

Stottesdon & Sidbury Parish Council

The annual Parish Council meeting held on Monday 19th May, 2025 at 7.30pm in Chorley Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs D Young (Chairman), A Sierakowski, S Allen, R Gutteridge.

Public: None

Clerk: Mrs F Morris

Prior to the meeting commencing all Cllrs, who had not already signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office, did so.

A letter was read out from a Cllr unable to attend tonight's meeting, expressing her regret that we did not manage 80% of Cllrs elected, thus preventing the PC from proceeding further with Quality Status. She also offered her name to be put forward for Vice-Chairman and SALC representative if there was no other interest.

1) **Election of Officers:**

a) Chairman:

Current Chair is prepared to stand again, as there were no further nominations, it was proposed, seconded, and **RESOLVED that Cllr Young be re-elected.**

b) Acceptance of Office by Chairman – completed.

c) Election of Vice-Chairman:

Current Vice-Chairman had not filled in her papers for the elections, so could not be considered. It was proposed, seconded, and **RESOLVED that Cllr Abbiss be elected.**

d) Acceptance of Office by Vice Chairman - will be signed asap.

e) Declaration of Acceptance of Office signed by Cllrs – already completed.

f) Election of SALC reps and any others as deemed necessary - agreed to leave these until we have a full council.

2) **Co-option of Parish Councillor** – No further applicants received to date. Clerk will put out reminders for next meeting.

3) **Public participation** – meeting to be suspended for this item. No public present.

4) **Apologies for absence:** Cllrs Abbiss, Crawford and Adams, Shropshire Cllr Davies, Police.

5) **Declaration of Interests:**

The Localism Act 2011, Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012. Members are reminded that they are required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether the interest is entered in the register of member's interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

6) **To confirm minutes of the meeting held on 28th April 2025:** These had been circulated with the agenda and were proposed, seconded, and **RESOLVED to sign these as a true record.**

7) Matters arising from minutes:

a) Clerk's report:

Reply re: Pitt Cottage bridge:

Clerk has had a conversation with Mr Edge, Pitt Cottage, and explained to him what we had been told. He confirmed that a landowner who owns part of the wood had offered to make a replacement bridge some years ago which would be 10' instead of 8' wide and higher and that he would try to contact him again regarding this.

I explained the situation regarding SC only providing BW bridge, which he understood, and that I was awaiting further information. He accepted this and I promised to update him when I knew anymore.

Clerk then spoke to Richard Knight; SC and he confirmed that they would only provide a BW bridge but would be prepared to put the cost of providing this towards the vehicular bridge. I asked him to speak to Mr Edge, which he agreed to do as he had spoken to Mr Edge previously. Further reply received: 14/5/25 from Countryside Team:

I have a meeting with my manager Richard Knight and some other parties involved next week on site to have a look and discuss the way forward.

Clerk thinks this should now be left to SC and the landowners to come up with an amicable, suitable solution. **All agreed.**

Reply re: Hinton Bridge:

Further to David's email regarding the above, Clerk had emailed Pete Gould this morning and he has just rung me to say that they did not need to notify us as they were not impinging on the highway.

They had permission from landowners and stuff that was left there was possibly the soil/rock samples, so would be no use to anybody!

The reason for the investigation drilling is they are looking to possibly replace the bridge at some time.

Clerk mentioned the Hardwickforge bridge being hit and he will get someone to look at it.

Reply re: PAYE:

Clerk had queried this with the Payroll Administrator, but due to increase in PAYE this was correct. **ACCEPTED.**

Reply re: Lengthsman Scheme:

Clerk had written to Neen Sollars & Milson and Farlow PC's, as requested and received the following reply from Neen Sollars & Milson:

Unfortunately, the news is not good! This started when I took over as Clerk and our new Cllr Peter Bloomer came up with a scheme that was taking place in Devon. I had a meeting with the lead Cllr Picton (now deposed). She was very enthusiastic about us helping filling in small Potholes (as per the Devon scheme) and didn't really see a problem with the Kier Contract, as Shropshire Council had small teams. She took it back to Andy Wilde who contacted us, Cllr Bloomer sent in details of the Devon Scheme and a 6 or 7 point plan was emailed back. We actually had a meeting with Jonathan Stigwood, who took us through filling in a Pothole, unfortunately since then Highways has been coming up with excuses at every turn, not replying to emails etc etc. We even late last year were asked by the County Council to put up monies, to which we agreed, but nothing ever happened.

