



Chew Stoke Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 2nd February 2023 at 7.30 pm in The Village Hall, Chew Stoke.

Present: Cllrs Dick Raffety (Chair), Nicola Ainger, Nick Baker, James Edgerton, Steven Read and Steve Hicks.

Ward Councillor Karen Warrington.

Clerk: Sarah-Jane Streatfeild-James

Minutes: 2023/02

1. **Apologies:** Cllrs Ali Cunningham and Carol Dyer.
2. **Public participation** – 11 members of the public attended to discuss the planning applications below, or contribute to the discussion about the Westaway fields.
3. **Declarations of interest** – none
4. **To accept the minutes of the meeting held on January 5th 2023**, unanimously agreed. A copy was given to the Chair to sign and returned to the Clerk.
5. **Ward Councillors report:** B&NES are currently discussing the budget and looking for savings of £14m. Also noted changes to bus services from April, some routes will be lost, but a 'direct response transport', (DRT) to be piloted in the area, this service is on demand and will take residents to arterial bus routes.
6. **Planning applications:**
 - i) Reference number: **23/00202/FUL** Site location: **26 Dairy Way, Chew Stoke, BS40 8UP** Description of proposal: Convert existing bathroom window to bedroom window on side elevation. Window to be enlarged and opaque glass to be replaced with transparent. *No comment.*
 - ii) Reference number: **22/04892/FUL** Site location: **Parcel 2727 Kingshill Lane, Chew Stoke.** Description of proposal: **Erection of rural workers dwelling in association with the equestrian business on site following removal of a temporary mobile**

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home. Further details about the cross-sections and height of the proposed build were provided prior to the meeting. However the report from the Rural Consultant is yet to be provided, and evidence of financial growth from the 2022 accounts have not yet been seen by the Parish Council. The PC would also like any development to be subject to an agricultural tie. It was noted the Mendip AONB have asked for a number of terms to be tightened. The PC also remain concerned about light spill from the roof windows and question the correct ongoing use of automatic blinds. The PC are minded to support the application but still need further information as noted above, agreed to discuss at the March meeting when the required information should be available.

7. The following matters were resolved:

- i) An update was received from Bath & West Community Energy (BWCE) following a request by them to review the opportunity to install solar panels in the top half of the Westaway fields. The reason to consult us now is because there are some changes to the opportunities, firstly the use of agrivoltaics (solar panels situated on high (3.6-8m) posts that allow the land below to be farmed) is an emerging practice. BWCE also currently have a 'slot' reserved to connect any power from the fields to the national grid, this opportunity will be lost in the next year or so if not taken up. The PC may have to wait a very long for further grid connection opportunities.

Prior to the meeting information about the grading of the land was sent to BWCE, a survey was commissioned but the current farmer in January 22. This report classified the land as Grade 3A, of good quality and not normally used for solar installations. BWCE stated they would not be looking to put ground level solar panels on this field now unless the Parish Council is keen to pursue it, and we consult the community and get agreement. BWCE are keen to undertake a community consultation and in so doing recoup a £40K grant, however as the landowners, the parish council need to be clear of their views on the use of the land prior to asking for residents' views. Members of the Westaway Working Group agreed it is difficult to weigh up the benefits of farming the land against solar installation, but highlighted we must remember the wishes of Brian Westaway that the land is not developed. In the view of the Working Group fundamentally this is a farming community with valuable good quality land, and asked if solar panels could not be put on more buildings? Consideration must be given to the possibility that panels can be turned off in summer if there is too much sunshine – 'curtailment'- resulting in no income.

BWCE were keen to put solar panels on this field, and plans have shown there to be nowhere else suitable in the parish. Although the land is 3a, BWCE felt it could still be possible to get planning permission, and a feasibility study would address this. The PC remain very keen to explore other possible sites for PV panels within the parish if possible, agreed to contact Bristol Water again, they have just been taken over by South West Water so it may be timely to revisit the option of a PV array on their land at this stage. John White from AGM Property Consultants was in attendance at the meeting and agreed to contact BWCE outside the meeting to discuss other possible sites. Agreed the councillors required further time to research

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and discuss the option of agrivoltaics prior to the next Parish Council meeting, to meet via Zoom and add a motion regarding a decision to the agenda for the March meeting.

