

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 16th October 2024 at 7.00pm held at Sedbury and Beachley Village Hall, Sedbury.

Present: Councillors: Drew, Cracknell, Koning, Russell, Swambo and Tullett.

Officers: Carol Hinton (Clerk) David Stevens (Assistant Clerk)

PC Mark Evans and PCSO Abi Coe

1. ATTENDANCE

a) Resolved to receive apologies for absence from those councillors unable to attend from Councillors Allan, Stead and Wall.

b) Resolved to accept those apologies received with reasons for absence from Councillors Allan, Stead and Wall.

Apologies had also been received from County Councillor Chris McFarling.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a) To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers and in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members.

Interests may be declared at any time during the meeting should they become apparent.

b) To consider any Dispensation Requests received by the Parish Clerk and not previously considered. **None.**

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

a) Resolved to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 18th September 2024.

b) To consider any questions arising from those minutes.

The Chairman stated his disappointment that Facebook comments following the September meeting suggesting the Council was trying to stifle comments on Facebook had not reflected the discussions at the meeting. The information had clearly been shared by a councillor present at the meeting and, whilst councillors are free to discuss any non-confidential aspects of a meeting with members of the public, only accurate details should be shared.

4. CO-OPTION OF JUSTINE BURGESS

Resolved to approve co-option of Justine Burgess to the Parish Council who duly signed the Acceptance of Office.

5. PUBLIC CONSULTATION

To receive and consider any questions from the Public. **None Present**

6. POLICING IN THE PARISH

Resolved to note Police crime statistics for Tidenham and Sedbury can be accessed following this link.

[Tidenham and Sedbury | Police.uk \(www.police.uk\)](https://www.police.uk)

Cllr Russell – There appeared to have been an increase in crime rates during August. PC Evans reminded councillors that the statistics provided through the system are for all incidents notified, some of which do not progress to being a crime. Over the past 6 months there have been 62 crimes reported in the Parish – lower than many areas. They are unable to tell how many of those became crimes to be investigated. PCSO Coe commented that there had been several crimes reported in a short space of time in just one location which will have also skewed the figures.

Cllr Koning – there appears to be a high number of violence and sexual offences. How does this fit in with the 'unable to prosecute' category? PC Evans – this may be because victims retract complaints, there is no evidence eg. CCTV etc., or may have gone to court and been re-graded to a different category.

Cllr Koning – are the crimes concentrated in one area? PC Evans – the main area is Sedbury but that probably due to the highest concentration of population - % crime in each area may be similar. Domestic crime is dealt with by a different team.

Cllr Tullett – is this domestic violence? PC Evans – not necessarily. Included would be anybody aged 16 or over that has been in a sexual relationship. This category also includes for example sibling fights, coercive behaviour and stalking.

PC Evans thanked councillors for the walk around (see item 7) which enabled them to share the issues they are presented with.

PCSO Coe – has been handing out ASB letters to some causing a nuisance with a local resident. Can the Parish Council erect high netting along the Sedbury playing field fence?

PC Evans – there have been a number of complaints regarding speeding near the cottages past the Beachley Barracks. Hopefully an ASB camera can be fitted facing towards the Barracks which be able to allow number plate recognition – this may be a deterrent.

PC Evans – Police are hoping to introduce a Youth Panel for the Parish which is currently in its draft stages. This following discussions with young people who have suggested lots they would like to see improved but don't know who to approach. This would involve a group of young people in a ten week session that will look at all aspects in the parish, including attending a Parish Council meeting if acceptable to councillors. They will also be involved in community speed surveys and various other police activities, culminating in a presentation and report to the Parish Council which will hopefully share issues from a young person's point of view. Certificates will be presented to the young people.

PC Evans – recently young people they have met in the area appear to show more respect for them.

Cllr Cracknell – informed the officers that the Tidenham Youth Programme is being newly launched and it would be good to work together on this and other issues. Contact details were shared with Cllrs Cracknell, Burgess and Swambo.

