

# Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Severn Stoke & Croome d'Abitot Parish Council

A grouped parish council comprising of the two Parish Areas of Severn Stoke and of Croome d'Abitot

## Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024, 7.30pm At Croome Court SOQ meeting room

<b>Parish Councillors Present:</b>	Cllr Larry Freeman Cllr Susan Faulkner Cllr Royston Garrard Cllr Richard Hill Cllr Pat Preston Cllr Nicola Sumner Cllr Ray Williams	(rep for Croome parish ward) (rep for Severn Stoke parish ward) (rep for Croome parish ward) (rep for Severn Stoke parish ward) (rep for Severn Stoke parish ward) (rep for Severn Stoke parish ward) (rep for Severn Stoke parish ward)
<b>Also in Attendance:</b>	Mrs L Stevens (Clerk and RFO). District Cllr David Harrison. S.S (Lengthsman). L.H (Parish Hall Committee) 3 members of the public. <i>The meeting commenced at 7.30pm</i>	
<b>Apologies:</b>	County Cllr Martin Allen. District Cllr John Michael. J.H (PCC St Denys'). M.F (National Trust). P.J (Environment Agency). 2 residents.	

23/24	<p><b>a. Election of Chair 2024/25</b> <i>Cllr Freeman Chairing.</i></p> <p>i. <b>Nominations and vote.</b> Cllr Freeman noted his increasing personal commitments and advised the parish council to consider succession planning. <b>Cllr Faulkner nominated</b> by Cllr Freeman. Seconded by Cllr Sumner. Vote, <b>carried.</b></p> <p>ii. Signature on Declaration of Acceptance of Office. <i>Cllr Faulkner took the Chair from this point in the meeting onwards.</i></p> <p><b>b. Election of Deputy Chair 2024/25.</b></p> <p>i. <b>Cllr Freeman nominated</b> by Cllr Preston. Seconded by Cllr Garrard. Vote, <b>carried.</b></p> <p>Cllr Freeman welcomed the new Chair and thanked Cllrs for their assistance during his time in the role. Cllrs thanked Cllr Freeman for his time as Chair, particularly in his support of the Clerk and Lengthsman and welcomed Cllr Faulkner to the role. Cllrs expressed a hope that Cllr Freeman will continue in his capacity liaising with the National Trust and with Savills, to which Cllr Freeman acquiesced with gladness.</p> <p><b>Role of a Parish Council Chair:</b> • Holds a statutory post defined in law • Is a member of the Council and is elected annually • Must be obeyed when issuing lawful direction or direction in line with Standing Orders. • Is the interface between the public and Council • Welcomes speakers and make them 'feel at home' • Create an atmosphere which encourages participation and ensures fair accessibility and equality. • Makes sure decisions are clear for the clerk to act upon. • Ensure the meeting is quorate, as guided by the Clerk. • Ensure the Council acts only within terms of reference and/or legal powers as guided by the Clerk. • Remain impartial. • Not allow the meeting to continue for more than 2 hours. • Has no power to make decisions without the Resolution of the Council.</p>	
24/24	<p><b>Introduction, apologies and points of order</b></p> <p>There are currently 5 vacancies on this parish council, (1 in the Croome parish ward and 4 in the Severn Stoke parish ward). The quorum of this council is that 4 parish cllrs must be present for the meeting to proceed. Apologies as above duly accepted.</p>	
25/24	<p><b>Declarations of Interest.</b></p> <p>Cllr Hill in respect of M/24/00389/LB The Hayloft, High House Barns, Severn Stoke Bank. Noted. No vote. Cllr voluntarily withdrew from debate at appropriate time in meeting.</p>	
26/24	<p><b>Minutes</b></p> <p><i>To receive and consider approval of the minutes of the previous meeting.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024. Prps: LF. Scnd: RW. <b>Approved.</b></li> <li>- Annual Meeting of the parish council 2023. Noted only. Already approved in June 2023.</li> </ul>	

