

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Residents
of Severn Stoke and of Croome d'Abitot
&
Minutes of the Meeting of Severn Stoke
& Croome d'Abitot Parish Council**

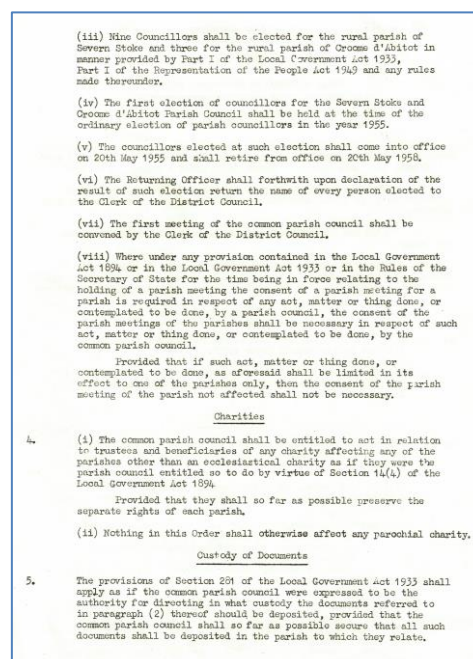
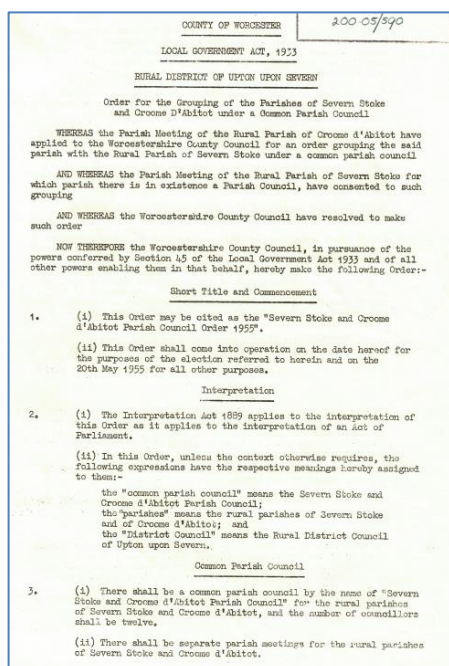
Wednesday 26th March 2025, 7.30pm
At St Denys' Church, Severn Stoke DRAFT

Parish Councillors Present:	Cllr Susan Faulkner (Chair) Cllr Royston Garrard Cllr Richard Hill Cllr Ray Williams	(rep for Severn Stoke parish ward) (rep for Croome parish ward) (rep for Severn Stoke parish ward) (rep for Severn Stoke parish ward)
Also in Attendance:	Lisa Stevens (Clerk and RFO). Martin Allen (Worcestershire County Cllr). David Harrison (MHDC District Cllr). National Trust reps. St. Denys's Committee reps (including Friends of St Denys'). Parish Hall Management Committee rep. Volunteer Footpath Officer. 17 members of the public.	<i>The meeting commenced at 7.35pm</i>
Apologies:	Cllr Larry Freeman (Deputy Chair) Cllr Pat Preston Ian Daly Dame Harriet Baldwin MP, J.Michael (MHDC), M. Maginnis (Worcs County Council) R.Ebanks (Environment Agency), S.B (Lengthsman). 1st Severn Stoke Brownies	(rep for Croome parish ward) (rep for Severn Stoke parish ward) (applicant for co-option, Severn Stoke parish ward)

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Residents of Severn Stoke and of Croome d'Abitot

a/25.	<p>i. Option for vote for a Chair. Cllr S.F took the Chair. <i>Nb. If residents do not nominate a Chair, then the parish council will Chair as a courtesy.</i></p> <p>ii. Introductions, points of order, apologies & declarations of interests. <i>No new declarations were made.</i></p>	
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b/25. 70 years ago the two parishes of Croome d'Abitot and Severn Stoke voted for their parish councils to merge and act for the betterment of one whole community. Grouping Order April 1955 below. Thank you to all residents, councillors, clerks and lengthsman past and present for all contributions. We look forward to another successful 70 years.



