

Annual Meeting of Residents

hosted by Severn Stoke & Croome D'Abitot Parish Council

Wed **20th March 2024**, 7.30pm
Meeting at **St Denys' Church, Severn Stoke**



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Residents and Councillors, Notice is hereby given that the annual meeting of residents of Severn Stoke and Croome d'Abitot parish areas will be held on Wednesday **20th March 2024 at 7.30pm** at St Denys' Church, Severn Stoke village. Lisa Stevens, Clerk & Resp. Financial Officer, 07950256363, severnstokeandcda@gmail.com

This is a meeting of the parish electors organised by the Parish Council at the request of residents. Electors (residents) freely contribute to the agenda. This meeting is an opportunity to celebrate local activities and debates current issues. It is an opportunity for parishioners on the electoral roll to raise any matters of concern to them that relates to their local community. It would be helpful to have written notice of any matters to be raised but it is not essential. (Annual Parish Meetings must be held between 1st March and 1st June each year).

a.	7.30pm start. Option for vote of a Chair for this meeting. <i>If residents do not nominate a Chair, then the parish council will Chair as a courtesy.</i> Introductions, points of order, apologies & declarations of interests.
b.	Open Forum. Residents may raise any matter without notice.
c.	Flood bund. The Environment Agency has been invited.
d.	Bell ringing. Ringing Master at St Mary's Church Kempsey. Intro on Bell Ringing at St Denys', explain plans for ringing there for Sunday Services, weddings and for other events as well.
e.	Footpath warden volunteer opportunities. Opportunity for a resident volunteer to become the parish council footpaths warden. A request for volunteers please, made by the Parish Council. We need one or more appointed residents to walk all the rights of way in the parish once a year and complete a survey of their condition, note any broken stiles/gates/finger posts and note any that need clearance of vegetation. This will allow the parish council to better report and chase action by the County Council. Training will be provided for this volunteer opportunity by the County Council, based at the Worcester Woods Country Park.
f.	Biodiversity. A notice from the Parish Council to residents. To note with no Motion: All parish councils are now legally required to consider biodiversity in all projects and also in all planning application responses. This reflects the general increased concern amongst the population of climate change and species decline. As a first step, the Parish Council is approaching farmers and land owners with an introduction letter and survey. Councillors see this as an opportunity to engage and get a bit of a feel for what might already be going on (eg encouraging 'rewilding'). Residents who also want to receive this survey or who have been conducting their own projects to increase biodiversity, are encouraged to take part.
g.	Ketch Housing. Resident request that the permitted housing at the Ketch A38 roundabout be subject to a retrospective internal enquiry at Malvern Hills District Council: This 3 story housing development not being in any way suitable for this location, a blight on the surrounding countryside and, the adjacent traffic and pollution being of likely significant deterrent to the residents who will live there. Motion: to write to Vic Allison, Chief Exec, MHDC. and to copy in Harriet Baldwin MP. Motion: delegate to the Parish Clerk to take action unless a resident wishes to take this on.

Annual Meeting of Residents agenda continued.