27/24	<p><b>General Power of Competence</b> (Description in Appendix 3)</p> <p>a. <b>Noted:</b> council CANNOT adopt general power of competence for 2024/2025 (criteria apply).</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Cllr Larry Freeman</td> <td>- elected May 2023</td> <td>Croome d'Abitot Parish Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Royston Garrard</td> <td>- elected May 2023</td> <td>Croome d'Abitot Parish Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vacancy</td> <td>- <i>unfilled at May 2023 election</i></td> <td><i>Croome d'Abitot Parish Council</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Sue Faulkner</td> <td>- elected May 2023</td> <td>Severn Stoke Parish Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Pat Preston</td> <td>- elected May 2023</td> <td>Severn Stoke Parish Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Ray Williams</td> <td>- elected May 2023</td> <td>Severn Stoke Parish Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Richard Hill</td> <td>- coopted September 2023</td> <td>Severn Stoke Parish Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Nicki Sumner</td> <td>- coopted September 2023</td> <td>Severn Stoke Parish Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vacancy</td> <td>- <i>upon resignation L.Russell 2024.</i></td> <td><i>Severn Stoke Parish Council</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vacancy</td> <td>- <i>unfilled at May 2023 election.</i></td> <td><i>Severn Stoke Parish Council</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vacancy</td> <td>- <i>unfilled at May 2023 election.</i></td> <td><i>Severn Stoke Parish Council</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vacancy</td> <td>- <i>unfilled at May 2023 election.</i></td> <td><i>Severn Stoke Parish Council</i></td> </tr> </table>	Cllr Larry Freeman	- elected May 2023	Croome d'Abitot Parish Council	Cllr Royston Garrard	- elected May 2023	Croome d'Abitot Parish Council	Vacancy	- <i>unfilled at May 2023 election</i>	<i>Croome d'Abitot Parish Council</i>	Cllr Sue Faulkner	- elected May 2023	Severn Stoke Parish Council	Cllr Pat Preston	- elected May 2023	Severn Stoke Parish Council	Cllr Ray Williams	- elected May 2023	Severn Stoke Parish Council	Cllr Richard Hill	- coopted September 2023	Severn Stoke Parish Council	Cllr Nicki Sumner	- coopted September 2023	Severn Stoke Parish Council	Vacancy	- <i>upon resignation L.Russell 2024.</i>	<i>Severn Stoke Parish Council</i>	Vacancy	- <i>unfilled at May 2023 election.</i>	<i>Severn Stoke Parish Council</i>	Vacancy	- <i>unfilled at May 2023 election.</i>	<i>Severn Stoke Parish Council</i>	Vacancy	- <i>unfilled at May 2023 election.</i>	<i>Severn Stoke Parish Council</i>										
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28/24	<p><b>Insurance and risk assessments</b></p> <p>a. - Confirmation that insurance cover is in place in respect of all insurable risks. Noted.</p> <p>b. - <b>Motion:</b> Acceptance of reviewed risk assessment. (Reviewed by Clerk March 2024). Prps: LF. Scnd: SF. <b>Approved.</b></p>																																														
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31/24	<p><b>Projects and Committee Reps.</b> Reviewed in March 2024. <b>Motion</b> to Confirm only. Prps: PP. Scnd: RH. <b>Approved.</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Committee/Working Party</th> <th>Members</th> <th>Terms of Ref</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Finance/Audit Committee x 3 members</td> <td>RG, LF, RH</td> <td>Financial Regulations under review May 2024 onwards.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing Working Party x 4 members</td> <td>LF, PP, RH 1 vacancy</td> <td>Yes, Terms of Ref in place.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Complaints and Grievance Panel Committee x 3 members</td> <td>New committee May 2024. This Committee would only meet if a complaint is received by the PC.</td> <td>Grievance Policy (Staff) &amp; Complaints Policy (MoP)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Appeals Panel Committee x 3 members</td> <td>New committee May 2024. This Committee would only meet if a complaint is received by the PC and the complainant then appealed the decision. 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32/24	<p><b>AOB.</b> Nb. items which require a financial vote to be moved to future agenda. Nil items raised.</p>																																														
33/24	<p>Thanks to all involved and we look forward to 2024/2025.</p> <p><b>Close of the annual meeting of the parish council and open of the monthly meeting of the parish council 7.41pm</b></p>																																														