I had even been contacted by another Council in Kinlet who had seen a piece in the Shropshire Star about the Parish Council filling in Potholes, as a pilot scheme for the County.

All I can say is that, whilst I understand the majority of the Councils monies that are spent on Social Care, we are getting a very poor service, made worse in our case by adjoining Worcestershire County Councils roads.

I was also told by a recent team, who had come from Shrewsbury, that due to travel they would only have 5 hours to work on the roads. We also had a team from Craven Arms earlier in the year that went home by 2;30pm as they had run out of tarmac, never returned, leaving potholes in the carriageway unfilled, but had filled in non-carriageway holes!

Sorry as you can see it works me up rather. We have a new Secretary who will be starting soon as I am now a member of the Parish Council.

It would be good if we could have further discussions, and I am hoping that one of our Councillors will be attending the Southern meeting in July.

Regarding the Lengthsman, he is employed 7 hours a week and has offered his services to help the CC gully suck drains etc etc, but the County has never let us know when they are coming.

Further reply:

You are quite right about Insurance, but it has been sorted in Devon! They don't fulfil their obligations as in the Highways Act of 1980, and as long as it is reported on FixMyStreet they can't use their get out of jail card which I think is Section 49 of the same act.

Cllr Butler had also tried, but his last email said they were trying to avoid us doing it because of liability insurance, this had been sorted by Devon CC, and Cllr Bloomer had forwarded all the details to them previously of how Devon was undertaking it.

Perhaps this is something we need to get together about and try and force their hand. We spend about £4K on our Lengthsman per year. Perhaps we ought to control our own road budgets?? Clerk read out the specification for the job when Mark took it on. This led to a big debate as to what other services could be provided under this scheme as money had been put into the precept for this.

Was it possible to come up with our own 'pilot scheme' for the parish?

Clerk also read out the details from the original contract and at present Mark covers all the items agreed.

Clerk was asked to find out:

1. if the scheme covers insurance for the Lengthsman
2. What tools/equipment Mark would need to carry out additional work.
3. Construct email for Clerk to send.

b) Any others - none.

8) Planning applications/permissions/refusals received:

a) Any received after issue of agenda – none received.

9) Shropshire Cllr's report: Not available, new Cllr hopes to attend our next meeting.

10) SALC report: no meetings.

11) Finance:

a) Accounts to be paid: Clerk's salary, £xx HMRC - £451.15. Insurance renewal - £670.31 – Clerk was asked to query if the 2 car parks are covered and the Legthsman before this is paid.

Any others received after issue of agenda – none.

b) to approve Asset Register – **APPROVED.**

12) Parish problems:

Reports from Cllrs:

Same potholes as previously reported.

Harcourt road getting really bad from Litley bridge up to the crossroads then numerous large potholes further on along this road.

Bagginswood signs up for starting on 16th June – 27th June.

Cllrs still having problems uploading photographs onto FMS.

- Any others: Response received from residents at 5 Station Road – this matter is now closed.

13) To approve Financial Regulations:

Clerk had taken further advice from SALC and thought the alterations were ok, but suggested speaking/looking at other Clerk's websites. Clerk confirmed that she had done this, but some were way out of date.

Clerk had altered as she thought was suitable, but Cllrs were still not happy with section 7.1.

It was agreed to cross out the second sentence and insert: In their absence authority to execute the payment as described in 7.10 will be delegated to the Chair.

Clerk pointed out that this account was linked to her own personal banking, but only for logging in purposes but both are totally separate, no one else can see the PC accounts as everyone has their own log in details. This is how the bank set up the internet banking. In her absence the cheque book could be used.

Clerk was asked to contact the bank and ask if this request could be implemented.

14) Correspondence: *All noted as read unless comments made:*

- SALC Bulletins/weekly briefings
- Electoral roll alterations
- Park & Ride to Shrewsbury Hospital approved.
- Ludlow Half marathon 13th July road closure
- Completion of Interest Forms – electronically as per email sent out.
- Training – Clerk pointed out that this budget should be used to refresh Cllrs knowledge.
- Standing Orders complete and sent out to Cllrs.
- Any others received after issue of the agenda.

Clerk's annual appraisal is now overdue – will be left until full council and committees approved.

15) Date of next meeting: 24th June 2025

Payments approved:

Insurance - £670.31

Clerk's salary: £xx

HMRC - £451.15

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.00pm.

Signed: Chairman

Date: