

**DRAFT Minutes of the bi-monthly meeting of
Severn Stoke & Croome d'Abitot Parish Council
Wednesday 29th March 2023, 7.30pm at Croome Court SOQ meeting room**

Present: Parish Cllr L Freeman (Chair), Parish Cllrs G Seward (Vice Chair), S Faulkner, R Garrard, P Preston, and R Williams. 5 Vacancies

In Attendance: Mrs L Stevens (Clerk and RFO). Paul Jones (EA). County Cllr M Allen. District Cllrs D Harrison and J Michael. L.H and R.H (Parish Hall Committee), I.Daly and 4 other members of the public.

Apologies: Cllr R Halling. J.H (Church Warden). M.F (National Trust). S.S (Lengthsman). L.Russell (resident)

a.	<p>Environment Agency. Latest information on the flood bund at Severn Stoke from Paul Jones Partnerships and Strategic Overview Advisor. Residents were welcome to contribute.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current pause in works is temporary, due to health and safety matters. - Assurance that building of the bund will commence in the next few months and be in place by this autumn (approx. timescale for construction is five months), with potentially the road heightening being outstanding in early 2024. Provisions will be made should there be a flood event before the roadworks have been concluded. - However, currently no construction contractor has been appointed. Work is being undertaken with various contractors to have a second look at the financial viability of the project and see if their interest can be obtained, including Jacksons. Construction will start as soon as a contractor is brought onboard. The appointed contractor may then sub-contract, as is normal with such projects. - Material on site is safe with no oil or pollutants, with the Worcester Regulatory Authority approving all material before it is brought to site. Chris Prosser has identified a number of ongoing sources to sufficiently cover the amount of material required by the project but much of this requires testing. Material continues to be provided by Mr Prosser free of charge. Stocking piling on site will occur. - Hardcore material in resident photos is for the working road construction and will not be used for bund construction. It is not waste but is larger chunks of unprocessed material. 650 tonnes of courser material have been brought onto site, with the agreement that up to 5000 tonnes can be used for assisting construction roads. - Archaeologists will be back on site shortly. Medieval fragments have been found but most significant finds are on higher ground and will not interfere with plans. - There remains the ongoing need to maintain the landscape post construction and the CIC will be approached regarding this. A dispensation to remove the trees near the pond can be obtained as necessary at any time of the year. - Funding for construction costs was in pace according to last years prices, but this will require re-evaluating and to include 11% inflation. At present the funding is not in place although the Government has provided more funding for small communities who suffer frequent flooding, and Severn Stoke is on that list - although the money ultimately remains outstanding. The inflation levels are a huge concern and all previous financial projections are no longer applicable. - Parish Cllrs expressed concern at the ongoing uncertainties (lack of construction contract, lack of funding and, uncertain timescales because of this). Cllrs asked that the EA update residents via a newsletter as soon as possible. Cllrs thanked Mr Jones for attending and making them more aware of the EA criteria/tendering process and allowing them to appreciate the important negotiations that will be necessary before appointing a contractor to construct the bund. The parish council subsequently sent a letter of support to the EA, stressing the importance of the bund for our community and urging completion with all alacrity. - EA to further liaise with residents who have concern about new patterns of flood water (during flood events) since material has been stored on site.
b.	<p>Public Open Forum</p>

**DRAFT Minutes of the bi-monthly meeting of
Severn Stoke & Croome d'Abitot Parish Council
Wednesday 29th March 2023, 7.30pm at Croome Court SOQ meeting room**

