

# CREECH ST MICHAEL PARISH COUNCIL

## Approved Minutes for the Meeting of Creech St Michael Parish Council [CSMPC] held at Creech St Michael Village Hall on **Monday 9th January 2023 at 7:00pm**

### Councillor Attendance

Cllr. Annabelle Peters – Chair	AP	Present	Cllr. Paul Tucker	PT	Present
Cllr. Charlie Cudlip	CC	Present	Cllr. David Griffin	DG	Present
Cllr. Diane Phillips	DP	Present	Cllr. Neil Davidson	ND	Present

**Also Present:** Cllr. David Fothergill (SCC) (from 7.55pm), Cllr. Norman Cavill (SW&T) (from 8.15pm), thirteen (13) members of the public and Andrew Williams, CSM Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer.

### Meeting started at 7:02pm

1.0	<b>Chair's welcome</b>
	AP welcomed all Councillors and members of the public to the meeting.
2.0	<b>Public Question time</b> - Questions asked by the Public and Press will be noted.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A spokesperson for residents living in the North End area of Creech St Michael spoke in respect of the proposed development by Gladman at North end and confirmed that the resident's group objected to the development.</li> <li>• The spokesperson asked if the Parish Council would consider engaging the services of an independent planning consultant. DP confirmed that once the formal application had been received it was something that would be considered by the Parish Council.</li> <li>• The spokesperson confirmed that a meeting was held on the 2nd of January 2023 and was attended by 130 people. None of the people at the meeting supported the proposed development and it was agreed at that meeting that residents would actively object to any formal planning application.</li> <li>• The spokesperson sought support from the Parish Council in their attempts to object to any planning application.</li> <li>• A member of the public representing the Ham Conservation Group (HCG), an organisation with more than 50 members, spoke against the planning application 14/22/0051.</li> <li>• The HCG object to the planning application in principle and reported that more than 100 objections has already been lodged with approximately 60% of households within the village of Ham lodging objections.</li> <li>• The HCG's specific objections are; the unsuitability of the site, adjoining both the water treatment works and the village of Ham which will be impacted significantly by the size and scale of the development; the proposal is the largest of all applications for a solar power farm being considered by Somerset West and Taunton Council and it will have one of the highest panels and the largest surface area of panels in the district, making the site visible from all surrounding areas; battery storage will consist of the equivalent of 10 shipping container size units with 32 air conditioning units sited atop and 14 transformer and inverter units, 84 inline transformers and 2 substations that are significant in size and scale. All of these units will generate noise and the member of public criticised the current noise</li> </ul>

	<p>assessment which was based on half the proposed battery storage units and 16 air conditioning units; The proposed site straddles a public right of way; the proposed site is partly located on flood zone 2 land and 67% of the site is classified as grade 3a Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land; the closest property to the development is within 70 meters and the majority of the village falls within 300 to 400 meters; It was felt that the hedge screening would be inadequate and would result in the site being visible from surrounding areas; access to the site is from a highway that is prone to flooding; it was noted that the fire risk presented by the equipment on site was significant, with the potential for local rivers to be contaminated as a result of actions to treat any fire incident; the site as unsuitable to provide access for fire service vehicles and equipment; the errors and omissions within the application were highlighted and included a number of inaccurate statements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The HCG representative confirmed the view that the site had been selected by the developer because of its proximity to the sub-station at Creech St Michael.</li> <li>• DP commended the HCG representative for the work undertaken and for the information that had been provided to the meeting.</li> <li>• DG asked if the representative could clarify the current position on proposed legislation covering battery storage. A member of the public confirmed that legislation was progressing through the House of Commons and that national guidance was in the process of being developed for Fire Chiefs.</li> </ul>
3.0	<b>To receive County and District Councillors' Reports</b>
	<p>Verbal reports were provided out of order of the agenda to facilitate the arrival of Cllr. Fothergill and Cllr. Cavill.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllr. Fothergill agreed to circulate his report via email to the Clerk and RFO for onward distribution.</li> <li>• Cllr. Fothergill raised the issue of a bus shelter for Creech Heathfield, which had been previously considered by the Parish Council. A resident of Creech Heathfield had contacted Cllr. Fothergill to request that the matter be raised again. Cllr. Fothergill agreed to pass the details to the Clerk and RFO.</li> <li>• Cllr. Cavill provided an update on the Local Government Reorganisation, specifically the planning committee setup. Local plans will continue to be used whilst a new strategic plan is developed by the unitary authority. Cllr. Cavill recommended that the Parish Council update its Neighbourhood Plan.</li> <li>• The geographical areas for the LCNs will be published the following day.</li> <li>• The IT system to support the Local Government reorganisation is being implemented shortly and will result in some short-term disruption to services.</li> <li>• Cllr. Cavill reported on the local support for Ukrainian refugees and the work being undertaken by staff at the local authorities. Confirmed arrivals in Somerset are currently at 1,360 and 985 housed within the county. This has resulted in significant amounts of work at a local level, all of which has been undertaken by local teams. Cllr. Cavill highlighted that there were grants available to support transport needs for refugees.</li> </ul>
4.0	<b>To receive any apologies for absence</b>
	<p>Apologies were received from Cllr. Ken Hunt.</p> <p>The Clerk and RFO noted that this was the third consecutive absence reported for Cllr. Hunt. Cllr. Hunt had been notified of this via email.</p>
5.0	<b>Declarations of Interests</b>
	<b>4.1 Declarations of Individual Members</b>
	None
	<b>4.2 Dispensation Request</b>

