements within the community infrastructure, encouraging a greater degree of community cohesion and engagement.

2.0 Funding

The Parish Council has allocated funding of up to £3,000.00 for the financial year ending March 2025. Additional funds could be made available in exceptional circumstances.

The minimum amount of grant funding available for individual projects is £500.00.

All projects must comply with the legal constraints within which the Parish Council operates and with the Parish Council's Financial Regulations.

3.0 Funding Criteria

- A bid for funding must be supported by at least one parish councillor.
- A bid must be supported with evidence of need from residents or community groups who operate for the benefit of the Parish.
- All bids must be for projects or activities which can be completed within 12 months and will directly benefit the residents of Creech St Michael Parish.
- All applicants undertake to provide an interim and project end report that details how the funds have been used and what benefits have been derived from the project.
- Projects that have previously received funding from the Parish Council must have provided a report on the use of those funds and this must have been accepted by the Parish Council before another bid is considered.
- Only one bid per project or activity can be received within each financial year.

Bids received for the following types of activity or project will not be considered.

- Contributions towards large, general appeals.
- General running costs for activities or projects.
- Retrospective funding for costs that have already occurred.

4.0 Application Process

It is the responsibility of individual councillors to prepare and submit bids to the Community Development Fund. The application form will be available via the Parish Council website and should be submitted with the requested accompanying information.

Applications will be considered by the Parish Council at the next scheduled ordinary council meeting.

The application form will require the following information to be supplied. Applications that do not provide full and complete information will not be considered.

- Name of the councillor or councillors supporting the bid.
- The name and contact details of any organisation involved in the bid.
- Amount of funding being bid for.
- Details of the project and how it will benefit the community.
- Detail of any ongoing costs and how these costs will be managed by the project or activity.
- Documents to support the bid.

The application will also request that the councillor submitting the bid, confirms that the information contained within the bid is complete and accurate and that the terms and conditions set by the Parish Council will be complied with.

5.0 Terms and Conditions

- Funding may only be used for the purpose set out in the application form and it cannot be transferred to any other project or activity.
- If any community group supporting the project or activity ceases to operate before funds have been spent or if the project does not proceed as planned, the applicant will be required to provide evidence of how the project can be successfully completed.
- Any evidence of dishonesty or negligence which comes to the attention of the Parish Council will be treated with the utmost seriousness and if found to be proven will result in the termination of any funding and may be reported to the relevant authorities.
- Recognition of any funding made by the Parish Council must be made in any publicity and in any organisation's accounts.
- The Parish Council may require photos of any projects or activities with agreement from the participants and may use the name of any organisation, project or activity in its own publicity materials.

Item 12

Somerset Rivers Authority Grant Application

Note: This paper has been prepared with a significant contribution from Mr Paul Thorogood, a resident of Mill Lane, Creech St Michael.

1.0 Proposal

To seek approval to progress a submission of a grant application to the Somerset Rivers Authority for the purpose of purchasing a diesel pump/permanent electric pump and creating a community flood action group for the residents of Mill Lane Creech St Michael.

2.0 Introduction

Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) has set up a Community Flood Action Fund to provide small grants for works to reduce flooding in Somerset. Up to £200,000 will be available in 2025, split up into grants of between £3,000 and £20,000. The Fund is aimed at not-for-profit organisations. For example, town and parish councils, parish meetings, charities, social enterprises and community benefit societies.

The SRA wants to help people with good local knowledge of flooding problems take practical actions with obvious benefits that can be achieved quite quickly.

The first bids for the SRA Grants are due to be submitted prior to 25/02/2025.