	<p>Debate with DCllrs and Cllr regarding future of bus services. Astons bus service funded through S106 money and future is uncertain once this funding is used up. Community transport (pick up upon order) may be the way forward. It costs £95 per hour to run a bus (Astons).</p>	
1 & 2	<p>Apologies (as above). Declarations and points of order.</p> <p>Resignation: Cllrs noted the resignation of Jayne Rowe and thanked her for time on the council. Motions put in place over the last six months will proceed, including development of the parish council community strategy, and WCALC lobbying on behalf of parish councils for options to improve virtual public participation at meetings.</p> <p>Points of order: At this time, it remains imperative that Councillors attend parish council meetings themselves in person, if they are to effectively serve their community. The Clerk is writing a new cllr welcome pack. WCALC has pledged to offer cllr training events in mid-2023 to help new Cllrs to settle in and ensure that Cllrs fully understand the legal remit that parish councils must function within.</p> <p>Declarations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cllr Williams declared an interest in reference to Savills proposals (received that same week and therefore not for debate at this meeting) for sites for new parish hall – one such option proposed by Savills being adjacent to his home. - Cllr Seward ref planning matter M/22/01877/FUL as a close neighbour. 	
3	<p>Minutes – to consider the approval of the minutes (as amended within public open forum of this meeting) of the meeting held on 30th November 2022. Duly approved. Prps: GS. Scnd: RH.</p>	Clerk
4	<p>Councillors' Reports</p>	
a	<p>Cllr Allen. Update on drains at Croome corner, with works due to start end of April / May. Posts and verge marker project at Croome corner is also proceeding, to encourage sensible parking. Visitors are now unfortunately parking on the lawn in front of the Arch and CCllr Allen is encouraging MHDC to start enforcement. Additional VAS locations are being pursued at Kinnersley. Clerk to ask Tanya for copies of all the existing VAS permits. Ring fenced parish council grant towards flood bund has been put on hold by WCC, as the County Council is aware that the EA has no contractors in place. The money is not lost to the parish but we cannot access it until the EA project is more certain.</p>	Clerk
b	<p>DCllr Michael. PURDAH. Encourage residents to use the two community bus services. DCllr is the lead member at present for 'Active Travel' – all residents will receive a survey about this after the May elections.</p>	
c	<p>DCllr Harrison. PURDAH. New bottle banks are planned for the parish hall. MHDC are chasing for an update on the ongoing Defford application for flood lighting. Parish Cllrs welcome David back after his operation and wished him well.</p>	
5.	<p>Planning and Enforcement – <i>to consider, comment and resolve to respond to the following applications or enforcement matters.</i></p>	
a.	<p>M/22/01877/FUL Properties The Old School House And Cedar Lodge And Sherborne And Coventry Barn Severn Stoke. Proposed garage block serving Old School House development (3 new dwellings), Cedar Lodge and Coventry Barn (1 space per dwelling).</p> <p>Cllrs considered that this represents an improvement on previous plans suggested for the site. Aware of some planning concerns about matters relating to roof height but no further comments were made on this. Cllrs were keen for the project to now move forward after many years. Motion for support: PP. Seconded SF. Unanimous Carried. Cllr Seward absent from debate and vote.</p>	Clerk

**DRAFT Minutes of the bi-monthly meeting of
Severn Stoke & Croome d'Abitot Parish Council
Wednesday 29th March 2023, 7.30pm at Croome Court SOQ meeting room**

<p>5b.</p>	<p>Residents noted how nice the site looks now and how pleased they are with the quality of restoration.</p> <p>M/22/01870/OUT Land At (Os 85804430) Severn Stoke Old Boars Head car park. Outline app. for the proposed erection of 2no. self-build dwellings with vehicular access from A38</p> <p>One item only of correspondence had been received from a resident with concerns about access, speeding and the number of residents consulted. The Clerk had received verbal assurances from MHDC that notices had been sent to all required properties in the area. The Clerk had contacted the police regarding speed concerns and both the police and WCC had observed the mismatch (Clerk phrasing) between resident/councillor levels of concern and the number of recorded incidences. Cllrs noted that raising the issue of speeding and inconsiderate driving does remain a priority for the parish council and questioned the value of including objections that would be anecdotal under scrutiny. DCllrs noted that planning guidance stresses the importance of balancing local concerns with statistics when considering planning matters, in order not to weaken overall arguments or leave matters open to appeal. The Clerk noted previous PCSO suggestions that all incidences be reported to the police promptly to build up a true picture of the problem and Cllrs commented residents should be encouraged in this.</p> <p>Parish Councillors noted that the previous use of the plot as a busy pub car park weighs heavily for support of this application, with access to the site established. Similar applications on this site have been supported by the parish council without comment. The parish council has in the past received negative resident comments about the unkempt nature of that site.</p> <p>The Clerk had received reassurance via email that the applicant would have to make a separate Public Path Diversion application to MHDC, who would then determine if the application can be accommodated under the legislation. The path would then only be diverted once a separate public consultation had been conducted and a separate planning permission has been granted.</p> <p>DCllrs suggested that SWDP settlement boundary for Severn Stoke village are due to be removed in 2024 and would no longer be relevant, therefore Cllrs did not debate this point. Concerns about the general nature of self-build were raised but Cllrs did not consider this as a reason to object. Parish Councillors had also noted previously by email that there may be an additional access option from Stonnall Close, deliberately left viable when the cul-de-sac was constructed. The Clerk was subsequently instructed to note this in the parish council response.</p> <p>Motion for support: RW. Second: RG. Unanimous carried.</p> <p>Residents queried whether this application would affect future applications such as for the parish hall, as the matters of access were the same. Cllrs did not respond as they did not have an answer to this at that time.</p> <p>Standing Item: To consider and as required, arrange an extra ordinary parish council meeting for planning applications received after date of publication of this agenda. NIL.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>6 a.</p>	<p>Parish Hall - <i>Discuss and formulate Motions not requiring written notice.</i></p> <p>General update and progress. Richard Hill was welcomed and gave a brief update – a bat survey is due May 2023, thereafter with a planned application for demolition. Structural survey does not identify that the hall is structurally unstable or unsafe and so the Hall Committee has taken the view that there is no immediate risk and so will allow time for the bat survey to proceed. Cllrs did not make comment on this.</p> <p>Parish Cllrs thanks Richard for chasing the response from Savills and acknowledged receipt of Pip Webster's documents 23rd March 2023 in respect of Savills/Merchant Venturers/St Monica</p>	

