# DRAFT MINUTES
# Stoulton Parish Meeting
## Held in Stoulton Village Hall on May 19th 2022 at 7pm

**Present:** Cllr P. Haywood -Vice Chair, Cllr W. Edwards, Cllr A. Morris, Cllr S. Morris, Cllr A. Walker, Cllr M. Robinson, District Cllr M. Ward, Clerk, County Cllr L. Robinson

30 parishioners attended

### 1. Chairman of the Parish Council's Report- Cllr Haywood

Welcome to Stoulton's Annual Parish meeting.
In May 2021 the A.G.M. with the council meeting was organised as a zoom meeting as had the previous meetings of that year under the shadow of Covid-19 but since that date council meetings have returned to more normal arrangements with face to face meetings but with the necessary precautions.

The regular issues raised at the parish council meetings over this past year have been to consider planning applications, highways matters i.e, parking in the village and speed regulation on the B4084, the work of the lengthsman in maintaining the drainage ditches in the area and the vegetation along the pathways and Village Hall matters; a report from the Village Hall Committee will follow as a separate item.
The key issue studied by the council has been the S.W.D.P. (South Worcestershire Development Plan) which has been kept under review throughout this year, as it has been since 2019 but an update on this item will be give later in this meeting as separate matter.

Two particular issues have been raised during this year, the proposed Boundary Commission changes for county council representation and the Stoulton Conservation Area. The first involved the proposed Boundary Commission changes, a plant to reduce the number of county councillors across Worcestershire from 46 to 44 requiring a reorganisation of the electoral districts and Stoulton was one of the districts affected, Stoulton was to be combined with Norton, a district on the edge of the City of Worcester. After consultation and discussion an objection was sent to the Boundary Commission favouring a link with the more rural district of Upton Snodsbury. We await a decision on this matter. The second item, was to give support to the Stoulton Conservation Area. Molly Edwards, the Conservation Officer for Wychavon District Council, offered to research the village and to provide a written report. The council expressed an interest in the project which would research the history of the settlement and its buildings, identifying what is important about the village and what threats there are to its character. Molly was linked to groups in the area who had already researched some aspects of the project. We look forward to the resulting report.

I would like to thank, all the councillors who have given their time and used their local knowledge for the benefit of this area during this year. Thanks also go to our County Councillor Linda Robinson and District Councillor Mark Ward for their regular reports and for keeping this parish informed of Worcestershire and Wychavon decisions, thanks also go to our former chairman Councillor David Reece for his leadership and to Lynn Stewart for her guidance as clerk over recent years but I am also grateful to Lisa Cope for taking on the role as clerk in recent months.

The A.G.M. is an opportunity for members of the parish to listen and participate in the issues that

have engaged this parish over the past year and to consider future matters but I would also like to take this opportunity to remind members of the public that they are entitled to bring issues before our meetings, as the first part of each meeting is set aside for matters of concern and that information and decisions made by the parish council are posted on the noticeboards around the area.

## 2. Chairman of the Village Hall Committee's Report-Cllr Morris

Stoulton Village Hall has enjoyed a successful year against the context of the COVID pandemic. Since restrictions have eased has been in constant use with bookings and events.

The committee has sought to re-establish the hall as a venue for community functions, bringing people together to meet and socialise. Attendance of some of the events has been less than pre-pandemic levels but the Coffee Mornings on the 1st Saturday of the month have seen a steady increase in attendance along with the monthly Lunch Club (in support of St Edmunds Church). We raised £200 for Macmillan Nurses at our October Coffee Morning and the forthcoming quiz night in support of St Richards Hospice will see the Hall at full capacity!

Many of the clubs and regular activity bookings have returned and we have benefitted from bookings from Drakes Broughton whilst they have been renovating their Village Hall.

By providing an affordable venue with excellent facilities we are supporting a wide range of activities for people in the area and benefiting the groups or small businesses that run them.

There was no significant building work but we continue to ensure general maintenance and minor repairs are completed on both the interior and exterior. In the coming year we expect to redecorate the hall and are currently reviewing quotes.

The Chairman would like to thank fellow committee members for their hard work and dedication and the many people who have helped with the various events throughout the year. In particular we owe our gratitude to Richard and Kate Hartnell for continuing to maintain and water the Garden area along Manor Farm, benefiting both the Hall and the village as a whole.