3.0 Background

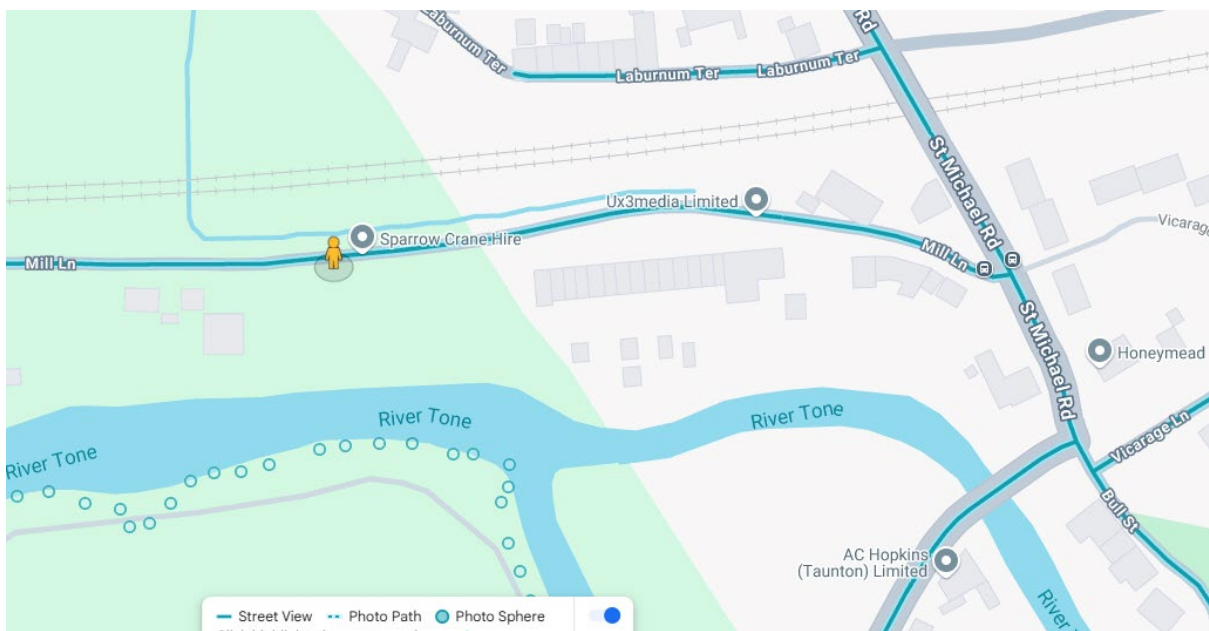
Flooding is a real and present issue for many parts of the Parish Community and the frequency of flood incidents is increasing and will continue to increase.

The residents of Mill Lane, Creech St Michael are protected by the Mill Lane Control Structure at Environment Agency (EA) Grid Reference ST 27127 25406.

The Mill lane Structure was built in 2009 and relies upon the delivery of a EA 6 inch pump in times of flood, it lowers the level of the culvert to prevent properties being flooded. The Dutch design structure has proven to protect the properties and the EA have delivered a pump.

The link below describes the 1.3 million scheme in 2009;

<https://www.somersetcountygazette.co.uk/news/4467938.work-starts-on-creech-st-michael-flood-scheme/>



During Storm Bert 23 to 24 November 2024 residents of Mill Lane we were told they were not scheduled for a pump and that they should be “prepared to flood”. Fortunately, a pump was supplied and averted a significant flooding incident.

However, the Environment Agency have made it clear that in the future the availability of a pump is not guaranteed, even though they are fully aware of the issues with Mill Lane and the impact of flooding in the area (see appendix A). They also suggest an approach to the Somerset Rivers Authority grant scheme as a possible solution.

4.0 Purpose of the Grant

It is proposed that an application to the SRA to fund a project that enables the Parish Council to hold or install a diesel or electric pump that can be deployed during flood incidents.

The grant will be used to purchase the pump and fund the installation of the unit should it be a fixed installation. In addition, the grant will be used to fund a training program to ensure that there are adequate numbers of people able to deploy the pump when needed, should a permanent installation not be viable. The Parish Council will be responsible for the ongoing servicing and maintenance costs associated with the pump.

Further liaison with the EA and SRA is essential to assess the options available.

5.0 Recommendation

That the proposal is approved.

Andrew Williams
Clerk and RFO
30.12.2024

APPENDIX A

Dear Paul

Our Ref: GE37662

Please find our response to your enquiry below.

Im sorry to hear that your neighbour reports having difficulty in recent dealings with the Environment Agency regarding the installation of a temporary pump at Mill Lane Creech St Micheal.

As you mentioned in your email, the Environment Agency has for some years provided the community with a temporary pump during winter months. The community at Mill Lane remains a priority for us, and we will continue to provide a temporary pump if we are able to do so. However, as for any deployment of temporary pumps, whether we are able to do so depends on a number of factors. Our temporary pumps are part of a national stock, so can be deployed anywhere in the country when there is flooding, therefore availability of pumps depends on the flood situation across the whole of England. In addition, we must have staff available to deploy the pumps, and we are reliant on the same field teams for this work as with a number of other critical tasks across Wessex. Unfortunately, we cannot currently delegate operation of the pumps to community volunteers, who would not have the same level of training or safety equipment as our operational staff.