**DRAFT Minutes of the bi-monthly meeting of
Severn Stoke & Croome d'Abitot Parish Council
Wednesday 29th March 2023, 7.30pm at Croome Court SOQ meeting room**

6 con	<p>Trust and Severn Stoke Parish Hall, including Savills suggestions for options of rebuild, including 3 locations on Trust land across the parish and with the confirmation that the land lease to the parish council would not be extended beyond 25 years unless further options for additional housing were also considered. Cllrs had noted in previous meetings that a lease of at least 75year+ would be an absolute requirement if options for a public loan were to be pursued and for the risk to public funds to be properly managed.</p> <p>Continued.</p> <p>Previous information on the settlement boundaries was again discussed, with parish councillors hearing that the development boundaries are up for review (probable scrapping) in first four months 2024, but nonetheless noting that this remains a consideration until formal any notice is given by MHDC.</p> <p>Cllrs had not had sufficient time to fully absorb the content and did not feel able to properly reflect on the options presented by Savills. Cllr Preston noted that the public needs to be fully informed of all options and locations and the conditions for additional housing seemingly being exacted by Savills/St Monica Trust – warmly supported by all Parish Councillors. Cllr Freeman noted that nothing further could be discussed until the May elections were undertaken and the new four-year session of parish council begun. The Clerk was instructed to liaise with the Hall Committee and arrive at an interim answer to Savills.</p>	Clerk
7.	<p>Highways and infrastructure – Discuss and formulate Motions not requiring written notice Street lighting (parish council owned) Knights Hill and Stonnall Close. The Clerk continues to chase maintenance works.</p>	Clerk
8. a. i. ii. b	<p>Speed, parking & traffic concerns <i>Discuss and formulate Motions not requiring written notice</i></p> <p>Vehicle Activated Speed Signs High Green: 24/01/23 – 29/03/23: Vehicle count 29,436. Max Speed 55mph 12/02/23 1600 hrs Severn Stoke/Clifton/Kinnersley. Cllrs continue to apply the rota for moving the VAS and now include Kinnersley. Kinnersley Residents have expressed their satisfaction. Cllrs asked the CCllr to pursue an extra VAS pole for Kinnersley and to enquire about extra funding for an additional VAS. Clerk to check which VAS keys are kept in store for the parish council. Clerk to check insurance covers cllrs and volunteers for moving VAS. Batteries are 8hrs to charge and RG to let Clerk know how much each charge costs – with a view to budgeting Cllr expenses in this respect.</p> <p>Speeding The Clerk continues to raise this issue quarterly with the PCSOs and the Crime Commissioner. The Clerk was instructed to enquire as to the purpose and necessity of groups of police cars speeding through High Green and Clifton on a regular basis.</p>	CCllr Clerk Cllr Garrard Clerk Clerk
9. ai	<p>Group/Committee/Other project updates - <i>To discuss/formulate Motions not requiring written notice. Cllr/Clerk updates or written reports received from representatives prior to the meetings.</i></p> <p>Croome National Trust including Churches Trust update. Update provided via email:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ended financial year on 246,000 visitors which was not our budget target but an improvement on 2021/22 performance. Proactive car parking management is planned over the Easter period. • New exhibitions are opening up in the house in April and work on Temple Greenhouse will commence later this spring as we have new building surveyor support. • We are in the process of getting quotes for our Changing Place Facility – funded by DCMS via Malvern Hills DC – so planning permission for that will be going in soon. • Pre-app advice for turning the paddock into permanent parking has now had highways advice - they don't require a traffic study as we're swapping one parking area (overflow orchard which has year-round permission) for the paddock area (orchard will go back to 	

**DRAFT Minutes of the bi-monthly meeting of
Severn Stoke & Croome d'Abitot Parish Council
Wednesday 29th March 2023, 7.30pm at Croome Court SOQ meeting room**