h.	A report has been invited from the County and District Councillors . Max 3 mins each please.
i.	A report has been invited from St Denys' .
j.	A report has been invited from the Parish Hall Committee .
k.	A report has been invited from the Parish Council and Lengthsman . Max 3 mins each please.
l.	A report has been invited from our PCSOs .
m.	A report has been invited from the National Trust .
n.	8.30pm approx. AOB and closing questions.
Close of resident's annual meeting and opening of Parish Council meeting.	
1.	Cllr's declarations of interest if required.
2.	To express condolences on the passing of long serving Council Chair Hugh Hanmer.
3.	Planning matters a. to receive and consider a response to any planning matters that have an expiry date before the next scheduled parish council meeting (22 nd May).
4.	Annual Review of Standing Orders and Committees/Working Parties. i. Motion for Standing Orders to be amended. Currently states: "A meeting shall not exceed a period of 3 hours". Motion to be proposed: "A meeting shall not exceed a period of 2 hours with non-urgent matters deferred to the next full parish council meeting". ii. Motion to adopt 'Working Party Terms of Ref' & 'Committees Terms of Ref'. Appendix D . iii. To note (and take as read) existing Committee/Working Party/Reps. Appendix B . iv. To note (and take as read) the current process for handling planning applications. Appendix A . v. Motion for projects/third parties to submit a report prior to meeting commencement. vi. Motion that regular items (eg. VAS and items of news/correspondence) be distributed to the Councillors for info and listed in the Minutes, but not dedicated meeting time unless a decision is required.
5.	Community Engagement Strategy (draft). Appendix C . Clerk to note any amendments received prior to meeting and Motion to adopt in principle and to invite public comment and suggestions to be received via email to the Clerk.
6.	Finance a. To consider/motion to approve payment of accounts made in the previous month. App 1. b. To consider/ to approve payment of outstanding accounts this month 2024. App 2. c. To receive the latest bank reconciliation .
7.	Date of next parish council meeting. 22 nd May 7.30pm SOQ room at Croome National Trust visitor centre

Reminder this meeting is at St Denys' Church

**If you cannot attend this meeting
why not contact the Clerk, Lisa Stevens
to ask for a copy of the minutes of the meeting:**

severnstokeandcda@gmail.com

07950256363

Appendix A. For public visibility and inspection. The current procedure for handling planning applications by this parish council

- a) Planning application is received from MHDC and the Clerk downloads all associated paperwork and distributes to councillors via email.
 - b) Councillors inspect the application and ask the Clerk to obtain clarification on questions as may be.
 - c) Declarations of interest are received from the Councillors by the Clerk and added to the agenda for approval and entry into the Register of Declarations.
 - d) Correspondence received on planning matters from the public is distributed to Councillors with sensitive/personal info redacted.
 - e) If Councillors confirm that they are minded to raise matters for support/objection, the Clerk inspects the general list of material considerations on the .Gov Planning Portal and advises if appropriate.
 - f) Councillors are permitted to raise historical/factual info for the attention of all councillors via email.
 - g) Clerk will request an extension to the deadline for response by the Parish Council if required but Councillors do not assume that this will be granted. In the event of this not being granted, Councillors consider by email whether an extraordinary meeting in public is required. In the event where no correspondence from the public is received and where Councillors cannot find a material consideration to be debated, the Clerk is delegated to respond to MHDC as such.
 - h) Councillors will take note of any new legislation or regulations, changes in policy or other developments affecting the planning process, and any briefings received, and participate in any relevant training.
 - h) No summary report is produced by the Clerk, but after receiving all the above via email in conversation format, Councillors attend the Full Parish Council meeting (every two months) ready receive information/questions via Public Open Forum, to promptly summarise findings and vote on a motion to Support, Object or Comment.
 - i) None of the above constitutes a predetermination since any/all Support/Objections are raised at full parish council and can be debated in public. 'Predetermination occurs where someone has a closed mind, with the effect that they are unable to apply their judgment fully and properly to an issue requiring a decision'.
- end-

Appendix B - Current Committee Membership/Working Party/Representatives.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| - Finance Committee | - 3 reps. RG, LF, SF |
| - Planning Advisory Committee | - All Cllrs. |
| - Staffing Committee | - 4 reps. LF, PP. 2 vacancies. |
| - Tarmac Liaison Committee | - 1 rep plus Clerk invited. LF |
| - Parish Hall Representatives | - 2 reps (Hall Constitution) (Not a PC group) SF. 1 Vacancy |
| - CALC Representative | - 1 rep. normally the Chair. LF |
| - VAS caretakers working party | - RG, LF and SB. |
| - Biodiversity Working Party | - Proposed to be created in mid 2024. |

Appendix C

Draft Severn Stoke and Croome d’Abitot Parish Council Community Engagement Strategy

1. Introduction

1.1 A community engagement strategy guides us and our partners (including Malvern Hills District Council, Worcestershire County Council, our PCSOs, neighbouring parish councils and key community groups such as the Hall Committee, Flood Action Groups, CiCs, Savills and, The National Trust) on how we engage with our communities, interested people and organisations in the services this parish council provides.