We will undertake best endeavours to deploy pumps to Mill Lane this winter if needed, but unfortunately there is not a guarantee that we would be able to do so. I am sorry if this causes any anxiety or concern, but I hope it also provides some reassurance that we are aware of the issues at Mill Lane and we will continue to assist however our resources allow.

There are other communities in Somerset with similarities to Mill Lane, small settlements that are dependent on flood banks and pumps – who have invested themselves in resilience equipment including pumps. If it is of interest, I can pass your details onto community members in another similar place to see if there is any learning that you might be able to share with one another.

There is a funding pot available to communities through the Somerset Prepared partnership, of which the Environment Agency is a member, for grants up to £5000 for equipment that enables a community to be more resilient to flooding. There is normally a 20% match funding requirement, but applications are looked at on a case-by-case basis. For more information see somerseprepared.org.uk/get-support/funding-support/.

It may also be worth approaching Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA), who invest in flood risk reduction and resilience across Somerset, to see if they might be able to assist: sra@somerset.gov.uk.

SRA's Community Flood Action Fund, which will open for applications on 10th December. Grants This will enable parish and town councils or other constituted groups to bid for £3,000 - £20,000 for small scale works.

Adaptations to properties, many of which are simple measures, are another important aspect of reducing the impacts of flooding. Our flood resilience team provides advice and support for

communities, including sending out a quarterly newsletter with useful information for flood wardens and volunteers. For more information and further support, contact floodwessex@environment-agency.gov.uk.

We trust this response answers your enquiry. Should you require further information please contact us again at wessexenquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

Kind regards

Amanda Dimarco

Environment Agency, Wessex Enquiries, Customer & Engagement Team

03708 506 506.- Wessex Enquiries

Creech St Michael Parish Council

27 December 2024 (2024-2025)

PAYMENTS LIST

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
194	Membership & Subscription Fee	26/11/2024		Unity Trust Bank		Subscription Charges	Geosphere Ltd	S	150.00	30.00	180.00
187	Salaries	27/11/2024		Unity Trust Bank		salary	Karen Hutchings	E	837.49		837.49
189	Salaries	27/11/2024		Unity Trust Bank		salary	Andrew Williams	E	2,644.02		2,644.02
188	Salaries	27/11/2024		Unity Trust Bank		salary	Francis Reading	E	678.19		678.19
189	General Administration Expenses	27/11/2024		Unity Trust Bank		salary	Andrew Williams	E	63.65		63.65
177	Security	28/11/2024		Unity Trust Bank		Locking & Unlocking Service	RelyOn Guarding & Security	S	663.00	132.60	795.60
191	Bank Charges	30/11/2024		Unity Trust Bank		Bank Charges	Unity Trust Bank Plc	E	9.00		9.00
192	Utilities (Electricity)	09/12/2024		Unity Trust Bank		Electricity Charges	Yü Energy	L	11.36	0.57	11.93
195	Utilities (Electricity)	10/12/2024		Unity Trust Bank		Electricity Charges	Yü Energy	L	29.34	1.47	30.81
198	Venue Hire	11/12/2024		Unity Trust Bank		Room Hire Charges	Creech St Michael Village Hall	E	95.00		95.00
197	Venue Hire	11/12/2024		Unity Trust Bank		Room Hire Charges	Creech St Michael Village Hall	E	55.00		55.00
200	Repairs & Maintenance (Buildings)	11/12/2024		Unity Trust Bank		Fire Safety Service	Devon and Somerset Fire Service	S	99.87	19.97	119.84
196	Improvements	11/12/2024		Unity Trust Bank		Replacement Lock	TLS Security Systems Limited	S	512.16	102.43	614.59
199	Donations & Grants	11/12/2024	02.12.2024 item 12	Unity Trust Bank		Grant	Citizens Advice Somerset	E	250.00		250.00
201	Pension Contributions	20/12/2024		Unity Trust Bank		Pension Contribution	NEST	E	189.33		189.33
202	Mobile Phone Charges	23/12/2024		Unity Trust Bank		Mobile Phone Charges	Tesco PLC	S	15.83	3.16	18.99
203	Salaries	24/12/2024		Unity Trust Bank		Salary Payment	Karen Hutchings	E	634.14		634.14
205	Salaries	24/12/2024		Unity Trust Bank		Salary Payment	Andrew Williams	E	2,220.07		2,220.07
204	Salaries	24/12/2024		Unity Trust Bank		Salary Payment	Francis Reading	E	515.71		515.71
Total									9,673.16	290.20	9,963.36