9 aii b c	<p>usual 28 day). Consequently, an application for permanent use will be submitted soon. A complete car park re-design/hard standing forms part of a subsequent bigger project. Feasibility for this will commence this year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-app advice for the Sewage Treatment Plant is going to Historic England and the District Council having had some informal conversations with stakeholders such as Hereford and Worcester Gardens Trust and local neighbours as an outline idea. • NT Croome is happy to be working with the Severn Stoke Flood Protection project by planting trees in site. <p>The Clerk had attended the Croome Church Conservation Trust meeting. Numerous new ideas were put forward at that meeting for how to fund raise, with NT offering to cooperate and help in any way possible. Section137 was explained to them, which is the grant system that parish councils run that allows a set amount per elector (£1.75-ish) to be given to non-religious causes if an application is made. The Church Trust may at a future date approach asking for support towards children/scouts/schools attending the church and receiving historical lectures or an xmas tree competition.</p> <p>Tarmac Liaison Group. A meeting to take place next week.</p> <p>St Denys' update including AGM. The Clerk had attended the AGM and the minutes of that meeting had been distributed. St Denys recognised a £15k loss this year. 30% of accounts are ring fenced and so cannot be used for general maintenance or everyday expenditure. They are looking to conduct fund raising in 2023. The Clerk will continue to attend these meetings where she can.</p>	
10. a b c	<p>Communication, General Finance and Administration - <i>To discuss and formulate Motions not requiring written notice.</i></p> <p>To consider/motion to approve payment of accounts made in the previous month. App 1. Prps: GS. Scnd: PP. Duly approved.</p> <p>To consider/ to approve payment of outstanding accounts Feb/March 2023. App 2. Prps: GS. Scnd: RW. Duly approved.</p> <p>To receive the latest bank reconciliation. Prps: PP. Scnd: GS. Duly approved.</p>	Clerk Clerk Clerk
11	<p>Thank you to outgoing Councillors. Councillors Graham Seward and Rob Halling had indicated their intention to retire at the end of April 2023. A presentation was made and they were warmly thanked for their contribution. Rob was thanked in his absence. During his time on the council, Graham undertook vital work on refreshing policies and procedures, ensuring legal compliance, and pursued a reduced risk for banking activities. During his time on the council, Rob regularly represented parishioner interests on the parish hall committee, represented housing association residents and ensured that the more vulnerable sections of society have had their needs highlighted. Both Cllrs have lobbied hard for preservation of bus services, tackling of speeding issues and regularly raised the ongoing need for the flood bund. Councillors agreed that their input has been much appreciated, and their efforts will continue to have a beneficial impact for long into the future.</p>	
12	<p>Correspondence, dates for diary, items for future agenda. Items to be added back to agenda once new council is formed May 2023.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Defibrillators. b. Kinnersley daffodil bulb planting project. c. High Green phone box maintenance. e. High Green noticeboard working party. f. High Green milestone working party. g. Kinnersley bench maintenance. 	

**DRAFT Minutes of the bi-monthly meeting of
Severn Stoke & Croome d'Abitot Parish Council
Wednesday 29th March 2023, 7.30pm at Croome Court SOQ meeting room**

	<p>h. Communication strategy and Vision – to continue formulation including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leaflet/poster for general parish. - Exploration of parish council rebranding to 'Local Community Council'. - Parish council logo/brand/letterhead. 	
13	<p>Date of next meetings: Wed 10th May, 7.30pm - Annual Meeting of Parish Council (SOQ room Croome) Wed 24th May, 7.30pm - Annual Parish Meeting at St Deny's Church</p>	

Signed ChairmanDate

Appendix 1. Items already paid February 2023 since last PC meeting:

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

Mrs Lisa Stevens	Stinky Ink order	£29.96
Mr Simon Bott	Lengthsman invoice January 2023	£281.80
Mr Simon Bott	Lengthsman invoice February 2023	£291.60
Scouts and Guides Kempsey 6th Worcester	Annual Donation	£50.00
SARA search and rescue for the parish	Annual Donation	£50.00
HMRC	Income tax clerk	£38.40
Mrs Lisa Stevens	Expenses February 2023	£10.50
Mrs Lisa Stevens	Manual payrise Jan 2023 until bank mandate is updated.	17.68
Mrs Lisa Stevens	Clerk wage January 2023	£294.16

Appendix 2. Items for payment March 2023 outstanding:

WCALC	New Cllr Guides 8980	£51.00
WCALC	Clerk trainings 8983 (25 plus 5 VAT)	£30.00
Mrs Lisa Stevens	Expenses March 2023	£12.75
Mrs Lisa Stevens	Clerk wage February 2023	£311.84