

SEDGEBERROW PARISH COUNCIL

The minutes of Sedgeberrow Parish Council Meeting held at 7.15pm on Wednesday 17th January 2024 in Sedgeberrow Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs S Morris, R Hunt, J Williamson (Chairman) C Jackson & A Howe-Double

In Attendance: 3 parishioners, County Councillor E Eyre, District Councillor E Simms & Mrs N Nicholson (The Clerk)

1.Apologies:

District Councillor Emma Kearsey

2.Declarations of Interest:

Cllr Morris declared an interest re School as she is a governor.

Cllr Hunt declared an interest as Chairman of the Village Hall Committee

The public were present to listen to proceedings, no one had anything specific to raise.

The Chair moved to **Agenda Item 18 Representatives reports:**

Sedgeberrow Report January 2024 COUNTY COUNCILLOR ELIZABETH EYRE

A Happy and Healthy New Year to you all and thanks for the work you do for your community.

The New Year did not start as well as it might have, even today there are challenges from the Severn at Bewdley and Worcester. There were a good number of local closures including Brook Lane, Jubilee Bridge, Eckington, Pershore Bridge and Evesham Bridge. Weather conditions or other urgent works may cause the highway works programme to change. Resources are in some cases being re-deployed as we move into the recovery phase following storm Henk.

Cllr Eyre advised that there was only one reactive gully sucker and two cyclic gully suckers for the entire County and there for drainage issues could take some time to be addressed.

Cllr Hunt had a full list of Sedgeberrow drains that required gully sucking as reviewed by the Lengthsman, Cllr Eyre would request a gully sucker address these.

I remind you that you can use [one.network](#) to see all live, historic and upcoming roadworks and traffic restrictions including works undertaken by utility companies or housing developers. There is also a function within the [one.network](#) mapping system that allows you to set up alerts that will email you directly with all planned roadworks and traffic restrictions in any specific area either daily, weekly or monthly. Below is a link, which you can add to Google, to a short video tutorial on how you can set up these [one. network](#) alerts.

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PKzT1BEhAD8>

Budget 24-25. The budget this year is again a challenge the Local Government Provisional Settlement on the 18th of December gave us an extra £21 million (about £1.6 million less than what was already expected and announced the previous year) which leads us to a draft Budget for Cabinet tomorrow, 10th January. In summary. Any extra funding is welcomed but the recently announced rises in the National Living Wage and the major challenges with Children's Social Care placements and Home to School Travel continue.

The Council is significantly overspending in year because of demand & cost pressures around Childrens Social Care placements, Home to School Travel and Adult Social Care. Many other County and Unitary authorities across the Country are reporting these demand-led pressures in statutory services and so we have been working with similar Councils through the County Councils Network to highlight these financial challenges to Government and suggest ways in which they could be addressed by policy changes \ reform, extra funding, or a combination. These in-year pressures show no sign of abating and therefore to set a balanced budget for 2024/25 we must address this "structural deficit" in our budget as well as make reasonable provisions for growth in demand & cost during the next financial year. The Government is actively encouraging Councils to use reserves, and we are doing so, but they can only be used once, and the ongoing financial challenge means we must act.

Our current package of £25 million of proposals and the recommendation to increase Council Tax by 2.99% plus an additional 2% for Adult Services¹ will generate a further £19 million which still leaves us with a £20 million gap which we will continue to work on between the draft and final budget in February. We will seek to do this by challenging assumptions around growth, demand and cost wherever possible and considering the further use of some reserves. We will also be seeking to explore further proposals to reform the organisation in a way that does not affect the public, enhance productivity, and review our property needs. The important task is for the Council to remain financially sustainable and continue to protect the most vulnerable people in society as well as strive to improve the economy, environment, highways, and infrastructure of the County that you rightly expect.

VAS data I have because of the PCC and a chief officer appearance at Full Council, on 11th January, asked how the police use the VAS data that parishes collect. And I have been advised that there are 69 areas where community speed watch is being carried out in Worcestershire and the police plan further sites in the future so do contact for an assessment if you have an area that would benefit from community speed watch.

The Environment Act 2021 resulted in significant new responsibilities for the protection and enhancement of the natural environment. Local Nature Recovery Strategies must agree on priorities for nature recovery, councils must prepare a local habitat map identifying the most valuable existing areas for nature (be aware for your neighbourhood plans). This map will

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identify specific proposals for creating or improving habitat for nature. Watch out for the important issues and options for consultation.