34/24	<p><b>The meeting was adjourned for Open Forum (Public Question Time)</b></p> <p>a. A resident provided Cllrs with an update in relation to visitor parking at Croome National Trust. Cllrs were very appreciative that the resident had pursued this matter, grateful for the information given and resolved via a general summing up by the Chair to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Double check with CCllr Allen the reasons for why additional yellow lines have hereto been declined by Highways.</li> <li>- Write to the Police Crime Commissioner to thank him for acting on resident correspondence promptly, for sending a colleague for a site inspection and for making recommendations.</li> <li>- In light of the above, write to West Mercia Police and the County Council and ask what additional measures they feel are now appropriate at the entrance to the National Trust car park and ask again for yellow lines.</li> <li>- Wait for further information from Ben Shephard with regard to architect's proposal for hard standing (Croome are in receipt of funding from Central NT for this project).</li> </ul> <p>b. To celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Commonwealth, The Palace invited nominations from Worcestershire for one person (plus their nominated guest) to attend the King's Buckingham Palace Garden Party on 21st May 2024. Parish Councillors nominated Mr Simon Bott, our parish lengthsmen by way of thanks for all the voluntary work that he undertakes for the parishes of Severn Stoke, Croome d'Abitot and Kempsey. This nomination was accepted and Simon and his wife Sue attended Buckingham Palace in a general audience with The King and his family. Simon stood at this parish council meeting to express his heartfelt thanks for the nomination and the honour given to him by the councillors and parishioners. Councillors agreed that the honour was very well deserved.</p>	Clerk Clerk Clerk
35/24	<p><b>Flood bund update</b></p> <p>a. - Written update received from the Environment Agency. Appendix 7. Councillors resolved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To write to Paul Jones to express extreme disappointment and to request a meeting with the wider EA team and Paul Jones' manager and to push for details in order to understand the context of the delays. Prps: LF. Scnd: RG. <b>Approved</b></li> <li>ii. To ask for an updated timetable for the project.</li> <li>iii. To contact HB Member for Parliament, though it is anticipated that no reply can be given during the pre-election period.</li> </ol> <p>Councillors debated providing an update to the Press depending on the response from Paul Jones to the above. <i>Cllrs subsequently felt that notifying the press during the pre-election period would be a wasted opportunity, since the EA would inevitably decline to comment.</i></p> <p>b. - Noted that the County Council has objected to the application's discharge of condition 8.</p> <p>c. - <i>Discharge of bund planning condition for biodiversity:</i> To note that Savills has declined permission for the parish council to use the parish hall site as a community garden and wildflower meadow on the basis of the likely permanent nature of any such installation. Permitted uses are those that benefit the community in a non-permanent way – cited examples were car parking and recycling facilities.</p>	Clerk Clerk Clerk
36/24	<p><b>National Trust Update - Planning update and report received below</b></p> <p>a. "Visitor numbers are so far YTD on a par with last year's numbers – which is positive considering the poor weather. We implemented the use of police cones through a local traffic management company to try to stop people parking in inappropriate places when the car park was full over Easter. Overall this helped a lot, not a long term solution but it was effective, some people were still moving the cones around etc. We are just planning for May half term and have car park volunteers to help but a dry paddock means we have more spaces available. We are also just organising our Summer of Play offer for the holidays. Week commencing 3 June is national volunteers week so we'll be thanking all our volunteers who help us out in many ways. On 6 June – the D Day anniversary - we have RAF Defford history walks on the visitor programme and we have a banner up for the Kempsey beacon and celebration to point people there."</p> <p>b. - <i>Addendum post meeting.</i> A pop up museum organised by M.Hubble will be on show at the Kempsey Common D-Day beacon lighting event.</p> <p>c. - Save the date - Changing Place launch date at Croome - 19 July</p>	