2. Aims and Objectives

2.2 It’s important for everyone to have the opportunity to get involved and have their say in local issues that affect or interest them. Severn Stoke and Croome d’Abitot Parish Council is committed to engaging residents by encouraging them to become actively involved in decisions that affect them and the community, to delivering better services and to improving the quality of life of residents by creating a more active and informed community. Severn Stoke and Croome d’Abitot Parish Council will do this by ensuring access to relevant information to allow them to contribute by an exchange of information to the decision-making process.

2.3 The aim of the Community Engagement Strategy is to:

- To work with all members of the community by keeping them informed of events within their locality,
- To improve the way in which the Council communicates with members of the community,
- To listen to the views of residents on important issues,

NB. Listen to the community. Lots of council communication is about ‘broadcasting’ information, but listening is also crucial. We will ask questions in person, on social media or via council newsletters. We will gather feedback through surveys that reach and engage different parts of the community. We will feed back what people said and explain what steps we’re taking as a result. This will help us understand the community’s needs and concerns and demonstrate that we are a council that listens.

- To use these views to deliver better services,
- To improve the long-term social, economic and environmental well-being of residents,
- To plan future development of the parish in accordance with community priorities and needs.
- To consider key audiences and key messages. What do you want the community to know and understand about the council? What are your council priorities, services and facilities and how can we communicate these effectively? Which audiences are you trying to communicate those messages to?

3. Community Engagement

3.1 Severn Stoke and Croome d’Abitot Parish Council and its partners will inform, consult and involve the community in many ways to influence local services. It will do this through various methods including:

- Agenda and minutes to be placed on the website and on notice boards.
- Calendar of Meetings via the website and noticeboards
- Annual Report and Accounts available at the Annual Meeting, website and summarised on notice boards.
- Any Surveys will be available, both electronic and paper based.
- Website. This parish council is currently in the process of setting up a new website. Our council website will be designed to provide easy access to information about council services, policies, and procedures. We know that providing access to information can help build trust in the community. We will signpost to the website through all our other communications channels, including social media.
- Public Meetings.
- Encouraging more public participation at Parish Council meetings.
- Meeting with local representatives and groups.
- Having representatives on outside bodies and partner committees.
- Articles in Community Newsletters and Newspapers.
- General Information on social media including Facebook and Instagram.
- Presentations via Working Parties.

4. The Parish Council Clerk will

- Assist Councillors who are delegated to develop and assess Questionnaires.
- Assist Councillors who are delegated to report back to Council.
- Assist in identifying hard-to-reach groups.
- Publish results as instructed by the parish council.
- Receive and store information in accordance with GDPR.
- Arrange visits as instructed by the parish council.
- Assist Councillors who are delegated to prepare presentations.
- Place notices in noticeboards.
- Update the website and Facebook account.

5. Opportunities for Community Involvement

5.1 Meetings

5.1.1 The Parish Council has an element for Public Participation. The bi-monthly council meetings are open to the public and time is set aside, for members of the parish to make comments or to ask questions. The Parish Council is also flexible to requests for Standing Orders to be put aside to allow urgent public input on a debate – subject to the discretion of the Chair.

5.1.2 An Annual Parish Council meeting is held between March and June each year giving residents the opportunity to have a say on local issues, find out what the parish council has been doing and residents are given the opportunity to share their opinions on the services delivered by the council.

5.1.3 Residents will continue to be encouraged to submit items which they wish to be brought to the attention of Councillors at the monthly meetings, or to give their opinion on a particular agenda item, to the Clerk.