	A dispensation request had been received from AP. The request relates to agenda item 9 and the Clerk and RFO recommended that the dispensation request be granted under Standing order 13 (h) (ii) as granting the dispensation was in the interests of persons living in the Parish Council's area.				
	<b>Prop: ND</b>	<b>Sec: DP</b>	<b>In Favour: 5</b>	<b>Against: 0</b>	<b>Abstain: 1</b>
6.0	<b>Parish Council Vacancies</b>				
	No applications have been received. AP asked the members of the public present, to make others aware of the vacancies.				
7.0	<b>Minutes</b>				
	7.1. to <b>Review and Approve</b> the minutes of the meeting held on 5 <sup>th</sup> December 2022. [M]				
	All present confirmed that they had received the minutes of the meeting held on 5 <sup>th</sup> of December 2022.  Cllrs. agreed the minutes of the meeting held on the 5 <sup>th</sup> of December 2022. The Chair signed a copy of the minutes for the records.				
	<b>Prop: AP</b>	<b>Sec: DP</b>	<b>In Favour: 4</b>	<b>Against: 0</b>	<b>Abstain: 2</b>
8.0	<b>Review and Monitor the Actions Outstanding from Past Meetings</b> – See Appendix A for details of action points and progress toward the completion of each action.				
9.0	<b>Planning Applications</b> – to Consider and Make Recommendations to be passed to the relevant authority on the following Planning Applications (links to the relevant application are available via the planning reference). [M]				
	<b>14/22/0051[V]</b>				
	Installation and operation of solar farm and energy storage system with associated works, equipment and infrastructure on land at Ham Farm, Ham, Creech St Michael.  DP had circulated a summary of issues relating to the planning application and described the key points of objection as being. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscape – that the proposal runs contrary to the Taunton Deane Core Strategy.</li> <li>• Visual Impact Assessment – the assessment is flawed and incomplete.</li> <li>• National Policy – the application is contrary to national policy regarding Best and Most Versatile Land.</li> <li>• Rights of Way – the impact of the development on the rights of way in the area.</li> <li>• Access Concerns – issues with access to the site via highways that are prone to flooding.</li> <li>• Heritage assets – the negative impact of the development on the village's heritage assets.</li> <li>• Noise – the impact of the noise on the local community and the fact that the noise assessment is inaccurate.</li> </ul> It was agreed that the Parish Council would object in principle to the planning application.				
	<b>Prop: AP</b>	<b>Sec: DG</b>	<b>In Favour: 6</b>	<b>Against: 0</b>	<b>Abstain: 0</b>
	<b>14/22/0045 [V]</b>				
	Erection of a first floor extension over annexe to include a balcony at Tone Villa, St Michael Road, Creech St Michael.  DP recommended that the application was supported. It was agreed that the Parish Council had no objections to the application.				