36/24 con d.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Planning Officers are examining upon resident request the existing permissions in relation to opening hours, car parking, which buildings/services are covered by opening restrictions and number of events permitted each year. The National Trust is involved and welcoming the advice from the District Council and it is likely that an application for a Certificate of Lawfulness of Existing Use or Development will be made shortly.</li> </ul>	
37/24	<p><b>Councillors' Reports</b> - <i>Items presented for Motion and decision will be including in the next agenda, unless covered by a previous Motion, or previously Approved as part of the annual budget, or covered by the Delegation to the Clerk Policy.</i></p> <p>a. CClr Martin Allen. (Apols)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Update Coventry Close flooding of front drives: the program had to be moved and is now planned for 6<sup>th</sup> &amp; 7<sup>th</sup> June in order to install the additional gullies.</li> <li>- Councillors expressed thanks to the County Council for the road resurfacing in the vicinity of the Rose and Crown.</li> <li>- Councillors expressed thanks to the County Council for the path resurfacing at the noticeboard in Kinnersley.</li> </ul> <p>b. DCllrs David Harrison and John Michael</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Verbal reports received, including planning statistics (18 in past year with 15 being decided). DCllr Harrison noted that useful changes in restrictions along Rebecca road are likely and that the parish council will be consulted shortly.</li> <li>- DCllrs will chase a meeting with C.Chandler (WMD Area Flood Risk Manager) and P. Jones ref flood bund.</li> </ul>	
38/24	<p><b>Parish Hill Management Committee</b></p> <p>a. Councillors received a report from LH with thanks and resolved the following:</p> <p><i>“Confirm to Savills that the parish council will be retaining the lease on the Severn Stoke village hall (now demolished) site for the foreseeable future. The Parish Council has been formally notified by the Village Hall Management Committee that, upon legal advice, the constitution and purpose of the hall charity does not allow for the scenario where there is no land and no lease in place. Negotiations must therefore take place with the Charity Commission and then formal consultation with the residents undertaken before the constitution can be rewritten, before the future of charity funds can be decided and before the lease can be renegotiated/renewed as required. The parish council has accepted this legal advice and voted to keep the lease in place, subject to the existing terms (including clauses for renegotiations and expiry deadlines) within the current lease, until such time as the hall committee provides relevant updates.” Prps: SF. Scnd: PP. <b>Approved. Unanimous.</b></i></p> <p>The Clerk was <b>instructed</b> to send this response to Savills asap.</p>	Clerk
39/24	<p><b>Knights Hill Residents Parking Survey results – Cllr Faulkner. Stats in Appendix 4</b></p> <p>a. The Chair provided an update (which was subsequently used to draft a leaflet and so this text is extracted from that document):</p> <p><i>“Parish councillors believes that it is important that everyone is given opportunity to understand the rules or to be prompted about things that are making neighbours lives difficult. The project for parking signs will be pursued along the lines of resident’s suggestions. the parish council has listened to residents’ other suggestions, including requests to look at increasing the amount of parking available. The parish council does not own any part of the land, verges or road and has no powers in law that permits parish councillors to change parking provision or enforce parking restrictions. However, we have begun to work with Platform Housing and Highways at the County Council to establish firstly who owns the road and verges. Once ownership is established, we will request the relevant party to pursue options for changing some of the verges to parking spaces. This is never likely to be a short-term project and, will involve some form of traffic safety survey and may involve changing the depth of pipelines and cables. In the mean-time we really encourage each household to speak to others and ask for an improvement in neighbourly cooperation. As with any amenity project, before granting permission the authorities will look at whether the cheaper options have been pursued. A simple and easy way to solve this problem is if all neighbours consider each other when parking. Installing signage will certainly assist in demonstrating to the authorities that there is a problem and so this is another reason that the parish council are keen to pursue this option.”</i></p> <p>Councillors approved a leaflet to be sent to residents updating them on progress and also to address the matter of flytipping in the area too. Prps: LF. Scnd: NS. <b>Approved.</b></p> <p>Clerk was <b>instructed</b> to seek confirmation of who owns the verges.</p>	Clerk Cllr Faulkner  Clerk

40/24	<p><b>VAS to be purchased asap after receipt of Crime Commissioner grant (funding 100%)</b></p> <p>a. To receive recommendation and Motion for decision to be made on which VAS to purchase.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quotation from Westcotec did not meet the spec and was not accepted as satisfactory. Portable Speed Indicator Device (SID) with SLOW DOWN Legend beneath, battery powered complete with spare Lead Acid battery, 'intelligent' charger, sign weatherproof cover and bracket set for a cost of £3,175.00 each excluding VAT.</li> <li>- Quotation from Elan City for a EVOLIS Vision Speed Indicator Device (SID) - Radar Speed Signs. EVOLIS ULTRA-MOBILE PACK with two additional mounting bars. £2200. Pack £50. Mounting Bars £270. Plus VAT = £2520, plus delivery costs.</li> </ul> <p>b. <b>Motion:</b> Councillors accepted the second quotation Elan City in principle subject to Cllr Freeman being happy with the spec upon further examination and proposed delegated authority for Cllr Freeman to proceed with the purchase. Prps: PP. Scnd: NS. <b>Approved.</b></p>	Clerk Cllr Freeman
41/24	<p><b>Church S137 application for grant from J. Hall for portaloos at summer fete July 2024</b></p> <p>a. Motion to grant £145 plus VAT. (PC budget for S137 grants is £500 pa). Prps: LF. Scnd: RH. Approved</p> <p>b. <b>Parish Council annual contribution to St Denys' Belfry repairs fund subscription of £20.</b> Councillors declined until further information is received about the condition of the bells as it is known that an inspection will be undertaken soon.</p>	Clerk
42/24	<p><b>Finance and Administration</b> - Discuss updates and formulate Motions not requiring written notice.</p> <p>a. To consider and respond to <b>M/24/00389/LB. Associated Ref:M/23/01188/HP:</b> The Hayloft, High House Barns, Severn Stoke Bank, Severn Stoke, Worcester, WR8 9JP, Erection of ground floor side extension <b>Motion</b> to support: Prps: LF. Scnd: RW. <b>Approved.</b></p> <p>b. To receive and approve the recommendations of the Staffing Committee with regard to Clerk pay and backdated payment, as per national guidance on payscales. <b>Motion</b> to approve: Prps: RW. Scnd: NS. <b>Approved.</b></p> <p>c. To review payments made within the past month and to consider and motion to approve the payment of outstanding accounts. Appendix 5 &amp; 6. <b>Motion</b> to approve: Prps: PP. Scnd: NS. <b>Approved.</b></p> <p>d. To consider and approve payment of urgent accounts if any (Delegation to Clerk policy). Nil.</p> <p>e. To receive and motion to accept latest Bank Reconciliation 2024. <b>Motion</b> to approve: Prps: LF. Scnd: PP. <b>Approved.</b></p> <p>f. Motion to accept Clear Councils Insurance quotation £609.76 at a fixed annual price for three years. (non-fixed price is £621) Excess £250. Prps: RG. Scnd: NS. <b>Approved.</b></p> <p>g. To note that the 23/24 accounts are now with the internal auditor for review. <b>Noted.</b></p> <p>h. To note Garden Waste Collection Service Renewal £150 paid each year by direct debit. (two bins at the parish hall site for use by lengthsman). <b>Noted.</b></p>	Clerk  Clerk  Clerk  Clerk  Clerk
43/24	<p><b>Correspondence to note:</b></p> <p>a. Receipt of certificate of unmetered supply by Parish Clerk – removing name and address of previous Clerk. From Unmetered Supplies Administrator, Operations Support, National Grid.</p> <p>b. To note that Tanya Crake WCC has given no denial of the possibility by the parish council to convert a mobile VAS (moved every few weeks via volunteers) to a stationery one powered by solar.</p> <p>c. Item for next meeting – quotations for Stonnall Close street lighting repairs.</p>	