5.2 Contact Your Councillors

5.2.1 Make an appointment, make a phone call, write a letter, e-mail a message.

5.2.2 Contact your Councillor to:

- let them know what you think
- get advice or help or be signposted to authorities better placed (and legally permitted) to assist with a query.
- pass on a suggestion or good idea

5.3 Write or Sign a Petition

5.3.1 A petition is a document that states a concern and asks that something be done to improve the situation. Members of the community sign the petition to show their support. Petitions are tabled in Full Council. They tell our Councillors how members of the public are feeling about an issue.

5.3.2 If you want to write a petition, decide whether the issue is a Parish, District or County Council issue. You will need to collect signatures and ask your Councillor to present the petition to the correct Full Council.

5.4 Partnership Working

5.4.1 Severn Stoke and Croome d’Abitot Parish Council is committed to working with local voluntary and community groups to improve the quality of life for residents in the parish. The Parish Council will work with Local Authorities (District, County and the Police) to ensure an improvement in the quality and delivery of services.

5.4.2 The Parish Council will work with residents, local groups and neighbouring parishes to find a solution to common problems – We have done this in 2024 in order to find a solution to defibrillator provision in the parish. Attending group AGMs is a significant part of this and Councillors will attend where able.

5.4.3 The Parish Council will continue to support and engage with local organisations to assist them in meeting their own aims and objectives. All members of the Parish Council will continue to support local projects and events, including those arranged by the Council.

5.4.5 For large or complex consultation programmes it may be necessary to form working parties – ideally consisting of Councillors and members of the public to organise the consultation programme.

6. Review

6.1 This strategy reviewed annually to assess its effectiveness and amended as necessary.

6.2 Drafted by the Parish Clerk 1/03/2024 with the assistance of Worcs CALC and the Association of Clerks, including Carrington Parish Council and Thurmaston Parish Council.

-end of Appendix C-

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Protocol for the Formation, Operation and Closure of Working Groups

1. The Parish Council and any of its Committees can set up working groups to carry out tasks as defined by the Council or the Committee. The working group may have different titles eg steering group, task force etc however they all fall within this policy. The opportunity for residents to be aware of/join such groups will be through parish newsletters, social media or on the Council's noticeboard and website.
2. The purpose of Working Groups formed from both councillors and members of the public is to meet to discuss issues, explore options and develop plans and then report back to the Council or Committee with recommendations. Subsequently, Working Groups may be tasked to deliver their plans. They have no decision making powers but simply present the Council or Committee with their findings. However, their ability to give particular topics that much more time outside agenda-driven meetings has proved to be invaluable.
3. When setting up a Working Group, the Council or Committee must set clear terms of reference for it regarding objectives, scope and outcome(s). These will be approved by the Council before the Working Group is formed. Once their work has been completed, the Working Group will be disbanded.
4. The Terms of Reference will include this protocol, the Committee to which the Working Group reports and all members of the Working Group will sign to confirm acceptance (held by the Clerk). The Terms of Reference and membership will be published on the Council's website.
5. The number of Councillors able to join a Working Group will be decided at the time of its formation but it must consist of no fewer than two councillors, one of whom will be the Lead Councillor.
6. The Working Group will notify the Council or Committee, via the Clerk, of the name of the Chair once they are appointed after the first meeting.
7. Quorum for meetings of a Working Group will be three members, one of whom must be a councillor.
8. The role of the Council or sponsoring Committee is to consider and question the recommendations put to it by the Working Group before a decision is taken and, in the case of a Committee, to be satisfied with them before making any recommendations to the full Council.
9. A Working Group will be accountable to its sponsoring Committee unless agreement is made, due to expediency and subject to agreement via email of a majority of members of that sponsoring Committee, for recommendations to be made directly to the Parish Council.
10. The lead councillor shall provide regular updates to its sponsoring Committee on progress made against the items as detailed in its Terms of Reference. Before the Working Group is closed or disbanded the lead councillor shall provide a report to the Parish Council including key events, issues encountered, achievements and outcomes against the items as detailed in its Terms of Reference.
11. The Working Group must provide the Council or Committee with as much information as possible to ensure it can make an informed decision on its recommendation(s).
12. A Working Group will not have a budget. Budgets remain with the Council/Sponsor Committee.
13. Working Groups do not meet in public, therefore the Council's Standing Orders are not applicable. However, the Code of Conduct still applies and declarations of pecuniary and other interests will be required at each meeting.
14. All Working Groups will follow all relevant Council policies including data protection policies.
15. The Clerk will ensure that a new email account is set up for each working party members. Personal email accounts will not be permitted.
16. All documents and records produced and emails shared by working groups will be retained for the duration of project and once the debate and decision of the Council is minutes at full council, all email accounts will pass back to ownership of the Parish Clerk for an audit of retention requirements to take place. Nb, all non-essential records and emails will be deleted by the Clerk upon cessation of the Working Party.

