

# **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting for Severn Stoke & Croome D'Abitot held at 7.00pm at Severn Stoke Parish Hall on 13 May 2015**

**Present:** Cllr Stephen Watkins (Chairman of the Parish Council) District Cllrs Harrison and Michael, CSO Martin Butcher, West Mercia Police, Mrs L Gower (Clerk to the Parish Council), Mr Tim Weeks, Chairman of FLAG, County Councillor Roger Sutton, Dan Wilkinson Environment Agency, David Thompson, Severn Stoke Parish Hall Committee and approximately 25 members of the public.

## **1 Welcome by Severn Stoke & Croome D'Abitot Parish Council, Stephen Watkins.**

Cllr Watkins welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the various speakers for attending this evening.

## **2 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from John and Cara Henderson. Cllr Michael would be arriving late.

## **3 Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 May 2014 and Matter Arising from those minutes (if any)**

The minutes of this meeting had been circulated to attendees at this meeting. Approval of these minutes was proposed by Ray Williams, Eileen Hadley seconded this, unanimously agreed.

## **4 Report of the Local Policing Officer (subject to duties)**

**SCO Martin Butcher** informed the meeting of crime figures for the year 1 April 2014 to 30 April 2015. There had been 23 crimes recorded within Severn Stoke and Croome D'Abitot (previous year 14 offences). These included 7 thefts, 4 criminal damage, 4 burglary non dwelling, 3 thefts from vehicles and 5 assaults (this can include domestic violence/neighbour disputes. This remains a low figure and a low crime area. The Safer Road Partnership is continuing to undertake speed enforcement action in Severn Stoke and will continue to do so until the results improve. There was a road accident this afternoon which SCO Butcher had attended, where a car has lost control and hit the two listed properties opposite the Parish Hall causing structural damage. The 999 calls are responded to by Officers based at Malvern which is considerably closer than Ledbury where they have previously been based. There is a new Inspector at Malvern called Deb Saunders. There have been various initiatives to tackle non dwelling burglaries and also Rural Watch which is similar to Neighbourhood Watch but covers farms, equestrian and rural businesses also. Further information available from the Parish Clerk if required. Clerk mentioned local non dwellings thefts in High Green recently in which garden/power tools and a quad bike had been stolen. Clerk also mentioned Madge Hill where night time activity was causing litter. Police are driving this area when on night duty. A resident of Severn Stoke asked about the arrests/conviction rates for the crime figures but these are not available.

## **5 Report of County Councillor –**

The issues discussed last year being Bus Consultation and Library Service at Upton have both been resolved. The Parish still has a very good, regular bus service including a night service and also a Sunday service when festivals are on in Upton. The Upton Library is continuing with a Upton Libraries Together charity being formed to assist with the running of Upton Library. Worcestershire County Council are currently still awaiting further information from Consultees on the Larfarge Tarmac planning application to extend the aggregate extraction to large areas around Clifton and Sandford.

Cllr Sutton mentioned the unsatisfactory disruption caused by the M5 night closures. The Highways Agency are the authority responsible for this and the three months this continued for was unacceptable. Cllr Sutton is pursuing this with the Highways Agency. Residents commented on the speed of vehicles coming along all routes of the diversions but particularly through Severn Stoke with properties so close to the road.

Cllr Sutton has also been pursuing the issue of HGV traffic through High Green, WCC has monitored vehicles and were not concerned as under 50 HGV's a day are using this route! Cllr Sutton will continue to pursue this. The Lengthsman Scheme is still being funded by WCC, this is an invaluable service to the Parishes.

## **6 Report of District Councillors D Harrison & J Michael**

Cllr Harrison thanked residents for voting for him and Cllr Michael at the recent elections. Cllr Michael introduced himself to the meeting. Cllr Harrison said the South Worcestershire Development Plan was still being reviewed by an Inspector, it is hoped this plan will be adopted later this year. Clerk commented that at present without the SWDP adopted it was leaving villages vulnerable to developers putting in housing applications. The Annual General Meeting of Malvern Hills District Council takes place next week, with many new Councillors having been recently elected, including Cllr Michael.