c/25	Open Forum. Residents may raise any matter without notice.	
i.	Bin layby A38 - size and capacity. a. Resolved. Motion to ask district council to empty existing more regularly and to ask if they have a spare lid that will fit the bin. Prps: JH. Scnd: J.X Resident. Duly approved. <i>Note post meeting 04/04/2025. The bin at this location is a discontinued Glasdon bin of a design that never had a lid.</i> b. Resolved. Motion for an additional bin in the layby – same style as Clifton layby bins. Prps: JH. Scnd: Resident. Duly approved. Clerk establish with MHDC that they will empty and to approve exact location with their operatives. <i>Note post meeting 04/04/2025 – A quote has been requested from Glasdon for bin style that matches Clifton layby.</i>	Clerk Clerk
ii.	M5 diversions along the A38. a. Previous agreement for limiting the 'number of consecutive days of a diversion' was an informal one arranged by a specific National Highways employee as a good will gesture only. That employee is no longer in post. No further action for parish council. DCllrs to pursue.	DCllrs
iii.	Speeding in the parish a. Feels like it has increased and given the narrowed pavements there are increased dangers to pedestrians (acutely when the motorway closed). b. Parish Cllrs explained previous actions. Police speed checks concentrate on percentiles and so take focus away from the occasional 50mph driver through the villages. Community speed checks not possible as nowhere identified that is safe for residents to stand. c. Resolved. Motion to ask for the existing Severn Stoke village roundels to be repainted. Prps: Resident. Scnd: RH. Duly approved. <i>Note post meeting: WCC judged roundels to be of sufficient visibility and will not repaint.</i> d. Resolved. Motion to ask for additional 30mph roundels within Severn Stoke village (ie in addition to the existing ones at the boundary of the village). Prps: Resident. Scnd: RH. Duly approved. <i>Note post meeting: WCC have judged that the criteria for additional roundels mid village in Severn Stoke cannot be met.</i> e. Resolved. Motion to ask for additional 30mph roundels for Kinnersley. (in addition to the existing ones at the white gates) Prps: Resident. Scnd: RH. Duly approved. <i>Note post meeting 04/04/25 – The Clerk has requested clarification of the restrictions for placement of additional roundel markings on the road, as understanding is that they are only used to delineate changes in speed limit, not as an additional reminder.</i> f. Resolved. Motion to ask for replacement zebra bollards on Severn Bank and additional 30mph signage within Severn Stoke village. Prps: Resident. Scnd: Resident. Duly approved. <i>Note post meeting 04/04/25 – this request has been submitted and a response is awaited. #76838.</i> g. The County Councillor gave guidance on the importance of clearing all new signage with Highways before installation, in order to ensure safety to all road users. h. Resolved. Motion to ask the PCSOs to conduct additional speed checks in Severn Stoke, Kinnersley and Clifton. Prps: Resident. Scnd: Resident. Duly approved. <i>Note post meeting 04/04/25 –Jon Hand has agreed to some additional spot check enforcement being carried out.</i> i. Why is the Severn Stoke 40mph speed limit extended round the sharp bend on Severn Bank? Speculative answer is because no one bothers to report accidents at this location. Residents should be encouraged to report all accidents and incidents via the police non-emergency website. https://www.westmercia.police.uk/ro/report/rti/rti-beta-2.1/report-a-road-traffic-incident/	Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk

c/25	Open Forum continued	
iv.	<p>Car parking facilities at National Trust Croome.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Resident concern that with increasing visitor numbers, the plans for a new car park will still not provide the required parking capacity. b. Resident concern that the new opening hours having been approved, anticipate ¼ million visitors per year, but all traffic/visitor plans are out of date with no commitment by the National Trust to renew them. c. It was noted that two new National Park applications will be made for Malvern Hills (timescales unknown) and that this, combined with the Worcestershire Parkway development will have a significant impact on visitor numbers at Croome. d. Update received from National Trust reps: Plans for the hardstanding car park are here today for everyone to look at. A formal application will be made in June 2025 with a view to building in 2026. New car park will allow delineation of spaces and efficient use of all available space. Matting in the Orchard will allow more use of that space also. Visitors are being encouraged to attend during the week to try to avoid peak weekend parking issues. Many visitors are using the dial a bus service. e. Example 1 provided by resident: Sunday 2nd March Croome's car park provision was swamped, there were queues on the roads, and aggression shown by disgruntled visitors to staff/volunteers led to police being called. NT response: Paddock car park was opened as soon as senior staff were made aware. Unfortunately visitors ignored double yellow lines. f. Example 2 provided by resident: Sunday 9th March visitor numbers exceeded 2400 and Croome's car parking provision was again overwhelmed (i.e. 1000 cars @ 2.4 per car). Corner Cottage field, Orchard and Ice House fields were used as overflow parking and visitors still had to be turned away. NT response: Glorious hot weather after a long cold winter meant that visitor numbers were once again very high. Some parking spaces were still too soggy to use unfortunately. g. Residents requested for MHDC to monitor visitor numbers going forward. It should be noted that this is the responsibility of the National Trust Croome and Worcestershire County Council only. h. Resolved: Motion for MHDC to require an updated travel plan as stipulated by the original planning application. Duly agreed that DCllr D.Harrison will write to ask for a new travel plan once the application for the car park is submitted to MHDC. <p><i>The minutes have been rearranged at this point to bring forward an item related to the above</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Residents requested clarification from the District Cllrs as to why Planning Application M/24/00913/FUL - Croome Court variation of conditions and opening hours was not taken to planning committee. DCllr response: In direct response to planning officer and resident comments and feedback, on 24th Jan 2025 the applicant (NT) reduced their application to 10 major events pa. This update was published on the planning website, to which residents have the option to sign up to receive updates and also brought to some residents' attention by the clerk, but no additional comments were received. In light of this, the planning officers considered whether there was still a necessity of taking the matter to committee. 	<p>DCllrs</p> <p>DCllrs</p>

c/25	<i>Continued c/25. iv. i.</i>	
iv.	<p>Ultimately the decision came to district cllrs as to the test of reasonableness, when considering the most recent amendments made and when comparing to consents already given in existing planning. The decision was made to not take to committee <u>as recommended by the planning officer</u>.</p> <p>j. Residents requested clarification from the County Cllr as to why the County Council did not respond to resident and parish council requests for an updated traffic and travel management plan ref Planning Application M/24/00913/FUL - Croome Court variation of conditions/opening hours. The CCllr declined to make a comment due to the pre-election period of sensitivity.</p> <p><i>No further questions and open forum closed.</i></p>	
d/25.	<p>Flood bund – next public meeting at St Denys’ Wed 7th May at 1830</p> <p>a. The Environment Agency’s main contractor withdrew from the project in 2024. Worcestershire County Council agreed to take on the construction of the whole scheme including a bund and road raising work, but in March 225 Griffiths which was lined up to carry out the work also pulled out.</p> <p>b. Update from Matt Maginnis, Worcestershire County Council: “Unfortunately, we’ve been informed that Tarmac has withdrawn its subsidiary company, Alun Griffiths Contractors, from being available to construct the Environment Agency’s Severn Stoke flood risk management scheme as part of wider restructuring. This is particularly disappointing for Worcestershire County Council having been given explicit assurances late last year that the contractor would be able to take on the construction work, should the scheme be assessed by the Environment Agency as being affordable. We’re urgently trying to secure an alternative construction contractor for Severn Stoke and, in the meantime, we continue to work with the EA to continue completion of the scheme design, assessment of the material on site, materials planning, discharging planning conditions and making preparations for a seamless handover to any new contractor (subject to the affordability).”</p> <p>c. Update from Reid Ebanks, Environment Agency: “Dear Community, As some of you are aware, Worcestershire County Councils Framework Supplier Alun Griffiths has had to withdraw from its commitment to deliver the construction phase of the project. This has been a significant blow to the plan to deliver the flood scheme, and I am sure you are concerned about what this means to the success of the project. The answer is that we don’t yet know. Assurances were given that this would not be an outcome and the conclusion on if the scheme will go ahead would be one of affordability, we continue to work to gain the required confidence in affordability, but without a contractor we will be unable to reach a conclusion. All parties are working hard to identify other options to construct the flood scheme, but it is unlikely in any scenario that we will be in the situation to start construction this Summer as had been the intent.”</p> <p>d. Resident discussion on renewable energy companies and whether they could share project costs and share use of the flood plain.</p>	

