

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SHEPTON MONTAGUE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL, SHEPTON MONTAGUE ON TUESDAY MAY 28th
2019 AT 7.30pm**

Draft minutes for approval at the next meeting.

Present: Andrew Wiley (Chair), Paul Williams, Richard Reed, Julia Hunter, Oliver Dowding, Margaret Hill (Clerk), Robin Bastable (District Councillor) and 8 members of the Parish.

1. **Apologies for absence:** were received from Anna Groskop, County Councillor.
2. **Declarations of Interest:** None.
3. **Minutes of last meeting:** were signed as a correct record.
4. **Matters Arising:**
 - **Speeding:** P.C.S.O. Tim Russell had responded to the latest request to say that he was waiting for the speed gun to be recalibrated. **Action:** Clerk to chase up.
 - **New clerk:** the Chair reported that a suitable clerk had been found and the post would be offered to her officially, after which the appointment would be confirmed to Council.
 - **The Newt in Somerset:** was now open. Increased traffic had already been observed heading for The Newt via Cary Edge Lane and not by the signed route. It was noted that The Newt postcode would bring visitors using SatNav down Cattle Hill and this was not what was promised. A 'No Access to The Newt' sign was needed at the top of Cattle Hill to keep motorists on the A371. **Action:** Clerk to write to Sue Seager.
5. **Planning Application no. 19/01133/FUL The erection of a single dwelling, access, landscaping and ancillary works. Land North of Stoke Farm, Barrow Water Lane, Stoney Stoke, BA9 8HR**

The application was discussed and comments invited from the Applicant and from the floor. It was resolved to send the following observations to Planning:

The house plan replaces an existing permission to build a substantial house close to the existing farmhouse and buildings. The Parish Council has no objections to the proposed house as it is sited further north and on a lower site making it less intrusive and visible.

There are distinct problems however with the proposed access onto the B3081.

The original farm house for Stoke Farm became separated from most of the land when this section of the B3081 was built. Being a dairy farm the cows would cross the road via the tracks opposite the buildings to get to the fields. Sometime in the 70's the farmer relocated the farm to its current site and created the current access from Barrow Lane. (The old buildings were converted into two dwellings – Manor Barn and Dairy Barn.)

The application refers repeatedly and misleadingly to these cow tracks as 'existing access' but they have not been used for at least 35 years, and with good reason:

there is minimal visibility and they would be very dangerous. The existing access is from Barrow Lane where it was wisely put.

There have been numerous accidents on this stretch of B3081 both at the Park Wall Cottage bend and in the dip outside Manor Barn/Dairy Barn. One recent summer saw 10 crashes within 3 weeks. The telephone pole has been down twice in recent years. In the 4 years since the occupants of Dairy Cottage have lived there, they have counted 25 accidents. Many of these accidents are not reported to the police but result in damage to residents' hedges and fences and potentially their livestock, and of course danger to life.

This road now carries an ever increasing volume of traffic due to Hauser and Wirth, The Newt in Somerset and other local attractions.

The National speed limit applies to this stretch of road. The 'Technical Note' provided in the application by Key Transport Consultants Ltd does not include a speed survey and their calculations show that the available visibility at the proposed new access point requires traffic to be travelling below 60mph (57mph and 54mph). They confirm that the calculated stopping distances at the cow track access points are worse but a 'least worst' scenario is not a sensible way forward and seems based on the false premise of 'better than the existing'.

The proposal ignores the existing access which is the perfectly satisfactory and safe access off Barrow Lane and would seek to create a dangerous new access right between two notorious accident black spots, thus adding to the catalogue of accidents on this stretch of road, only one or two of which have involved fatalities so far.

Council has tried for years to improve the safety of this section of road with various signage, mainly to no avail. Adding a further hazard to the zone would be extremely unwelcome and unwise.

N.B. The application states incorrectly that there are no listed buildings nearby. In fact Manor Farm House, Stoney Stoke, is a listed building.

6. Correspondence:

- **V.E. day:** A letter had been received from SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity, outlining plans for VE Day 75 being organised to celebrate and commemorate the 75th anniversary of VE Day. Andrew said he would contact Jeremy Collyer as Churchwarden, regarding bellringing (8th May) and a church service (10th May) and suggested that the Village Hall Committee might want to consider some sort of function on Saturday 9th May, in line with SSAFA's suggestion. Does anyone in the village play the bagpipes?
- **Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group:** Had sent information about 'Fit for Life'.
- **Update from police:** with particular success regarding 'County Lines' drug problems.
- **Traffic incident in Higher Shepton:** Council had been copied in to an email to Anna Groskop from the owner of 1 Higher Farm Cottage requesting action to prevent large vehicles trying to negotiate the road past Higher Farm as the bend at the end is too sharp for them. The occupant of 1 Higher Farm Cottage was at the meeting and described the accident that had occurred on 20th May that had damaged the side of the house. It had

been suggested that in order to discourage lorries from taking this small stretch of road when actually heading for the A371, a sign saying 'HGV's Left' be placed at the fork in the road to direct them along the left side of the triangle. It was also suggested that these lorries may be associated with Keen's on Verrington Lane. **Action:** Clerk to contact Highways. Oliver will approach Keen's.

7. **A.O.B.** Council would like to thank Richard Ellis, outgoing Chair, for his excellent Chairmanship of the Parish Council and hard work on behalf of the Parish.

8. Open discussion

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.12 pm.

Chairman _____ Date _____