- ii) A recent road safety incident has highlighted the dangers of the roads, and walking in the village. There are either inadequate and unsafe pavements or in places no pavements at all. It was noted the village hosts the only secondary school in the area and a primary school. Following a productive discussion, agreed to the following actions:
 - o Devise a reporting form on google docs for residents to complete to give evidence of dangerous incidents or near misses.
 - o Clerk to contact N Somerset to find out more about their installation of variable speed check cameras that they have recently installed in Dundry.
 - o Contact Bristol Airport for assistance with funding for more road safety measures.
 - o Ask B&NES for white lines to be painted down the edges of Stoke Hill and Pagans Hill (gives the impression the road is narrower than it is).
- iii) Village Hall lease update- the PCC are reviewing the lease, awaiting update from the PC solicitors.
- iv) Road safety paintings designed by the children at Chew Stoke Church School were judged by the councillors and a winner from KS1 and KS2 were selected. Clerk to return paintings to the school and inform the Deputy Headteacher of the winners.
- v) The following policies were approved and adopted:
 - o Training and Development policy,
 - o Subject Access Request Procedure and
 - o Retention of Documents

8. Finance:

- i) To note standing orders:
 SJ Streatfeild-James - clerks salary (January)
 Hugo King – ground maintenance salary (January)

ii) The following online payments were agreed:

Date	Item	Payee	Net	VAT	Total
28.12.22	HP Ink (printing)	SJ Streatfeild-James	£4.17	£0.83	£5.00
25.11.22	Quarterly website support & backup	JacksonBone	£60.00	£12.00	£72.00

9. Matters of report:

- i) The New Local Plan workshop was held on 23rd Jan. B&NES sought views on the rural aspect in B&NES, including issues such as community, farming, multigenerational living, transport. Considered there is currently not enough emphasis on the climate emergency in the Chew Valley Neighbourhood Plan and this will need including in the update.
- ii) The Community Shop Group have submitted an offer to hire the shop space, no further update at present.

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- iii) To note an electrical supply has been reinstated at the Happy Box, an AC/DC supply will be fitted next week.
- iv) Work has been done by B&NES to repair the footpath in Mill Lane, heavy rainfall had washed away recently added stones exposing the flexi-pipe and drain, making it hazardous.
- v) The next Clean & Green Week is the w/c 13th Feb, any issues are being reported to B&NES via Fixmystreet in advance of the week. The village groundsmen have cleared Stoke Hill pavement of leaves and debris, however the overhanging trees towards the lower end of the road require assessment and maintenance as does the bank which requires being dug back to widen the pavement, Clerk to contact landowner to advise that maintenance is required to these areas to as a matter of urgency.
- vi) The Clerk has attended a B&NES election briefing. To publicise details about the need for voter ID this year. To also promote the vacancy on the council and encourage residents to consider standing for election.
- vii) Information has been received about changes to the local bus service, including the loss of some routes through Chew Stoke and the introduction of an on-demand minibus service to take people to the main arterial routes. To communicate information to residents.
- viii) Rectory Field update – Cllr Baker is reviewing the trees with a resident and the tree surveyor. Also reviewing idea about the tree nursery in the corner near the road and the stream. To speak to an engineer regarding the installation of the ram pump.
- ix) Recreational Trail update – Cllr Baker has been in contact with Kirsty Dunford from Bristol Water about a couple of issues regarding maintenance, of which B&NES have responsibility. Aiming to establish good links with Bristol Water, to have a good working relationship. BW was taken over by Southwest Water on 1st Feb 23.
- x) The Local Plan Partial Update has now been adopted by B&NES.

Meeting ended at 9.40pm

Next meeting Thursday 2nd March 2023 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

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