43/24 con d.	<p>Concerns from Severn Stoke and Croome d'Abitot Parish Council re local police numbers.</p> <p>Response from Police Crime Commissioner: "The PCC shared your concerns with West Mercia Police due to the operational nature of the issues you raised. West Mercia Police explained that they are aware of the significant geographical area that PC Hand covers and that there is an ongoing process to identify a further Safer Neighbourhood Officer for this locality, in addition to working with the Recruitment Team with regard to identifying potential PCSOs. Further, your local Safer Neighbourhood Team are supported by 24/7 response teams as well as specialist teams, including the Roads Policing and Armed Response Vehicles and therefore, will actively patrol the area as well as being able to respond to incidents in a timely manner."</p>	
44/24	<p><b>Date of next meeting Wed 19<sup>th</sup> June, 7.30pm</b></p> <p>Finance Committee with full parish council present. (Croome SOQ meeting room booked). Annual audit accounts will be signed off at this meeting Residents may apply to inspect these once signed off by Cllrs.</p>	

**Contact the parish clerk if you would like to receive agendas or minutes by email.**  
 #Clerk & RFO: Mrs Lisa Stevens, 9 The Limes, Kempsey, WR5 3LG.  
 Tel: 01905 820956 / 07950256363 [severnstokeandcda@gmail.com](mailto:severnstokeandcda@gmail.com)



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This document is available via the website above, searching 'S' for Severn Stoke and then selecting 'publications'.

### Appendix 1- Existing Parish Council polices re-adopted May 2024

Title	Year last updated	Published on website?
Code of Conduct, including reminder of the NOLAN principles.	Feb 2024	yes
Standing Orders of the Parish Council	Feb 2024	Yes
Financial Regulations	Under review May 2024 as new model regs published by NALC.	Old ones are.
Dispensation request form. & Dispensation request procedure Policy	Jan 2024	yes
List of existing dispensations awarded to existing councillors	Monthly	Av. upon request
Privacy Notice – How we store your personal information and why.	Feb 2024	Yes
Consent Form	Feb 2024	Yes
List of committee reps	March 2024	Yes
GDPR Data Protection Policy & Information Security Policy	Feb 2024	Yes
Document/Data Retention Policy	March 2024	Yes
Delegation to the Clerk policy	2020	No. Due for review in May 2024 once new financial regs are adopted.
Disciplinary Procedure (staff discipline procedure)	January 2024	No
Grievance Policy & Complaints Procedure	March 2024 Feb 2024	Yes Yes
Preventing sexual harassment Policy	Feb 2024	No
Equal opportunities Policy	May 2024	Yes
Expenses Policy	2020	No. Due for review in May 2024 once