e/25	<p>Devolution.</p> <p>i. Update from DCllr and CCllr. The Shadow Authority will be formed in 2027, currently both WCC and MHDC will run until April 2028. The WCC Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board met on 18 March 2025 to discuss interim proposals. Key findings of the WCC Options Appraisal include that there are likely two options for Worcestershire (either a single or two unitary authorities); it could be said that only the single unitary model meets the criteria set by Government; County Council financial modelling supports pursuing the single unitary option because in their opinion having two unitary authorities would take longer to achieve savings and have a lower level of benefits over time; Many district authorities currently favour a split unitary model as having a better level of local representation for residents. Ie. Worcestershire Unitary Authority and a South Worcestershire Unitary Authority. Recommendations from the WCC Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board went forward to Cabinet on 20 March, where the proposed draft WCC Interim Plan continues to be debated.</p> <p>ii. Parish councils will come under pressure to take on more services – and yet we also see this as an unique opportunity. New service provision by the parish council will require funding via council tax.</p> <p>iii. What could a parish council take on if residents request it? Bigger parish councils will be given the option to take over all libraries, public gardens, public toilets etc. Severn Stoke and Croome d’Abitot is on a much smaller scale. Nonetheless, this can be an opportunity if residents desire it. We could explore deeper parish council involvement in.....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mowing/maintenance of all verges. - Extensions to the lengthsman scheme (which cares for drains, gullies and roadside paths on minor roads). This might include extension training to operate heavy machinery (diggers) in order to care out verge maintenance for example and, permits for roadside weed control. - Maintenance on bridleways and public rights of way/sign posting and more controls over liaisons with landowners regarding legal care of styles/gates. - At this time, the parish council is not proposing to take over control of any flood bund features – if built – simply because so much remains to be made clear. At this time, the parish council has no jurisdiction over private land or church land and it is not envisaged that this would change. <p>Residents had no comments or questions.</p>	
f/25.	<p>Reports from County and District Councillors.</p> <p>i. County Cllr report Appendix 3. <i>The County Cllr is in the pre-election period of sensitivity and required to exercise caution in making announcements or decisions.</i></p> <p>ii. District Cllr report – MHDC has funding available to the tune of £4million -nb there is potential funding of up to £100k available per project to support local infrastructure projects. An expression of interest form will be made available to community groups and grants will be available for approx. 3 years. If building work is required, then planning permission will need to be obtained first.</p>	
g/25.	<p>St Denys’</p> <p>i. The Friends of St Denys Church held their AGM on Tues 25th March 2025. A St Denys' Church Flood Emergency team has been set up to coordinate helper to re-instate the church furnishings each year after flooding. New members very welcome please.</p>	

h/25	The Parish Hall Committee.	
i.	The Committee held their AGM on Thurs 30th January 2025. Village Hall Charity Status. Following legal advice received earlier in the year the Hall Committee is looking to change the charitable objectives. It has been agreed that the change to the charity will be to transform into some kind of trust to hold charity funds for a defined period of time, for example three years. The purpose of this is to enable time for a greater vision of the future to be realised in terms of a) flood prevention in the village, b) changes in government planning policy recently announced and going forward and how this might 'shape' the village in the future, and c) clarity on sources of funding, e.g. section 106 funding etc. Both the Charity Commission and members of the parish need to approve any change in charitable objectives. The Hall Committee are currently working on the details to enable this to happen and is hopeful that that approvals can be achieved within 12months.	
i/25	Volunteer Footpaths Officer and Lengthsman.	
i.	A reminder of the District Council litter picking scheme 'Adopt A Street' https://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/join-the-adopt-a-street-scheme ¾ of the footpaths in the parish have been visited. 19 issues reported in Severn Stoke and 3 in Croome. Request for residents to please look after the rights of way near your home. Please also be courteous to land owners who have expensive requirements to look after the land and the routes through.	
ii.	Resolved. Motion to request spare finger post directional arrow signs from Highways so that repairs can be conducted quickly. Prps: RH. Scnd: Resident. Duly approved . Update 04/04/25 – The Clerk notes that this request has been made and we await a response from Highways.	Clerk
iii.	To note that the starting budget for 2024/25 Lengthsman Scheme was £3,100.69. The 2025-26 Budget has been agreed at an uplift of 3.95%. Clerk will sign the new WCC Annual Agreement when it is made available on the lengthsman app in April.	
j/25	PCSOs. Police station open day free event for all ages. Sunday 13th April 10am – 3pm, at Worcester Police Station, WR1 3QX	
k/25	National Trust. South Worcestershire Newsletter March 2025 has been distributed to Cllrs for info. Visitor Numbers 2024 /2025 NT end of year figures: 255, 800. (255,450 was the target). From Mon 7 April we hope to change to 9am opening. Café and Visitor reception will open from 9am. Shop from 10am. Court from 11am.	
l/25	Tarmac - Next liaison meeting 04.09.2025. 4pm – the PC will send representation.	
i.	Report from Colin Stratford Operations: Currently extracting the last of the mineral in Phase B of the Southern planning permission. Should be extracted by the end of April, once extracted then the as dug material on top of ground will be processed. Restoration of Phase B is ongoing as we extract the mineral, the interburden is used to create the batter slopes for the final restoration ground profile. Vegetation has been from the soil storage bunds in Phase 4 to allow the relocation of the badgers and the closing down of the badger sets. This will allow the restoration of the silt beds. Tree/hedgerow planting scheduled for this month in Phases B & 9.	

