SOUTH STOKE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Special Parish Council Meeting held on 21st July 2014 at 6:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall

Present: **Mr. G. Davis (Clerk)**
Mr. M. Devenish (Chair)
Mr. P. Dawson
Mrs. S. Dustin
Mr. T. Geake
Mr. R. Hellard (Vice Chair)
Mrs. J. John
Mr. C. Winpenny

1. B&NES Core Strategy Process

To re-consider the merits and possible outcomes of a legal challenge to the Bath and North East Somerset Core Strategy process.

Robert Hellard explained that SOBA (South of Bath Alliance) were keen to take advice on a possible legal challenge to the Bath and North East Somerset Core Strategy process, and had requested that both South Stoke Parish Council and Combe Hay Parish Council consider committing funds to such an action, on the basis that the Protect Bath organisation would also meet half of the cost.

It was noted that a Parish Council cannot itself instigate Judicial Review proceedings against another Council but can give funds to support another's action. So neither Parish Council could prosecute any such action, and it would be for an individual from SOBA or Protect Bath to do so.

It was reported that Combe Hay Parish Council agreed not to commit any funds to the seeking of an opinion concerning a possible legal challenge by Judicial Review, and not to contribute Public Money to the claiming of a Judicial Review, unless the opinion was that such a challenge had an extremely high chance of success.

Robert Hellard outlined the possible outcomes from such proceedings and the likely costs of each phase, and these were discussed.

The view was expressed by many of the councillors that it would be irresponsible for the Parish Council to support the start of the process unless a) there was a real possibility of SOBA or Protect Bath being able to take this through to a conclusion and b) there was a very real chance of a successful result without the significant risk of handing the developers a second chance to build even more houses on the Plateau.

The Parish Council felt that the risk/benefit balance weighed heavily against a successful outcome. The Parish Council therefore resolved not to commit funds to any part of the proposed process and this motion was carried by vote, with six councillors voting to support the motion, and one abstention.

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