		new financial regs are adopted
Freedom of Information – documents available for publication	Feb 2024	Yes
Gifts and Hospitality	May 2024	Yes
Health and Safety Policy The PC has no permanent meeting room premises and this matter remains under review	2020 and May 2024	No
Home Working Policy	March 2024	No, as pertinent to the Clerk and Cllrs only.
Lone Working Policy	January 2024	No
List of Reserves & List of Assets	Annually and monthly	Yes in AGAR
Risk Assessments	Feb 2024.	Yes for parish council meetings, so that public can access, review and implement.
S137 & Grants Policy, including grant to religious orgs.	May 2024	yes
Staffing Committee Terms of Ref Includes guidance on STAFF APPRAISAL, Guidance on STAFF SICKNESS ABSENCE, Guidance on STAFF ANNUAL LEAVE AKA Protocol for the Formation, Operation and Closure of Working Groups/Committee meetings	Feb 2024	yes
Training Policy	To be written	
Planning Response Policy	May 2024	yes
Biodiversity Policy	Jan 2024	yes
Website Accessibility Statement	Feb 2024	yes
Subject Access Request Procedure (This procedure is to be followed when an individual contacts Parish Council to request access to their personal information held by the Council).	Feb 2024	yes
Press and Social Media Policy	Feb 2024	yes
Community Engagement Policy	March 2024	yes
Respect Pledge - Putting civility and respect at the top of the agenda and start a culture change for the local council sector.	Adopted by PC 2023	Yes

**Appendix 2 FOR INFORMATION ONLY to retain on record**  
**WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS**  
**Good Practice Guide:**  
**THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL**  
**NOV 2014**



**PUBLISHED**

**The annual meeting of the parish/town council (often erroneously called the AGM) must be held during May in each year. During an election year it must take place between the 4<sup>th</sup> day and 18<sup>th</sup> day after date of the election.**

- The clerk must give at least 3 clear days' notice to councillors and via the public notice for the annual meeting which, like all other meetings of the parish/town council and its committees, is open to the public.
- In election year, councillors – except the chair and deputy-chair - cease to be in office on the 4<sup>th</sup> day after the election. The chair and deputy chair remain in office until the successor is elected at the annual meeting.
- In election year, each member of the parish/town council must sign a declaration of acceptance of office before s/he may take part in the annual meeting or any other meeting.
- The person who takes the chair for the first item is the previous chair whether or not s/he is still an elected councillor. If the previous chair is not present, the previous deputy chair must take the chair, and if s/he is not present another councillor must volunteer to take the chair for the first item. The clerk must not take the chair.
- The first item of business must be the election of chair. The person presiding for this first item will be the previous year's chair. If they are a properly elected or co-opted councillor then the person presiding may use their personal vote, and in the event of a tie must use their casting vote as well. If they have also been nominated for the chair, they may use both their personal and their casting vote for themselves in the event of a tie. In an election year where the previous chair has not been re-elected, they cannot use a personal vote but must use their casting vote in the event of a tie; they cease to hold office as soon as the new chair is elected. Upon election to the chair, the new chair must preside and the previous chair, if no longer a councillor, must join the public. It MUST be clear to all nominees what the role of Chair and Deputy Chair entails.
- Each year, regardless of whether it is an election year, the chair must sign a further declaration of acceptance of office form on election to the chair and before taking the chair. There is no requirement for the deputy chair to sign such a form.
- Agenda items must include the election of chair as first business, and may include such items as election of deputy chair; appointment of committees and working groups, members to outside bodies; adoption of annual accounts; review of insurance, standing orders, financial regulations, scheme of delegation.
- The annual meeting may also undertake the business of an ordinary meeting. There is no need to have a separate ordinary meeting of the council.
- The minutes are adopted at the next meeting of the council - not the next annual meeting.
- Members must complete a register of interests within 28 days of election/co-option to the office of councillor. These should be sent to the monitoring officer, sometimes via the clerk. If re-elected, it is generally accepted that councillors need only provide changes to their register. The monitoring officer will provide the clerk with a complete copy of the register for all councillors on his/her council. It is useful for the clerk to bring this along to the annual meeting to allow individual councillors to check for any changes in their interests.

*-end Appendix 2. This guidance is in supplement to requirements within Standing Orders.-*



### Appendix 3 FOR INFORMATION ONLY to retain on record

#### What is the General Power of Competence? AND why is it important that the parish council aims to try to achieve this Power by having sufficient elected Members

The General Power of Competence (GPC) was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and took effect in February 2012. In simple terms, it gives councils the power to do anything an individual can do provided it is not prohibited by other legislation. It applies to all principal councils (district, county and unitary councils etc). It also applies to eligible<sup>1</sup> parish and town councils. Footnote 1 An eligible council is one which has resolved to adopt the GPC, with at least two thirds of its members being declared elected and the Clerk must hold an appropriate qualification (Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012). It replaces the wellbeing powers in England that were provided under the Local Government Act 2000. The scope – and some limitations – of the General Power are set out in sections 1 to 6 of the Localism Act 2011.