Local Issues

VAS Cllr Howe-Double advised that he had met B Barnes from Worcestershire County Council Highways and two new locations had been chosen, Winchcombe Road and Cheltenham the 2 new poles would be erected by the Parish Gang in due course. The clerk noted that the old VAS needed removing to enable the old redundant poles to be removed at the same time as the new poles are installed. It was agreed to get the lengthsman to remove and it would be scrapped as there was no identifiable use for it.

Sedgeberrow Bridge – WCC is in the process of exploring an alternate option to get to the site and replace the bridge involving the use of volunteers to assist in carrying the components onto the site. (William Saunders)

A 46 road closure 23/1/-25/1 2024 between Teddington Hands roundabout and M5 J 9 resurfacing

Sedgeberrow First School— no issues reported to me.

Severn Trent and National Grid reinstatement – need to have a look with Cllr Kearsey.

National Highways issues - made representation to Highways England no response yet.

District Councillor Emma Simms introduced herself and was welcomed.

Cllr Simms summarised her report as follows:

Flooding

Jeremy Teal is the Wychavon District Council, Head of Projects and Emergency Planning – I have spoken with Jeremy who would like to visit Broadway, (along with Wickhamford, Childswickham, Sedgeberrow), for a local parish flooding symposium on flood management; risk, alleviation, mitigation, surrounding local flooding issues and concerns.

WDC reported - 14 flood alerts - record rainfall for October and second highest in December - since data records from 2008.

Total rainfall for 2023 - recorded 1063mm and exceeded 1m highest in the district for 60 years.

Significant improvements in flood alleviation is making a difference of actual flooding and surface water in the area, which has been reported from parishes.

Design Code

The draft Design Code is now for consultation at the District Council - Broadway made comments on this draft, for the Cotswold Edge aspect. The design code sets out to developers, house builders, architects, what is required in detail from their proposed plans

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before they are even submitted, guaranteeing standards are upheld and removing the uncertainty which can lead to delays in the planning process.

What is a design code?

A design code is a recipe for a place. It is a series of specifications for new developments, streets and buildings, which direct how they will look and interact with surrounding places. The approach has been to prepare four separate design code, supplementary planning documents, SPDs, based on the character areas identified. Broadway falls into Cotswold Edge

The design code focuses primarily on new residential developments, but also considers civic and commercial buildings. There may be occasions where it applies to existing areas of development such as infill, residential development or regeneration of commercial buildings, streets, or public spaces, but the intent is to set standards for new developments.

Cllr Sims would obtain a hard copy for the members to read.

The Chair gave an overview of the report received from District Councillor Emma Kersey:

Neighbourhood Development Plans

I wanted to talk to you about getting the review of SBNP started, as was the original plan, to ensure it will always supersede the SWDPR and be the most up to date plan.

That said just before Christmas came some very welcome news in change in planning legislation by the Government. This strengthens the position of NDPs yet further to afford them the protections when the local authority do not have a housing land supply to five years.

This means that in reality it gives some breathing space and SBNP may not need to be reviewed for another 18 months/two years. We can talk more when I'm with you next.

WDC Promises

I explained last time that the four year promises are being worked on and formulated. I'm pleased to say my vision of having the majority of the district covered by a NP will be included in a specific promise.

What this means to Sedgberrow, is when SBNP is reviewed an agreed level of support will be provided.

Design Code

You will recall sometime ago residents were asked for their feedback on what they loved and what they really didn't like in terms of design, where you live. From that, WDC commissioned a proactive project with Create Streets, who have created four design codes for four different areas of Wychavon.

It's that you are now asked to comment on, to check it's what you wanted for your area.

Once adopted the design code and it is a code not a guide, will be applied with all planning applications and new development.

A wonderful piece of work that other authorities are now following.

Community Legacy Grant

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The £250k grant awarded to Sedgeberrow (one of the largest if not the largest ever granted in the five years of the CLG scheme) was based on the application which contained the details of the three consultation rounds carried out during the NP process. It was on this basis the grant was awarded.

Cllr Williamson advised that the consultations to take place next were on what the New Hall would house, what the residents wanted to see happen within the hall etc, not re-consulting on the requirement for a new Village Hall.

3. Evesham Volunteer Centre representative

No representative attended.

It was noted that the Police had been invited to attend the meeting, but the clerk had received no response from them.

