

## TIDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at 7pm on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at Sedbury and Beachley Village Hall, King Alfred's Rd, Sedbury NP16 7AQ.

**Present:** Parish Councillors: Justine Burgess, Clive Russell - Chairman, Michael Swambo, Jan Stead and Audrey Tullett.

11 members of the public.

Also Present:

Carol Hinton – Clerk, David Stevens – Assistant Clerk.

Matt Bishop MP with Emma Walker his Office Manager.

Dr GJ Koning, retiring Parish Councillor. Nick Evans, District Councillor and Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner. PCSO Abi Coe.

The Chairman welcomed all present. He introduced Jan Koning who has stepped down as Parish Councillor. He thanked Jan for his hard work and dedication to the Council and community over his eight years as a member, particularly during his six years as Chairman and year as Vice Chairman. Jan had guided the Council through major changes and introduced several large projects and initiatives.

#### 1. **Apologies:**

Apologies had been received from Parish Councillors Allan and Walsh, and from County Cllr Chris McFarling.

#### 2. **Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held 28<sup>th</sup> May 2025.**

The minutes were approved as presented and signed by the Chairman.

#### 3. **Matters Arising from minutes:**

There were none.

#### 4. **Reports:**

##### A. **Parish Council Report - The Chairman presented the highlights of last year's activities and performance.**

Councillor Russell introduced the Chairman's report for 2025/26.

##### B. **Financial Statements from:**

- ❖ **Tidenham Parish Council.**
- ❖ **Mopla Cottages Charity:**

Financial statements as per handouts. There were no questions.

##### C. **Report from:**

- ❖ **Tidenham War Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground Trust.**
- ❖ **Poor's Allotment Charity.**

It was noted that no report had been received from Tidenham War Memorial Hall. There were no questions on the Poor's Allotments Charity report.

##### D. **Annual Report from Sedbury and Beachley Village Hall Charity.**

There were no questions on the report. Liz McBride thanked the Committee for their support for the Rainbows and Brownies. Gloucestershire Midwives are looking to hold a weekly community hub at the hall and the Committee are arranging for the small office to be redecorated and a hand wash sink to be installed so it can be used as a consulting room. The room will also be available for rent for use as a consulting room.

## **5. Police – Report from PCSO Abi Coe**

PCSO Coe had provided a report which had been shared with people present which she briefly went through. The Parish Council works closely with the Police. The relocation of the goal posts from the hall playing field had significantly reduced anti-social behaviour at the site. One of the Parish Council's CCTVs has been relocated to Pipistrelle Close which has helped reduce the anti-social behaviour there, although work still ongoing with Two Rivers.

## **7. Public Forum:**

Hazel Evans – had emailed prior to the meeting and her concerns were for the quality of the grass cutting adjacent to her home – the Assistant Parish Clerk is discussing this with the contractors. Also raised concerns about the frequent traffic congestion in Chepstow and the District Council BioSphere proposal.

Matt Bishop MP took questions from those present.

Cllr Stead – playgrounds in Wales are supported by funding from the Welsh Government, as evidenced in the Chepstow area recently, whereas in Tidenham we have to rely on the precept and Section 106 funding. The Parish Council is currently planning a second large play area project. Will more funding become available for this provision in England?

Nick Evans added that in Wales the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act has had the desired effect and are there plans to introduce this in England?

Matt Bishop responded that there is currently no such legislation in England. He recognised that more funding is needed at a county council level which may be part of the new devolution process. He also recognises that parish councils need better funding. Cllr Stead commented that Tidenham Parish seems to be a forgotten part of the Forest of Dean.

Matt Bishop suggested contacting Tom Hayes MP, who has been doing a lot of work on provision of playgrounds, for support for Tidenham Parish Council projects.

Cllr Russell informed the meeting that the Parish Council is currently trying to use the empty shop in Sedbury for a youth Centre, supported by STEM.

Dr Lesley Moore – congratulated the hall Committee and Parish Council for their support for the midwife hub and providing suitable space for midwives locally. She thanked Matt Bishop for employing Emma Walker to work on a project on barriers to healthcare. She asked if Matt Bishop had engaged with sixth formers at Wydean School and was there a sense of hopelessness in schools?

Matt Bishop and Emma Walker responded that they had engaged with the School and with other sixth formers in the constituency, having taken part in a recent mock parliament with 60 students from across all schools. This had been a success although those taking part had been engaged from the start. They have not felt a sense of hopelessness from pupils. Matt Bishop felt that previous Govt. focus has been on attending university but feels that there needs to be other opportunities as well.

Hazel Evans – lack of suitable housing for younger people is an issue as well as the lack of meaningful local work and transport to elsewhere.

Cllr Swambo – why is the issue of student loan repayments not being addressed? Matt Bishop – there should be more support or levelling the field so that everyone gets the same opportunities. However, this requires some changes to be considered – maybe means testing?

Gerry Stead – there are conflicting messages on electric car use. People are being encouraged to purchase but are then also being charged extra for their use. It seems neither side knows what the other is doing. It often seems that it is not always the right person for the job in post.

Vanessa Homan – closure of the Old Wye Bridge – what is government doing about it? Matt Bishop had written to Gloucestershire County Council to urge them to support funding for repairs but it does not seem they are doing so at present.

The Chairman asked Jan Koning to join him and presented a garden ornament as a thank you from the Parish Council for his work and dedication. Jan Koning thanked Clive for the gift and card and thanked councillors for their support during his time with the Council. He had enjoyed his time and was pleased with the projects that had come to fruition.

The Chairman thanked all for their attendance and contributions at the meeting.

**The meeting closed at 20.05hrs**