In summary, the GPC enables councils to do things:

- an individual may generally do anywhere in the UK or elsewhere, • for a commercial purpose or otherwise, for a charge or without a charge
- without the need to demonstrate that it will benefit the authority, its area or persons resident or present in its area (although in practice councils will want to realise such benefits).

Footnote 2 Further discussion of the legal implications of the GPC can be found in the Local Government Association (LGA) essay 'Power to make a difference', October 2011: <http://tinyurl.com/nppcc4b>

But there are some limitations on the General Power, either because they are not things which an individual can do or because they are excluded by the Act. The GPC will not: • provide councils with new powers to raise tax or precepts or to borrow, • enable councils to set charges for mandatory services, impose fines or create offences or byelaws, over and above existing powers to do so, • override existing legislation in place before the Localism act 2011, so-called 'pre-commencement limitations' (however powers enacted after commencement of the GPC will only limit the GPC if this explicitly stated in the legislation). <https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/general-power-competence-empowering-councils-make-difference>

### Appendix 4 - Knights Hill Parking survey

There are 26 properties - 1 property was empty/ 1 property emailed Clerk with queries outside the remit of survey. This was passed to local councillors. Total canvassed 24 properties. There were 8 responses which is approximately one third of residents

		Y	N	No response/NA	Other
Q2	Inconsiderate parking experienced?	6	1	0	1
	Comments "Rarely"				
Q3	Have You spoken to neighbour about parking issues ?	1	4	2	1 "No. Normally resolved by putting my car on the road to save the space"
	Comment: "Spoken to delivery drivers but also a long standing issue with a neighbour who aggressively blocks our drive. " There is no point"				
Q4	Do you want parking signage?	4	2	2	NA
Q5	Suggestions for signage wording	Keep turning bay clear: Not to park in front of driveways: No parking on the grass This area is for turning and access to driveways only. Please do not park here or cause an obstruction : Keep the area clear for emergency vehicles : Keep the turning bay clear			
Q6	Best place for signage?	Outside of fence of <b>3 or 4 knights hill</b> : Best position would be on the <b>grass section between 19-20</b> , next to the bollard (top left of the cul-de-sac) : Entrance to the cul-de-sac : Front gate			
Q8	Comments	A lot of people have 3 /4 cars and so park on the grass. <i>Need more spaces, remove grass and put spaces instead</i> <i>More sense to create more parking spaces. Stop charging £25k for dropped kerbs so that people can afford driveways.</i> <b>Husband is disabled and need emergency access</b> on and off drive. Road needs resurfacing outside 13-24. There used to be a clear difference in surface/colour between the road and turning area but it is now so worn away they look the same. Request to escalate with WCC. <i>Put hard standing in. Get rid of grass.</i> Signs are a side issue. The key issue is lack of parking and lack of EV charging facilities <b>Ensure that residents in bungalows with mobility issues have easy access to parking and their properties.</b>			

Q2 75% of respondents had experienced inconsiderate parking

Q3 50% of respondents had not spoken directly to neighbour about the issue

Q4 50% of respondents wanted parking signs

Q5 & Q6 Discussion needed

Q8 Highlighted in bold 2 references to disabled & mobility issues being part of signage/In italics 3 references to creating more parking by removal of grass verges



## Appendix 5 Items already paid April 2024 since last PC meeting:

(Approved under previous agenda or required payment under contract monthly)

09/04/2024	1. Mr Simon Bott	Lengthsman invoice March 2024	March Worksheet	£379.35	£0.00
24/04/2024	2. Worcestershire CALC	Annual Subscription legal and advisory services	9520	£490.20	VAT £74.57
24/04/2024	3. Worcestershire CALC	Clerk training finance and annual audit	9407	£42.00	VAT £7.00
08/04/2024	4. Mrs Lisa Stevens	March 2024 general expenses and AGM Expenses, kettle, tea, coffee, biscuits. Kettle added to asset reg.	Expenses sheet	£44.65	VAT £6.66
24/04/2024	5. NPower	Street lighting Stonnall close and Knights hill. Invoice: 13 Apr 2024	IN10345404	£141.22	VAT £6.72
24/04/2024	6. Mrs Lisa Stevens	Expenses April 2024	Expenses worksheet April	£4.19	£0.00
24/04/2024	7. HMRC Shipley	Quarter income tax payment £5.80 (April). Clerk reimbursed PC, as wage is automatically paid via standing order 28/04/2024	PAYE Month 1	£5.80	£0.00
30/04/2024	8. Mrs Lisa Stevens	Clerk wage April 2024 for March 2024 (NB pay is one month in arrears). Full pay is £311.84. Reported to HMRC 24/04/2024 as £281.84 which is minus £30 home allowance. Payrise had not taken effect by this point in the year.	Month 1	£311.84	£0.00