l/25	<i>Tarmac report continued</i>	
ii.	<p>Report from Andy Cadell (estates and planning): focus is now the progression with the Eastern extension planning application, he also said that the CAPEX had been submitted for approval, there are works required in relation to phasing plan etc before the planning variation can be submitted. Variations to be submitted include extending to the planning permission to 2030, crossing point of feasibility study of the A38, initial highway communication is positive, time planning, EA permits to transfer ground water, Mining Waste permit (silt lagoons) required, also footpath diversions. Cllr Martin Allen asked the question whether traffic lights will be required, Andy Cadell commented that once the budget had been secured there will be a stage 1 audit undertaken and this will form part of the next phase of works.</p>	
m/25	<p>Results of parish council survey on future of parish hall site and whether the parish council should continue with the lease of the land.</p> <p>i. 78 responses were received in total, with a 50/50 split in opinion as to the way forward. Many suggestions have already been rejected by the landowners. Residents cautioned against ending the lease too soon, as they consider this the last remaining asset of the parish in many respects. Options for moveable temporary structures (portacabin style) will be passed onto the hall committee, but Cllrs queried whether the precept could be sig. raised for a temporary building and the matter of the 25-year lease restriction remains. Cllrs agreed to defer any decision until after the outcome of proposals for the flood bund project is known</p>	
n/25	<p>AOB and closing questions.</p> <p>i. Exit drain Croome Corner halfway down the hill is half filled with water, as is the section of ditch that was cleaned out in the autumn. Can Cllr Allen assist with getting this section cleared out again please? The Clerk was instructed to submit a report to the WCC website.</p>	Clerk
Close of resident's annual meeting and opening of Parish Council meeting. 8.30pm		
13/25	<p>Cllr's declarations of interest. Points of order. Apologies. <i>Apologies as previously accepted above. No new points of order or interest.</i></p>	
14/25	<p>Co-options of new cllr/s as per the co-option policy.</p> <p>Currently there are 6 vacancies on the parish council. At the time of printing there had been 1 expression of interest and 1 deferred expression from eligible residents of the parish. If less candidates apply than the number of the seats, then matters progress with a brief welcome/introduction and a vote by a simple show of hands. New Cllrs sign the acceptance of office, receive a welcome pack and join the table as full voting members, noting that they may make declarations of interest for each and any relevant agenda item.</p> <p>Ian Daly was noted by the Clerk to have completed all required paperwork for his application for co-option and made qualifying declarations as to eligibility. His introductory statement having been read out, it was Resolved: Motion to co-opt Mr Ian Daly in his absence. Prps: RW. Scnd SF. No abstentions. Duly approved.. A warm welcome to Ian. Paperwork deferred until a suitable moment. Clerk to notify monitoring officer of co-option and issue notice of co-option.</p>	Clerk

15/25	<p>Planning matters</p> <p>M/25/00443/CU Kookins Field Farm, Madge Hill, WR8 9JN. Horse menage. No correspondence had been received from residents on this matter. Parish Councillors gratefully noted the detail that no flood lights would be used on site and so voted to support. Resolved. Motion to support as above duly approved. Prps: SF. Scnd: RW. <i>Submitted 04/04/2025</i></p> <p>M/24/01677/HP Willow Barn, 2 Lower Farm Court, Kinnersley, WR8 9JR Conversion of garaging to ancillary living accommodation for dependent. No correspondence had been received from residents on this matter. Councillors noted the representations made by neighbours and considered that the practical issue of the location of the gas utilities might warrant further factual investigation - the layout of such and impact on access being a material consideration. Resolved. Motion to comment as above duly approved. Prps: SF. Scnd: RW. <i>Submitted 04/04/2025</i></p> <p>M/24/01651/OUT Old Boars Head Car Park (Os 8580 4430), Severn Stoke Correspondence had been received from neighbours raising concerns about access across a shared drive - this is outside the remit of the parish council to consider and would be for all parties involved to inspect the existing access rights and come to an agreement. Councillors noted that the previous use of the car park site required vehicles to enter at the point adjacent to Stonnall Close and to exit at the point adjacent to Tavern's End (as it is known now) (the shared driveway). This 'one way system' would therefore appear to be historically recommended for this site. Councillors were unable to really consider this application in detail because of confusion about what is being proposed. The overhead view map shows 2 x 2 bedroom houses, whilst the flood plans show three bedroom houses. It may make a difference in terms of parking. There are currently four parking spaces shown on the map, but on the application form it says 2 parking spaces. The design/number of bedrooms and number of storeys may also impact the overhead power lines. Further detail about the disposal of sewage and surface water would also be required. Resolved. Motion to comment as above duly approved. Prps: RG. Scnd: RH. <i>Submitted 04/04/2025</i></p> <p>b. Consultation on Extension of Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO) for Dog Control. Resolved. Motion to support and approve a positive parish council response. Prps: RG. Scnd: SF. Duly approved. <i>Submitted 01/04/2025</i></p> <p>Resolved. Motion to ask for new MHDC dog fouling signs for along the A38 in Severn Stoke, 2 for Westfield Lane at High Green and 2 each for the cul de sacs at Knights Hill. (Additional signs have already been erected on Stonnall Close by MHDC). Prps: RG. Scnd: SF. Duly approved. Clerk to speak to DHarrison.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
16/25	<p>Finance and admin</p> <p>a. To consider/motion to approve payment of accounts made previous month. Prps: RG. Scnd: SF. Resolved and duly approved. Appendix 1</p> <p>b. To consider/ to approve payment of outstanding accounts this month. Including standard months accounts and invoices for Clerk wages/expenses, monthly lengthsman. Prps: RH. Scnd: SF. Resolved and duly approved Appendix 2</p> <p>c. Review of the parish emergency flood plan (include updated email details). Prps: RG. Scnd: SF. Resolved and duly approved. Clerk to send to Jem Teal.</p> <p>d. To accept the Clerk reviewed and to adopt all existing risk assessments in readiness for the annual audit. Prps: SF. Scnd: RH. Resolved and duly approved.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>

17/25	AOB and closing questions. 9.00pm approx. Nil. Thank you to St Denys' for hosting.	
18/25	Date of next parish council meeting. Wed 21st May 2025, 7.30pm - Annual Meeting of the Parish Council	

Signed Chairman

.....Date

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

Notes to minutes – Terms

- Once approved, the Motion/decision is called a “resolution”
- Resolved – Where a decision is made about a Motion.
- Duly Approved – Motions where a formal vote took place, accepting the Motion.
- Duly Accepted/Agreed – Motions where no formal vote took place but the action/recommendation within the Motion or debate is to proceed. Usually for non-financial matters or for items already agreed as part of an existing budget.
- Declined – Motion where a formal vote took place, with the Motion rejected.
- Duly Noted – Information not requiring a vote.
- Abstentions or votes against a Motion will be noted but the minutes will NOT always show individual names, unless Councillors have declared an interest and the transparency of that interest must be maintained.

<https://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/MyParish/>

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which explains how we use and look after your information and your rights.