	<b>Prop: DP</b>	<b>Sec: DG</b>	<b>In Favour: 6</b>	<b>Against: 0</b>	<b>Abstain: 0</b>
	<b>14/22/0044 [V]</b>				
	Erection of a two storey extension to the rear of Mill Cottage, North End, Creech St Michael.  DP recommended that the application was supported. It was agreed that the Parish Council had no objections to the application.				
	<b>Prop: DP</b>	<b>Sec: DG</b>	<b>In Favour: 6</b>	<b>Against: 0</b>	<b>Abstain: 0</b>
	<b>Items for Decision</b>				
10.0	<p><b>Planning Consultation</b> – to consider and make recommendations for a response to the consultation process for the proposed development at North end by Gladman. [V] DP outlined a number of concerns regarding the proposed development at North End.</p> <p>CC recommended that the Parish Council refrains from making specific comment on the proposed development until such time as a formal application is received.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Parish Council would respond to the consultation with an objection to the proposed development and would wait for any planning application to be received.</p>				
	<b>Prop: AP</b>	<b>Sec: DP</b>	<b>In Favour: 6</b>	<b>Against: 0</b>	<b>Abstain: 0</b>
11.0	<p><b>Budget and Precept 2023/24</b> – to consider and approve the budget and precept request for the 2023/24 year. [V]</p> <p>DG introduced the agenda item. The Clerk and RFO provided a summary of the key elements of the budget and precept request. The outline budget had been considered and approved by the Parish Council Finance Committee at a meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December 2022.</p> <p>It was proposed that the precept request would be increased in line with inflation at a rate of 9.6% making the precept for 2023/24 £74,528.00 which equates to £64.81 per year for the average Band D property in the Parish. It was projected that reserves held by the Parish Council will have decreased at the end of the 2022/23 financial year by approximately £34,000.00 and by a further £27,500.00 at the end of the 2023/24 year.</p> <p>The Clerk and RFO stressed the need for the Parish Council to increase sources of income other than the precept.</p> <p>ND expressed concern at the rate of decline in the reserves held by the Parish Council and that if this was not addressed, the reserves would diminish to a level that was not acceptable. The Clerk and RFO agreed that at current levels, the precept was not adequate to replenish the reserves.</p> <p>ND asked if there was the opportunity to apply for and secure grant funding to support the work of the Parish Council and whether these could be used to fund investment in the community.</p>				
	<b>Prop: AP</b>	<b>Sec: DG</b>	<b>In Favour: 6</b>	<b>Against: 0</b>	<b>Abstain: 0</b>
12.0	Finance – to <b>review and approve</b> the Financial Transaction Report. [V]				

	The Financial Transaction report was approved. See <b>Appendix B</b> for a list of all payments. The Chair signed a copy of the report for the records.				
	<b>Prop: AP</b>	<b>Sec: DP</b>	<b>In Favour: 6</b>	<b>Against: 0</b>	<b>Abstain: 0</b>
13.0	<p><b>Coronation Celebrations</b> – to approve a proposal to lead the organisation of community celebrations for His Majesty The King’s Coronation. <b>[M]</b></p> <p>AP proposed that the Parish Council take the lead role in organising celebrations for The King’s Coronation, incorporating the Baptist Church, Village Hall and the Anglican Church. An event, along the lines of a large public tea-party could provide a focus for the community.</p> <p>The proposal to progress plans for an event was agreed.</p>				
	<b>Prop: AP</b>	<b>Sec: DP</b>	<b>In Favour: 6</b>	<b>Against: 0</b>	<b>Abstain: 0</b>
	<b>Updates from Committees, Panels and Working Groups</b>				
16.0	<b>Staffing Committee</b>				
	16.1 Update on applications for the role of Grounds and Maintenance Operative.				
	The Clerk and RFO reported that two applications for the post of Grounds and Maintenance Operative had been received to date and the selection process would be undertaken by the end of January 2023.				
17.0	<b>Finance Committee</b>				
	17.1. Expenditure against budget year-to-date.				
	The Clerk and RFO reported that expenditure to date was on profile and there had been no significant variations against budgeted income or expenditure.				
18.0	<b>Newsletter Working Group</b>				
	<p>AP reported that there were issues distributing the newsletter within the community. In general feedback had been positive.</p> <p>It was agreed that there was a need to find an alternative way to distribute the newsletter to all households. DG suggested that the school be approached and asked if they could distribute the newsletter via the pupils.</p>				
	<b>Other Matters</b>				
20.0	<b>Correspondence</b>				
	<p>AP raised the matter of the DPD Click and Collect unit that had appeared outside the store in the centre of Creech St Michael.</p> <p>The Clerk and RFO highlighted that the matter had been previously identified by CC and that the Clerk and RFO had reported the matter to Planning enforcement at Somerset West and Taunton. They were investigating the matter.</p>				
21.0	<b>New Matters to be Carried Forward</b>				
	None.				
22.0	<b>Council to Decide if to Exclude Members of the Public and Press for the Following Item(s)</b> <b>[M]</b>				

	None.
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The meeting ended at 8.54pm

[M] = 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:

Monday 06 February 2023	at 7pm in the CSM Village Hall
Monday 06 March 2023	at 7pm in the CSM Village Hall
Monday 03 April 2023	at 7pm in the CSM Village Hall