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Protocol for the Formation, Operation and Closure of Committees

Terms of Reference common to all committees.

1. All meetings of PC committees will be convened in accordance with the PCouncil's Standing Orders.
2. Committee agendas and minutes will be structured and formalised by the Clerk/Officer in discussions with the Committee Chair and meetings will be minuted by a delegated officer.
3. Committee rules are supplementary and do not override PC Standing orders or financial regulations
4. Cllrs can be members of one or more committees and the Council's Chair and Vice Chair are ex-officio members with voting rights. Members of the public cannot be committee members.
5. Committees may authorise expenditure or amend fees provided the decision is consistent with the responsibilities of the committee and within the budget set for that activity or within any additional budget for work authorised by full council during the financial year.
6. Minutes will be circulated to all council members and will be presented at full council for agreement. Agreement is given to acknowledge that the decisions have been reached within the powers delegated to that committee
7. Membership of all the committees will be as decided at the Annual Parish Council Meeting. The committee shall be subject to a **quorum** of half of its members or three whichever is the greater. If a committee or subcommittee is created outside of this period, membership will be authorised by full council. Any Cllr joining Council after this will be considered for a committee by Full Council.
8. A substitute member maybe nominated and appointed to a committee or subcommittee if an ordinary member cannot attend and the meeting maybe inquorate without that substitute.
9. The chairman and vice chair of the committee will be elected by the committee at its first meeting after the Annual Parish Council meeting or agreed at a subsequent full council meeting. Until a new chairman is elected, the chairman from the previous year retains that office.
10. Parish Councillors not on a committee may attend meetings but cannot vote, they assume the same standing as a member of the public. If they have points, they wish to include they are encouraged to email the Chair and Clerk directly 48 hours before the meeting.
11. The press and public may be excluded from committee meetings if their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons.
12. Committees may create advisory groups or working groups to deliver a specific objective. These groups will work within an agreed brief. These groups will be wound-up at the completion of their task.
13. Committees may create sub-committees. These may consist of councillors and non-councillors with equal voting rights. Advertising the time and place of the sub-committee will be at the discretion of the members but is not required as the public do not have an automatic right to attend. Sub-committees may make such decisions as have been delegated to them, but these decisions will be reported to the responsible committee.
14. The meeting calendar will be agreed annually where possible, though it is admitted that for example in the case of Planning Committee, extra ordinary meetings may need to be scheduled, with 3 clear working days notice issued.
15. Committee budgets will be derived through the agreed annual budget for the business as usual elements.
16. Delegated powers will be defined with a scheme of delegation to be confirmed at the Annual Parish Council meeting.
17. Committees can be reviewed at any time in the year and their effectiveness assessed by all Councillors to the Council. Nb. The Clerk must be approached to add this to the next agenda.
18. Parish Councillors may use their parish council email account for committee purposes. The rules governing emails and subsequent retention can be advised to councillors by the Clerk. The parish council retakes ownership of all parish council email accounts, including all documentation associated with committees at the resignation of a councillor.

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