## 3. County Councillor Report- Linda Robinson

As tonight is your Annual Parish meeting, I would like to say a few words of appreciation. It is hard to believe that nearly a year has passed since I became your new County Cllr. Taking the role on from Rob Adams was quite daunting and I would like to thank him for being a valued advisor for me as I got to grips with this new position. My thanks also go to all your hard-working parish councillors particularly your Chairman and Clerk.

Writing an annual report is a useful exercise as it makes you reflect on the previous year so here is a brief overview from my perspective.

A large percentage of my time is now spent on highways issues dealing with 11 parish councils and three parish meetings in our large Upton Snodsbury Division. I have been made Vice Chairman of Planning & regulatory services at County which is far more strategic than at District. We have decided applications for major infrastructure projects like a new footbridge across the River Severn and some large quarries. I have also become a member of the Hereford & Worcestershire Fire Authority which is very interesting.

From my Divisional Community fund last year, I have been able to fund a new VAS sign for the B4042

In May last year we were in the middle of the Coronavirus pandemic and I would like to thank all those in your community who gave their time to help others. Now we are involved in yet another crisis with the war in Ukraine and once again many of our residents are doing sterling work to help refugees and raise funds and send collections of essential items for those still in Ukraine. Please see below for the latest details from Wychavon & County.

**Covid-19 update**

April saw the end of free testing and this has affected the reliability of infection data. While official testing rates have fallen significantly, information from other sources presents a different picture, although data is still patchy.

What is clear is infection rates are significantly higher than the headline rates. In the south of the county, it is estimated about 1 in 14 people have Covid-19 which is the same rate as England and only slightly above the West Midlands (1 in 13).

This is being felt by our acute hospitals. As of 25 April, 129 patients were admitted with Covid-19 .There are 77now in hospital. Not all are being treated for Covid-19 though some may have arrived for a different reason but also have Covid-19. More people over 60 are presenting with Covid symptoms. Our hospitals are feeling the pressure and at a NHS trust's board latest meeting alarming figures from March were discussed with promises to redouble efforts to improve the worrying situation. These included long delays for ambulance call outs and an average waiting time of 150mins to be downloaded from ambulances with 241patients waiting on a trolley to be seen for up to 12hrs.

**Homes for Ukraine update**

Staff continue to work hard to deliver the Homes for Ukraine scheme in Wychavon. As of 12 mayl, we have been made aware of 119 hosts in the district, with an anticipated 284 guests. We are finding that some guests are choosing not to travel after their visa has been issued for a variety of reasons so we are treating this figure with caution.

As of 10th may the number of visas issued by the Home Office for guests intending to travel to Wychavon was 189. And 102 guests have arrived in our District.

**Cost of Living Crisis**

The third crisis it looks as though we are going to be facing concerns the rapid increase in the cost of living. The war in Ukraine and consequent sanctions against Russia have resulted in rapid increases in fuel and household energy costs. As part of the Government scheme to help households living in Band A to Band D properties will receive a £150 payment to help with recent increases in energy bills.

Residents will start to receive their Energy Bills Rebate from this week starting on 9 May.

Households living in a Band A to D property will receive a £150 payment as part of the Government scheme to help with recent increases in energy bills.

Wychavon will begin making payments first to residents they have bank account details for – those who pay by Direct Debit. The aim will be to complete payments to everyone paying by Direct Debit by the end of May.

Residents paying by Direct Debit are advised to check their bank account throughout May for the payment. Direct Debit payers who have not received the payment by 1 June 2022 should email Revenues@southworcestershirerevenues.gov.uk with Energy Rebate in the subject line.

Wychavon is finalising the details of the discretionary scheme announced by the Government. This allows councils to make payments of £150 to people living in Band E to H properties who are on low incomes. Once the scheme is confirmed, more information will be available on Wychavon's website.

Food costs have also increased and we are aware of increased demand at our food banks. Wychavon and County are offering 'Here to help' schemes so please let me know if you know of any families that are struggling and we can signpost them in the right direct

**How Worcestershire's gritters travelled the equivalent of three times around the Earth this winter**

GRITTERS covered almost 70,000 miles across Worcestershire this winter as staff sought to keep the county open for business.