4. Member Vacancies

It was noted that there are still two member vacancies. It was suggested the vacancies needed to be advertised more prominently in the next edition of the Newsletter.

5. Minutes of the last meeting:

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th November were proposed by Cllr Morris, seconded by Cllr Hunt, agreed by all and signed by the chairman as a true record.

6. New VAS – update

The new VAS had been received; it would be put up as soon as the correct poles were installed by Worcestershire County Council. It was agreed for the old VAS to be removed by the lengthsman so that the Parish Gang could remove the redundant poles. It was thought the best option was to scrap the old VAS as there appeared no useful option for its further use.

7. OPPC Funding VAS requirement A46

County Councillor Eyre had referred the request for a VAS and enforcement of the 40MPH speed limit to National Highways but as yet had not received a response.

Cllr Morris advised she had written to MP Harriet Baldwin as a resident and thought pressure to enforce the 40MPH and lobbying for the VAS offered by PPC needed to continue.

8. Neighbourhood Plan (NP) – Update:

The Chairman advised that the update NPPF (National planning policy framework) published in December had strengthened the value of Neighbourhood Plans. It was noted that the plans should be reviewed approximately every 2 years.

The Council would continue to utilise when commenting on planning applications.

9. Jubilee Playing field – regular checks

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The Chairman advised that he does a visual check approximately weekly as required and keeps a running log. It was noted that the clerk had booked the annual safety inspection for March and that she had signed up for the annual recall with ROSPA.

10. Pétanque Piste on Glebe Meadow – Update

Cllr Morris advised that members of the VHC and the Pétanque group were having a site visit this Sunday.

Wychavon District Council had advised that no planning permission was required.

ROSPA had reviewed the ariel drone photography of the 2 suggested locations and had agreed both were suitable.

Local resident D Barnjum who is a risk assessor by trade, will do a full risk assessment of the sites.

If the VHC agrees to site the Pétanque Piste at Glebe Meadow, Cllr Morris & Cllr Williamson will make an application to the Wychavon District Council rural fund for a grant.

11. School footpath – update

Members discussed how to address the muddy footpath by the school, where a member of the public had fallen recently. An idea was for the Lengthsman to lay chippings along the path, it was felt there was a need to identify who owned the land and who was responsible for its upkeep. The Clerk would investigate with the Countryside Centre as it was thought to be a Public Right of Way (No 512B on the definitive map)

Members also raised the state of path 521B part of the 'Isbourne Way', and requested this was raised too, as it was also very muddy and perhaps both could be addressed by chippings at the same time.

It was noted there were willing volunteers to help the Lengthsman lay the chippings.

12. Phone box refurbishment – update

The clerk had obtained the details of where to order official replacements for the phonebox panels and any other phonebox related items, she had ascertained these could be fitted easily locally. Cllr Howe-Double and Cllr Williamson would investigate exactly what was required for Sedgeberrow phone box.

13. Rural Networks funding

Members suggested that Nick Clutterbank would look to apply for this towards Isbourne River bank preservation owned by Warmington Trust.

14. Snowball App

The Chairman summarised how the app helped disabled people assess accessibility of any venue and how the request was for businesses and venues to update their accessibility statements for users of the app. Members agreed to promote this via the Newsletter.

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15. Planning:

a) Comments made on planning applications to Wychavon: W/22/02311/FUL Belfield At, Bredon Hill Country, Cheltenham Road, Ashton Under Hill, Evesham, WR11 7QT. Erection of storage and distribution building - Strong Objections submitted.

Cllr Williamson and Cllr Hunt had met with the Chair of Ashton Under Hill Parish Council as this was in their parish, but bordered Sedgeberrow. 78,000 sqft of warehousing proposed but inappropriate as there exists capacity at Vale Park; A46 road issue with already notably an accident involving the school bus; visible from AONB on Bredon and Cotswolds with views comprised.

W/23/02289/HP 63 Main Street, Sedgeberrow. Erection of two shepherds' huts (retrospective and part retrospective) Comments made.

b) Applications awaiting comment: N/A

c) Applications Approved: W/23/01411/HP 19 Main Street. Removal of existing garage and replacement with office space above.

d) Applications refused: N/A

e) Awaiting determination: W/23/01890/FUL 4 Church Cottage, Cheltenham Road. Objections submitted as sited in the flood plain and curtilage of listed cottage.

16. Finance

The bank reconciling for November & December was confirmed.