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

Appendix 1. Items already paid since last PC meeting (*Approved under previous agenda or required payment under contract monthly*) **And Appendix 2. Items for payment March 2025 outstanding:**

14/02/2025	Mr Simon Bott	Lengthsman invoice Feb 2025	£342.00
06/03/2025	1 st Severn Stoke Brownies	Annual donation to Brownies	£50.00
14/02/2025	Scouts Kempsey 6th Worcester	Annual donation to Scouting group	£50.00
14/02/2025	SARA - Severn Area Rescue	Annual donation to flood search rescue	£50.00
20/02/2025	Upton Library	annual donation	£200.00
18/03/2025	Mrs Lisa Stevens	HWA & Expenses Feb 2025	£38.80
18/03/2025	Mrs Lisa Stevens	HWA & Expenses March 2025 including printing for parish leaflet	£56.40
18/03/2025	HMRC Shipley	Monthly income tax payment	£11.20
31/03/2025	Mrs Lisa Stevens	Clerk wage February (paid one month in arrears).	£308.16
20/03/2025	Mr Dan Amphlett	Bench repairs Severn Stoke village. Work conducted 17/03/2025	£173.97
20/03/2025	Mrs Lisa Stevens	Reimbursement for Knights Hill Signs	£121.04

Appendix 3 – CCllr Martin Allen report to parish council and Residents Annual Meeting March 2025

ON DEMAND BUS - The service will take you to anywhere within the designated County Council Divisions of Croome and Powick, for example it will take you to Upton, Croome Court, Callow End, Powick, Longdon. It will also take you to points outside the zone: Tesco's in St Peters, St Peters Garden Centre, B&M Bargains and Aldi. County Hall/The Countywide Centre, Worcester Parkway Railway Station, The Retail Park in Malvern, both of Malvern's Railway Stations Church Street in Malvern and Tewkesbury. The bus will run from 7am to 7pm, Monday to Saturday. There is a flat fare of £2.50 for all journeys, with additional passengers paying £1.25, ticket bundles are available as well as concessionary cards. There is an app, anyone who cannot use an app can phone 01905 846180 and choose option 0 for assistance. The service is now free to all Veterans on productions of their Veterans I.D. card.

PLANS APPROVED FOR A NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL & A MULTI-STOREY CARPARK - WCC's planning committee have now approved the new secondary school plus a Multi-storey carpark for Worcester. A new access road on Newtown Road will be built to help manage school-related traffic, in addition a new exit road onto the A4440 Nunnery Way was also approved to allow visitors to reach the new carpark.

COUNCIL TAX AND FINANCES - WCC increase their portion of the council tax by 4.99% which is the maximum currently allowed in Worcestershire. 2.99% is to provide financial support for the delivery of outcomes in line with the council's Corporate Plan. 2% to be ring-fenced for Adult Social Care service. The council has been granted a loan of £33.6m, rising to £43m the following year. For the following third year, if more funds are not loaned to the County Council approximately £50m of savings will have to be made to balance the book. For every £20m the council borrows, it will need to repay £1.9m. The forecast of total debt, including long term loans, as of 31 March 2025 will be approximately £604m which is an increase from £555.4m the year before. The cost to service the debt interest last financial year was £12.9m

KEPAX FOOTBRIDGE IN WORCESTER - This cycle and pedestrian bridge has now been opened. It initially cost was expected to be just under £5m, with total costs approximately between £16m and £18m, although the final total has not been calculated and is expected to rise.

SPEEDING – At WCC request, there has been quite a lot of police enforcement recently, especially in Clifton.

REPLACEMENT OF THE FOOTWAY IN KINNERSLEY OPPOSITE THE ROYAL OAK - The footway has now been replaced.

SIDING OUT OF FOOTWAY IN SEVERN STOKE - sections of footway have been/are to be sided out.

COVENTRY CLOSE AND APRIL COTTAGE - Work was completed last year to resolve the problems with surface water in these locations.

FUNDING - Divisional funding of the refurbishment of the bench on the A38 in Severn Stoke.

ROAD BY THE ROSE AND CROWN PUB - Now been completed.

Promoted by Martin Allen on behalf of Martin Allen (green party), both at Hollygate, Ellsdon, Kempsey, WR5 3NT

Note by Clerk – as an existing county councillor, Councillor Allen provides such reports at every parish council meeting as standard practice.