7. COMMITTEES

Resolved to receive and note reports, minutes and recommendations from committees and to consider any questions arising from them.

i). Planning and Highways Committee meeting held on 25th September 2024.

There were no questions to Councillor Russell, Chairman of the Committee.

Cllr Russell – there had been a walkabout around the Tutshill roundabouts and other sites in the Tutshill and Woodcroft area, organised by the Police and including parish councillors, county councillor and Glos Highways. Glos Highways will ask a design expert to look at the roundabout location for possible improvements. They will also put in white 'H' markers near the school and in Woodcroft to stop parking in areas that will allow vehicles to pass. Cllr Koning commented that the meeting had highlighted the complicated issues around which driving or parking offences are the responsibility of the Police and which are not.

8. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Resolved to receive and note any announcements from the Chairman of the meeting.

The Chairman and Clerk had met with the administrators of the Sedbury and Beachley Facebook Group, along with Nicki Bullivant. It had been a useful discussion and nice to meet in person to discuss how the Council and the Facebook Group could work in a more positive manner going forward and attempt to stop some of the untruths and nastiness towards the Council, individual Councillors and some family members. It has been agreed to meet again and to share information through WhatsApp regarding Council activities.

Green Spaces Project – this will need to be re-assessed now that Joe Jenkins has left, but is still ongoing and will be progressed particularly once Cllr Stead has received further information regarding play areas.

9. REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Resolved to note report from Chris McFarling who had been unable to attend the meeting. Clerk to forward report electronically so that the link in it can be used.

10. PARISH CLERK'S REPORT

Resolved to receive and note the Parish Clerk's Report.

11. YOUTH PROJECT

Resolved to note feedback from the meeting on 4th October by the YETI Sub Committee to discuss the future of the project.

A positive meeting had been held. It had been agreed that the project would now be called the Tidenham Youth Programme. This will be organised by the sub group with no employed youth worker. A programme of events would be prepared – initially every two months. A meeting will be set up involving each school in the Parish. The first event proposed will be a film and disco night for 8-11 year olds on 7th December 2024.

12. FINANCE

a) **Resolved to approve payments** according to the Financial Statement for September 2024.

b) **Resolved to receive and approve the Financial Statement** for September 2024.

The Clerk reported that the second half of the Precept had been received from the District Council – this to be added formally to the November agenda.

13. EXTERNAL AUDIT – 2023/2024

a) **Resolved to approve** the External Audit report for 2023/2024 and note that PKF Littlejohn have stated that the information provided is in accordance with proper practices and that no other matters have been raised giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

b) **Resolved to note** the audited AGAR and Notice of Conclusion of Audit have been added to the website as required.

14. NETWORKING – LOCAL COUNCILS

a) **Resolved to note** a group of 13 councils within the southern Forest of Dean area have grouped together for meetings with Clerks to discuss common issues and resolutions.

b) **Resolved to approve** becoming part of a re-instated Wye Valley Consortium of local councils bordering the River Wye. Councillor Russell volunteered to be the representative for Tidenham.

15. SAFER STREETS FUNDING – CCTV CAMERAS

Resolved to note the two CCTV cameras are due to be installed 18th October, permission to mount on the lampposts having been received from Glos CC Streetlighting – one replacing the existing camera on King Alfred's Road and the second on the lamppost on the corner of the Tallard's Place footpath and the Sedbury Hall playing field.

16. COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH CAMERA

Councillor Russell declared an interest in item 16 b) and did not take part in the discussion or vote.

a) **Resolved to approve** Memorandum of Understanding between landowners on the B4228 in Woodcroft for the positioning of a pole and mounting of the Speedwatch Camera on their land.

b) **Resolved to approve** quotation from Howard Rees of £200 (no VAT) for the removal of the Speedwatch camera from its existing position on the B4228.

c) **Resolved to note** a letter of intention to erect pole and Camera to be delivered to local residents.