Cllr Harrison mentioned changes in Malvern Hills staff who had assisted Severn Stoke & Croome D'Abitot Parish Council in the past and will give Clerk new contact details for their replacements. Cllrs Harrison and Michael will be attending each Parish Council meeting in the future.

## **7 Report from Severn Stoke Parish Hall Committee Chairman**

David Thompson thanked Cllr Harrison for the recent donation given to the Hall Committee towards the Parish Hall website. Mr Thompson gave an update on the increase in revenue the hall has had on last year's figures despite losing the regular Auctions. Thankfully no flooding has taken place this year. The hall is not used during any week day so if anyone knows of a group who may require the facilities he urged everyone to spread the word which is also the aim of the Parish Hall website which will be available soon, [www.severnstokevillagehall.co.uk](http://www.severnstokevillagehall.co.uk)

## **8 Report from St Deny's Church** (circulated to all attendees of the meeting on a separate sheet) prepared by Mr J Henderson. The Clerk gave an outline of the information covered in Mr Henderson's report.

The Parish Council were thanked for their contributions to the upkeep of the Churchyard and covering the cost of the servicing of the church clock. Since the floods of the 2013 and 2014 the church needs to be made as flood resilient as possible. With a Government Flood Grant 32 stacking chairs were purchased, with Diocesan consent some of the wooden pews have been removed to storage. Two phases of improvements are taking place, phase 1 has commenced with the decorating of Chancel ceiling and timbers, new heat and lighting will be installed with a curtain hung in the Chancel Arch to separate this area.

Phase 2 will provide mains water, kitchenette, toilet etc. Consent has been given for a chemical toilet at present. Draft plans will be produced in the future and fund raising done to complete this scheme.

The Friends of St Denys was founded in the 1960's. They are a charity and fund raise to cover insurance, electricity building repairs etc. Major fundraising is being planned to fund the above, the first event is an Auction of Promises on 13<sup>th</sup> November. For further information contact John Henderson or Jim Spence, Church Wardens.

## **9 Flood defence progress by Flood Action Group Chairman, Mr Tim Weeks**

Mr Weeks reported that since the meeting held last November with the Environment Agency and FLAG members steady progress has been made. The Environment Agency (EA) have met with all land owners and have now reached an agreement of the location and line of the Flood Bund for Severn Stoke. The EA are currently drawing up revised plans which they hope to have available to put to the community next month. The funding for this scheme is also being pursued with the newly re-elected Harriett Baldwin MP giving her assurance that Severn Stoke Flood Bund will remain one of her top priorities. The sum of £600,000 has been earmarked by the Environment Agency via various sources which will leave a shortfall of approximately £350,000. A meeting is planned with Severn Trent this month with two FLAG members to discuss Severn Trent's obligation to assist with this scheme and resolve the pumping station/sewerage issues at times of flooding.

Various discussions took place regarding the amount and type of spoil required, possible sources for this and the possible compensation which may be required for by some landowners for their land. Dan Wilkinson of the Environment Agency joined in the discussions where required.

Moving forward the Flood Action Group will benefit from any profit made by the Village Fund Day which is on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2015, a licence is being applied for to hold a raffle at this event and it will also cover future events held at The Rose and Crown public house, such as a Quiz Night in November. Mr Weeks will be approaching both the Parish Hall Committee and the Parish Council for donations/pledges to the fund for the shortfall of this project. The FLAG group will also be seeking pledges and donations from community members. There is a need to demonstrate to Harriett Baldwin MP and the EA that the community supports this project.

## **10 Open Forum – Residents Question Time**

Cllr Watkins gave a brief outline of the things the Parish Council had achieved since the last Annual Meeting, this included the replacement of three of the Parish Notice Boards, the replacement of the bus shelter at Severn Stoke and the restoration of the War Memorial which was funded by grants from Lafarge Tarmac and The War Memorials Trust. Cllr Watkins also thanked his fellow Councillors who had been recently re-elected in an uncontested Election and also thanked Lorna Gower the Parish Clerk for her services.

No further questions.

**The meeting closed at 8.10pm.**

Signed .....Chairman of Severn Stoke & Croome D'Abitot Parish Council ..... Date