Precept requirement 2024/2025

Members reviewed and discussed the updated budget. It was agreed to add £2000 for Community Grants.

It was proposed by Cllr Hunt and seconded by Cllr Jackson to request a precept of £12600 a circa 2.8% increase, this was agreed by all.

This coupled with the Wychavon District Council rural grant would bring in a total of £13147.

Churchyard mowing/funding (legislation)

The chairman updated members that the levelling up Act passed in December had brought about some changes allowing Parish Councils to give grants to the Church for open church yard maintenance and clock towers. Due to waiting for clarification on what the Act would change the letter to the PPC had been put on hold. The current advice from CALC was that paying for the Churchyard mowing and reclaiming the VAT was likely not legal. A discussion regarding grants in general was had, members decided that ALL community group including the Church could apply for a grant from the Parish Council for Community benefit, each application would be assessed and discussed at the time of the grant request and no annual grants would be given without appropriate application.

The Clerk and the Chair would re-word the letter to the PCC.

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It was noted that the War Memorial required cleaning. It was thought that a specialist would be required to do more than a water a broom could do, as it was listed.

SCP Pay award 23/24

It was noted that the clerk salary mandate had been altered to cover the increase and the back pay. It was now £410.58pcm.

The following payments were noted as made since the last meeting:

a) Mrs N Nicholson – Clerk Salary November	£370.72
b) Mrs N Nicholson – Clerk Work from home allowance	£26.00
c) St Baranabas CofE First & Middle School – act on energy leaflet printing	£4.78
d) Martin Woodhouse – Lengthsman services November	£210.00
e) J Williamson – reimburse paper for Newsletter	£17.96
f) Mrs N Nicholson – Clerk Salary December	£410.58
g) Mrs N Nicholson – Clerk work from home allowance	£26.00
h) Sedgberrow Village Hall – meeting room hire 2024	£157.50
i) Elan City Ltd – Solar VAS unit	£2507.99

The following payment was authorised:

a) Mrs N Nicholson – Clerk OPE	£22.00
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Remittance:

OPPC Grant £1000.00

Worcestershire County Council Lengthsman reimburse Nov £210.00

Worcestershire County Council CC Grant towards VAS £500.00

The Queens towards Community News £100.00

Worcestershire County Council Lengthsman reclaim September £203.00

17. Village Newsletter – next edition

Articles for the next edition had been requested. Cllr Howe-Double advised that he had not received all as yet. Cllr Howe-Double advised he was using the A5 template, the clerk had

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sourced reasonably priced printing, and it was hoped to run an A5 colour version. Distribution was planned for W/C 5th February. 400 copies were thought to be enough.

Additional articles to be included were agreed, Sedgeberrow in Bloom, Footpaths, Mobile Library & Bustimetable.

It was agreed the Newsletter would run quarterly, early March, late June, Mid- Sept and Early December. (This February edition would run instead of March with the next edition planned for late June)

Advertising prices were discussed and agreed. £40 Full page, £20 Half, £14 third, £10 quarter.

18. Representatives' reports – delivered earlier in the meeting.

The Chair asked the clerk to move the agenda item to earlier in the meeting for future meetings.

19. Environmental Issues

Nothing to report this month.

20. Act on Energy leaflets

Cllr Hunt advised that these would be distributed with the Newsletter.

21. Correspondence:

- Worcestershire County Council boundaries consultation. No planned changes to affect our area.
- Wychavon District Council Design codes consultation. Cllr Jackson would respond.
- Hereford and Worcester fire and rescue service consultation. It was noted the proposal was to reduce number of engines and crews. Cllr Jackson would respond.
- OPPC John Campion budget survey. Cllr Jackson had completed.
- Wychavon District Council rural fund. Cllr Williamson would review criteria.

22. Legacy Grant – update

Members agreed that an article in the Newsletter was required to update residents and to advertise for the expertise required to take the project forward. Also to gather from residents what is required of a stand alone Village Hall.

23. Future agenda items and reports:

- Clerk to review webpage check all information up to date including current Councillors photographs.
- Pétanque Piste - Funding

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- Feedback from Newsletter
- Phone box refurbishment.
- School footpath

15 Date of the next meeting:

Wednesday 20th March to be held at Sedgeberrow Village Hall, within Sedgeberrow CofE School. 7.15pm Start.

Meeting closed 9.50pm

Signed

Date