## Appendix 6. Items for payment May 2024 outstanding:

17/05/2024	9. Mr Simon Bott	Lengthsman invoice April 2024 including mileage	April Worksheet	£373.05	£0.00
yet to be debated	10. Andysloos	Toilet for church fete July 2024	HAR/93895	£60.90	VAT £10.15
yet to be debated	11. BHIB	Annual Parish Council Insurance package 24/25 (reduced premium due to sign up to long term undertaking 3 yrs)	LCO02071	£609.76	Cannot claim VAT on insurance
Yet to be made	12. Malvern Hills District Council	Garden Waste Collection Service 24/25 Renewal for Parish Hall x 2 bins. Direct Debit to be taken on or around 1 June 2024	Account 0503264	£150.00	£0.00
Yet to be made	13. Mrs Lisa Stevens	Clerk wage April 2024. Paid one month in arrears. New payrise effective April 2024 is £303.12 per month plus £30 home working allowance = £333.12 per month. This will be reported to HMRC as £303.12. <b>HOWEVER, standing order to Lloyds will not have been amended by this point, so standing order will still pay £311.84,</b> giving rise to payment 15 below.	Month 2	£311.84	£0.00
Yet to be made	14. Mrs Lisa Stevens	Payrise from payment 8 above. £333.12- £311.84 = £21.28 ( income tax for month already reimbursed to PC by Clerk separately)	As per clerk contract	£21.28	£0.00
Yet to be made	15. Mrs Lisa Stevens	Payrise from payment 13 above. £333.12- £311.84 = £21.28 minus income tax deductions £4.20 = 17.08	As per clerk contract	£17.08	£0.00
Yet to be made	16. Mrs Lisa Stevens	333.12 - 311.84 = 21.28. x 12 months = £255.36 backdated pay. April 2023 to March 2024	As per clerk contract	£255.36	£0.00
19/05/2024	17. HMRC Shipley	Quarter income tax payment 4.20 (May). Amount deducted from payment 15 above	HMRC	£4.20	£0.00

**Appendix 7.** Environment Agency flood bund update May 2024

**Environmental works,** The Environment Agency received the Licence from Natural England on the 18 April allowing us to proceed with final Newt trapping. Since then, the newt fencing damaged during the winter flooding has been reinstated. The newt fencing will remain in place throughout the trapping period and until the embankment work has been completed. Newt trapping started during the week commencing 22 April and will be ongoing until the remaining trees have been cleared, root balls have been grubbed up and ditches and ponds drained and checked for newts. The remaining site clearance and newt trapping will take place over the next three weeks. I have been informed that to date no Great Crested Newts have been found. At this time there are no environmental constraints that will hinder the start of the project.

**Planning permissions.** There are no outstanding planning conditions that will hinder the start of the project.

**Construction.** The amount of funding available for the scheme is limited and as such we must ensure that the project is built within its budget. That means addressing any risks that could cause delay and increase the duration and consequent cost of the scheme before we enter a contract. The premiss that this scheme is based on and makes it viable, is that the material used in the construction of the embankment would be provided free to the project, is suitable and meets the design specification. In March we were ready to sign a contract with a contractor. At that time, we did not have enough suitable material available on site for use in the construction of the works. This was because the material sources that were initially thought to be suitable were found on close examination not to be so. If we had started work at this time we would quickly have run out of material and then started to incur costs from the contractor to cover standing time, which would likely have pushed us over budget. We are still seeking suitable sources of material that meet the project specification, consequently until we do, work on construction cannot proceed. Because of this we anticipate stockpiling material on site when it becomes available and then starting work when we have enough stockpiled. This we accept means the date when we start construction cannot be confirmed with any certainty and we further acknowledge that this is not news the Parish Council or the residents of Severn Stoke want to hear after the flooding that occurred this year. We can only reassure you that at this time along with Chris Prosser we are working hard to find suitable sources of material. The Environment Agency reaffirms its commitment to providing a flood defence for the village and points to the preconstruction work currently ongoing as proof of this.

**Signed** ..... **Chairman** ..... **Date**