17. STREAMING OF MEETINGS

Resolved unanimously not to approve requests from 3 members of the public for Parish Council and Committee meetings to be streamed via the Zoom platform. Because of the number of comments and misunderstandings shared about this by a few members of the public it was agreed to minute the reasons for the decision:

1. It is a legal requirement that members of the public cannot participate in a meeting unless attending in person. For those unable to attend a meeting to observe proceedings, draft minutes are posted on the website as soon as possible after each meeting.

2. Whilst it is allowed for meetings to be live streamed as they happen so that a meeting can be watched, Zoom is not a suitable vehicle to be able to do this. Due to issues with muting and the way Zoom allows for noise distractions to take over the microphone it would not allow for effective discussions to take place.

3. The microphone and camera from one laptop could not broadcast the meeting so that the sound and picture was clear and this could not be done through the Clerk's or Assistant Clerk's laptop whilst it was being used for the meeting. The alternative would be for each participant to have their own piece of equipment which some councillors do not have and which the Council does not provide.

5. Effective and suitable equipment for the size of the meeting room and for 15 or more people to speak would need to be purchased and can be expensive – Initial enquiries into costs of such equipment show a minimum of approximately £ 2500 without installation costs.

6. It was noted that the District Council live streams meetings but has a fully wired and set up council chamber to be able to do this. The Parish Council would need to have a portable system that would need to be set up and locked away for each meeting.

7. Members of the public attending a meeting in person can choose not to be filmed under Data Protection laws thus a camera that could be adjusted to allow for this would be needed.

8. Councillors commented that a very small proportion of the public (0.002 % of 6700 signed up members of the FB group) had shown an interest in this and that nobody had attended the meeting to discuss the item.

18. **SEDBURY AND BEACHLEY VILLAGE HALL**

Resolved to approve volunteer councillors to produce a working committee guidance document prior to the transfer of trusteeship to the Parish Council as Councillors Burgess, Koning, Russell and Swambo plus the Clerk.

19. **CORRESPONDENCE**

Resolved to receive and note any other correspondence as detailed in the Clerk's Report.

Letter from a member of the Historical Group regarding embroideries displayed in the hall.

Request for a councillor to be an assessor for a Duke of Edinburgh Award pupil – Councillor Allan had volunteered.

Jeff Baldwin – proposal to consider an e-bike scheme for Tidenham as in Chepstow. Clerk to invite to a future meeting to discuss.

DUE TO THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF ITEM 20, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS WERE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING

20. **ASSISTANT CLERK SALARY**

Resolved to approve salary scale point increase for David Stevens from 1st October 2024 as per his contract of employment, and to pay from that date.

21. **COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

Resolved to receive and note any matters which councillors wish to raise and where appropriate add to the agenda for the following meeting or meetings of committees.

Cllr Drew – Ormerod Road roundabout – could this be cleared before the soldier is displayed for Remembrance Day? Clerk to contact handyman.

Cllr Tullett – The Ormerod Road roundabout is looking sad and needs to be cleared. Also – the parking at the end of King Alfred's Road continues to be a problem. Chris McFarling had sent a report in the past few weeks stating that only urgent yellow lines where an incident had occurred were likely to be painted for the foreseeable future.

Cllr Burgess – concerned that the recent traffic issues in Tutshill and Sedbury had caused traffic on the old Wye bridge to mount the pavement to pass stationary vehicles and is the bridge robust enough for this double weight and which is also dangerous for pedestrians?

Cllr Cracknell – on the Sedbury Lane exit from St John's School the weeds on the pavements are overgrown making it unusable for pedestrians. Suggested reporting this through 'Fix my Street' at Glos CC.

Cllr Russell – The District Council needs to be aware of the almost daily traffic issues around the A48 and the amount of pollution being put into the local atmosphere for residents. Before further plans for housing for the area are made, a full evaluation of the noise and pollution needs to be carried out.

22. **FUTURE MEETINGS**

Resolved to note the dates of future council and committee meetings:

Wednesday 23rd October 2024 – Planning and Highways Committee.

Wednesday 13th November 2024 – Amenities Committee Meeting.

Wednesday 20th November 2024 – Full Council meeting.

The meeting concluded at 20.58hrs