Creech St Michael Parish Council

PAYMENTS LIST

27 December 2024 (2024-2025)

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
193	Postage	27/11/2024		SOLDO Debit card		Postage	Royal Mail Group Ltd	E	41.65		41.65
206	General Administration Expenses	30/11/2024		SOLDO Debit card		Stationery Items	Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd	E	4.00		4.00
207	Bank Charges	02/12/2024		SOLDO Debit card		Bank Charges	SOLDO Software Limited	S	27.00	5.40	32.40
Total									72.65	5.40	78.05

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Receipt No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
21	Rental Charges	09/12/2024		Unity Trust Bank		Charges for use of the Recreati	Ruishton FC	S	150.00	30.00	180.00
22	Lottery	10/12/2024		Unity Trust Bank		Lottery Sales Income	West Somerset Lottery	E	4.00		4.00
Total									154.00	30.00	184.00

Creech St Michael Parish Council
Summary of Receipts and Payments
Summary - Cost Centres Only

Cost Centre	Receipts			Payments			Net Position
	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
Payroll			0.00 (N/A)	54,124.24	38,963.58	15,160.66 (28%)	15,160.66
Recruitment & Training			0.00 (N/A)	1,250.00	766.70	483.30 (38%)	483.30
Administration	160.00	5,290.24	5,130.24 (3206%)	14,050.00	4,391.11	9,658.89 (68%)	14,789.13
Insurance			0.00 (N/A)	4,200.00	3,984.63	215.37 (5%)	215.37
Recreation Park	1,900.00	950.18	-949.82 (-49%)	32,349.00	19,224.07	13,124.93 (40%)	12,175.11
Canal Car Park			0.00 (N/A)	1,500.00	1,065.98	434.02 (28%)	434.02
Allotments	800.00	800.00	0.00 (N/A)	800.00	800.00	0.00 (N/A)	0.00
Phone Boxes & Defibs			0.00 (N/A)	500.00		500.00 (100%)	500.00
Waste Disposal			0.00 (N/A)	3,700.00	1,626.56	2,073.44 (56%)	2,073.44
Burial Ground			0.00 (N/A)	685.00	685.00	0.00 (N/A)	0.00
Bus Stops			0.00 (N/A)	550.00	375.00	175.00 (31%)	175.00
Capital Expenditure			0.00 (N/A)	5,700.00		5,700.00 (100%)	5,700.00
Grants			0.00 (N/A)	4,500.00	550.00	3,950.00 (87%)	3,950.00
Youth Provision			0.00 (N/A)			0.00 (N/A)	0.00
Events		255.16	255.16 (25516%)	1,600.00	455.16	1,144.84 (71%)	1,400.00
CIL		45,409.94	45,409.94 (45409%)		2,394.77	-2,394.77 (-23947%)	43,015.17
Precept	90,551.52	90,552.00	0.48 (0%)			0.00 (N/A)	0.48
Interest Earned			0.00 (N/A)			0.00 (N/A)	0.00
Highways			0.00 (N/A)	15,000.00	116.00	14,884.00 (99%)	14,884.00
NET TOTAL	93,411.52	143,257.52	49,846.00 (53%)	140,508.24	75,398.56	65,109.68 (46%)	114,955.68
Total for ALL Cost Centres		143,257.52			75,398.56		
V.A.T.		185.92			5,173.46		
GROSS TOTAL		143,443.44			80,572.02		



Gideon Amos OBE

Member of Parliament for Taunton & Wellington
House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA
gideon.amos.mp@parliament.uk

Chairs of Parish & Town Councils: -

Bishops Hull, Bickenhall, Bradford on Tone, Burrowbridge, Churchstanton, Corfe, Comeytrowe, Creech St Michael, Curland, Durston, Hatch Beauchamp, Kingston St Mary, Neroche, North Curry, Norton Fitzwarren, Orchard Portman, Otterford, Pitminster, Ruishton, Sampford Arundel, Staple Fitzpaine, Stoke St Gregory, Stoke St Mary, Thornfalcon, Trull, Wellington, Wellington Without, West Buckland, West Hatch, West Monkton

16th December 2024

Dear Chairs,

RE: Project Gigabit and high-speed rural broadband

I am writing to report back to you on the meeting I obtained with the Telecoms Minister, Sir Chris Bryant, in the last week of November. The Minister was joined by Andrew Field, Programme Director for Project Gigabit.

I made the point that, whilst 71.6% of premises in Taunton and Wellington have theoretical broadband speeds of 1 Gigabit per second (source: House of Commons Library), almost all areas of my constituency are in the worst 30%, and the areas of Ruishton, North Curry and the Taunton areas of Galmington and Trull are within the worst 10% in the country for average download speeds (this is because the constituency average is skewed upwards by a small proportion of lines with very high speeds).

The predecessor to the new Project Gigabit was the Superfast Broadband Programme. The latter has had a very chequered history. Phase 1 was completed in Somerset in 2017 but delivered mainly Fibre To The Cabinet (FTTC). Funded by central government with contributions from the European Regional Development Fund and a Local Enterprise Partnership, Phase 2 initially sought another contract with BT Openreach, but failed to reach agreement. A contract was then awarded to Gigaclear to connect up to 47,000 premises with full fibre, but this was cancelled in 2019 after the rollout fell "significantly behind schedule".

New Phase 2 contracts were announced in December 2020. Airband was contracted to deploy full fibre broadband in rural areas of Somerset West and Taunton, parts of Sedgemoor, East Devon, as well as areas of Mid Devon, South Hams and Teignbridge. However, in October 2024, Airband stepped back from its earlier commitments. As a consequence, it will now deliver full fibre to 27,171 premises rather than 55,493. The local government partnership, Connecting Devon and Somerset, has been hampered in its oversight of Airband by a government imposed standard contract, which prevented it from getting the safeguards it wanted from Airband and previous suppliers.

According to CDS, the following areas in my constituency are no longer in the build:

C04 Westonzoyland

Burrowbridge

Website gideonamos.org.uk **Facebook** [Gideon Amos - MP for Taunton and Wellington](#) **X** [gideonj_amos](#) **TikTok** - [gideonamosmp](#)

Whilst Gideon Amos MP will treat as confidential any personal information that you pass on, he will normally allow staff and authorised volunteers to see it if this is needed to help and advise you. He may pass on some of the information to external agencies if this is necessary to help with your case.

C05 Goathurst

Kingston St Mary, West Monkton

C09 Ruishton to Stoke St Gregory

North Curry, Ruishton & Thornfalcon, Creech St Michael, Durston, Stoke St Gregory, Burrowbridge

C11 Taunton

West Buckland, Trull, Bradford on Tone, Bishops Hull, Comeytrowe, Stoke St Mary

C14 Blackdown - Smeatharpe / Bishopswood to M5

Otterford, Churchstanton, Pitminster, West Buckland, Sampford Arundel, Wellington Without

C15 Greater Wellington

Sampford Arundel, Wellington Without, Wellington, West Buckland, Norton Fitzwarren

In responding to my concerns, the Minister and the Programme Director agreed to address the lack of gigabit-capable connections and promised that a contract with Openreach covering our area is expected to be signed in the next few weeks. Whilst I understand this will not initially cover premises included in Airband's contract, I was assured there would be opportunities to build more areas into the contract for delivery, and I have asked Building Digital UK to write to me and to you as Parish Councils directly, as soon as the contract is agreed, to tell me which areas it will cover and how further areas can be added to the contract, together with the timescales involved.

While the parishes of West Hatch, Hatch Beauchamp, Bickenhall, Curland, Staple Fitzpaine, Corfe, Orchard Portman, Stoke St Mary and Pitminster (Cluster 13) remain within Airband's descoped contract, I am keenly aware that my constituents in these areas remain in the dark when it comes to a definitive timetable for connection. Therefore, I will continue to press CDS to provide you with this information.

Gigabit connection is an essential utility like electricity or gas. Without it, rural communities in our part of Somerset will not thrive and those trying to run businesses vital to our local economy will be hamstrung. So I will continue to press the Minister and Project Gigabit to ensure your villages get the attention they deserve after so much failure in previous attempts at a national rollout of faster broadband.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me or my caseworker team. If you would like to discuss the issues raised here or any other matter with me in person, my programme of surgeries is now available online. Please follow the link here - <https://www.gideonamos.org.uk/post/gideon-amos-launches-pub-and-coffee-shop-surgeries>.

Yours sincerely,