Since October, Worcestershire County Council has carried out 51 gritting runs, spreading 5,341 tonnes of salt, keeping roads moving and safe for motorists. This covered 69,972 miles in total, which is the equivalent of approximately three times around the circumference of our planet.

Visit **www.worcestershire.gov.uk/surfacedressing** for the list of roads which will be subject to the works in 2022 and stay up to date with the surface dressing schedule on Twitter @WorcsTravel.

Finally I am pleased to say that so far 16,000 trees have been planted across our County as part of the Queen's Green canopy Scheme to celebrate her Jubilee.

## 4. District Councillor Report- Mark Ward

Wychavon District Council is in the process of delivering a new recycling search The Council is helping residents to recycle more and in the best way by having a database of items and packaging. The database will hold approximately 10,000 items with details of how and where they can be recycled.

Ticket to Ride event Our Ticket to Ride event recently went well and we've had some positive feedback from participants. Councillor Rob Adams gave a warm welcome to the 40 plus people in attendance, many of whom enjoyed having a ride on the Evesham Bicycle Bus and trying out an e-bike in one of our car parks. There were six workshop sessions on offer covering a range of popular and effective community transport schemes already in place in south Worcestershire, including car clubs, a community minibus, e-bikes, the bicycle bus and mobility hubs. You can find out more about these using the links below.
We encouraged people to put forward community transport projects they want to raise funds for to the Wychavon Ticket to Ride fund, the next round opens in June. Jen Taylor, summed up the evening by highlighting the wide range of benefits that community-led transport projects can generate including, improving access to services, reducing social isolation, improving health and wellbeing and cutting carbon emissions. Evesham Bicycle Bus Norton Connector community minibus Malvern Hills electric bike test before you invest / loan scheme Malvern Hills e-bike to work scheme Malvern Hills community car club

Community Recovery Fund We have started receiving applications for our Covid-19 Community Recovery Fund. This is the £150,000 grant fund we have set up to support community

groups/organisations with their day-to-day running costs to aid recovery from the pandemic. The fund is not to support businesses. You can find more details, and a link to our online application form, on our website.

Homes for Ukraine update As of 12 May, our team had been notified of 119 sponsor addresses in Wychavon, anticipating 284 guests from Ukraine. We have inspected 93 properties, with a further two booked so far, and have welcomed 74 guests to the Civic Centre to provide their £200 welcome payment and welfare checks. A further 22 guests are booked in for their welcome in the coming days. The Government publishes weekly numbers of visas issued by district and, from this week, numbers of arrivals by district too – Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme: Visa data by country, upper and lower tier local authority. As of 10 May, 189 visas had been issued for guests travelling to Wychavon and 102 guests have arrived in the district.

Former teacher is new Wychavon Chairman A former teacher is aiming to raise awareness of Wychavon's work to tackle climate change after taking on the role of Chairman of the Council. Cllr Alex Sinton was officially handed the chain from outgoing Chairman Cllr Robert Raphael at Wychavon's Annual Council Meeting on Wednesday (18 May). He will be supported by Cllr Emma Kearsey who was elected Vice Chairman for the year. The passionate Manchester United fan represents Droitwich Spa East on Wychavon having lived in the town since 1999. Born in Urmston in Manchester, Cllr Sinton was a primary school teacher in Manchester for many years before joining RGS Worcester in 1989, where he remained until retiring in 2011.

And finally, Take a look at What's On (Spring/Summer Edition) 2022 to see what events and attractions are taking place in Wychavon. There are festivals, Markets, Street Food, Guided walks, and attractions such as the Battle of Evesham, The Blossom Trail and the Confetti Flower Field at Wick, to name just a few. Visit www.valeandspa.co.uk for more information.

**5. SWDP- Public presentation of the Worcestershire Parkway Garden Town proposal**
(Please see slides on www. https://www.stoultonparishcouncil.org/swdp-planning/)

**6. Public Questions**

Various questions were asked relating to the SWDP plan and concerns were raised regarding:
Hospital & Schools provision
The need for infrastructure to go in before houses
Adequate sewerage and water supplies to accommodate
The lack of adequate walk and cycle paths to the station already
Where is the public money coming from to fund the development

The meeting concluded at 8:25pm