

SEMINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5 February 2020 at 8.00pm in the Village Hall

Present.

Councillors B Smyth (Chairman), R Blake, P Bowyer, M Kasasian (from Agenda item 6), R Oglesby, S Rimmer, W Scott, P Smith, C Wade and the Clerk Roger Coleman.

Wiltshire Council, Cllr. J Seed attended.

There were six members of the public present initially.

The Chairman took some of the items out of sequence but they are recorded here to accord with the Agenda for sake of clarity.

Following discussions previously held with Wiltshire Council officers and Cllr. Seed, Adrian Hampton (Wiltshire Council, Head of Local Services) and Wiltshire Council, Streetscene Manager) were invited to attend the Parish Council meeting and for Adrian Hampton to give a presentation, during the Adjournment, on the subject of 'The Future of Children's Play Areas' with particular reference to the Wessex Close Play Area. The Chairman decided that a presentation would take place during the Adjournment as this would give all those present (including members of the public) the opportunity to raise any points of interest/concern with Mr. Hampton.

A Summary of the main points of his presentation are appended to these minutes. This Summary does not form part of the minutes but is included for information.

1. Apologies.

There were no apologies received.

2. Declaration of Interests.

There were no interests declared by councillors.

3. Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 8 January 2020.

The Council **resolved** that the minutes were a true and accurate record. The Chairman signed the minutes.

4. Actions.

The Actions in accordance with the Action Grid were addressed during the course of the meeting, where possible, and the current state is recorded on the attached Action Grid dated 5 February 2020. Outstanding actions will be addressed at the next Parish Council meeting.

5. Community Policing.

In the absence of a member of the Community Policing Team there was no report.

6. Adjournment.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting for Wiltshire Council (Adrian Hampton) to give his presentation and for members of the public to raise any matters of interest.

He then reconvened the Parish Council meeting.

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7. Wiltshire Council Report.

Cllr. Seed stated that Wiltshire Council Cabinet had agreed a 3.99% increase in the Council Tax for FY20/21 – a general increase of 1.99% - and an increase in the Social Care levy of 2%. He commented that the Police Precept increase was to be the equivalent of £10/year for a Band D Council Taxpayer and that the Fire Authority was to impose a 1.99% increase in their Precept. He added that the Wiltshire Council Council Tax proposals will be presented to the full Council for approval on 25 February 2020.

8. Planning.

a. The Council noted the status of the following planning applications:

19/07938/REM	Land at St Georges Road	Reserved matters application for appearance, landscaping, layout and scale, pursuant to outline permission 16/01678/OUT for the erection of 24 dwellings and associated works.	Approved
19/11589/VAR	Bay Tree Cottage 5A High Street	Variation of Condition 2 of planning application 18/08168/FUL - Proposed dingle storey rear extension & outbuilding.	Pending

b. There were no planning applications received after 29 January 2020.

c. Cllr. Scott reported that the Semington Village website now included details of the latest planning applications and decisions.

He also advised councillors that the proposed Settlement Boundary around the village had been approved by the Government Inspector and that it now included the parcel of land at The Knapps – as had been recommended by the Parish Council.

Councillors noted that Wiltshire Council is now taking enforcement action in respect to the breach of planning permission at one of the traveller sites.

9. Finance.

a. The Clerk reported that the current financial position at 5 February 2020 was as follows:

Lloyds A/C 2149025

Bank Statement	£	19,401.98
31 December 2019		
Total:	£	19,401.98

Credits (1 January 2020 to 31 January 2020):

HMRC PAYE Month 9	£	136.40
Total:	£	136.40

Debits (1 January 2020 to 31 January 2020):

Clerk's Salary (December) (Paid 1 January 2020)	£	341.90
Clerk's Expenses (December)	£	19.95
HMRC PAYE Month 10	£	136.80
SLC Subscription	£	60.00
S Rimmer (Dorothy House)	£	50.00
Victim Support (Wiltshire)	£	50.00
Total:	£	658.65

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Balance at 31 January 2020:

	£ 18,879.73
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Credits (1 February 2020 to 5 February 2020):

None

	£ -
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Total:

	£ -
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Debits (1 February 2020 to 5 February 2020):

Clerk's Salary (January) (Paid 3 February 2020)

	£ 341.90
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Total:

	£ 341.90
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Balance at 5 February 2020:

	£ 18,537.83
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Lloyds A/C 7754288

Bank Statement

	£ 7,634.38
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31-Mar-19

Credits

09-Apr-19 Interest (Approx)

	£ 0.35
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09-May-19 Interest (Approx)

	£ 0.35
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09-Jun-19 Interest (Approx)

	£ 0.32
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09-Jul-19 Interest (Approx)

	£ 0.30
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09-Aug-19 Interest (Approx)

	£ 0.28
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09-Sep-19 Interest (Approx)

	£ 0.26
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09-Oct-19 Interest (Approx)

	£ 0.40
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09-Nov-19 Interest (Approx)

	£ 0.38
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09-Dec-19 Interest (Approx)

	£ 0.36
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09-Jan-20 Interest (Approx)

	£ 0.34
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	£ 3.34
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Debits

None

	£ -
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	£ -
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Balance at 5 February 2020:

	£ 7,637.72
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Total Balance in Hand at 5 February 2020:

	£ 26,175.55
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Payments to be authorised (5 February 2020).

Clerk's Salary (February) To be paid 1 March 2020

	£ 341.90
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Office Expenses (January)

	£ 41.38
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HMRC PAYE Month 11 (Due 5 March)

	£ 136.80
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Codewater Solutions

	£ 120.00
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TOTAL:

	£ 640.08
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The Council **resolved** to make all the payments under 'Payments to be authorised'. The Council noted that the hedging cuttings had not been removed by Simon J White and that the payment to him, agreed at the last meeting, had been cancelled.

10. Highways.

There were no matters raised.

11. Environment.

Cllr. Smyth confirmed that the Litter Pick will take place on 14 March and those individuals taking part should meet at 10am, Village Hall.

12. World War 2 – End of Hostilities Commemoration.

This Agenda item was deferred until a subsequent meeting.

13. Footpaths.

This Agenda item was deferred until a subsequent meeting.

14. Melksham Community Area Board/Community Area Transport Group Meetings.

There were no matters raised.

15. Wessex Close Play Areas.

a. The Chairman, Cllr. Smyth, stated that he had the meeting with Wiltshire Council officers and Cllr. Seed to discuss the issues arising out of the concern for the poorly maintained Wessex Close Play Area on 13 January 2020. He added that he had also consulted more widely, including having a helpful discussion with West Lavington Parish Council members where a mixed group of councillors and parishioners have established a Working Group to manage their Play Area facility. He gave a full report of those meetings and consultations and commented that it was clear that under the Service Delegation and Transfer of Assets initiatives, Wiltshire Council would cease to be responsible for Town and Village Play Areas within the next two years and that Parish Councils and Local Community Groups were being encouraged to take over that responsibility. He added that it was important for the Parish Council to decide the future of the Wessex Close Play Area and in particular the specific area under threat, namely the area containing the play equipment and the items of play equipment.

Councillors commented that there was a very good Play Area comprising Play Equipment at St Georges School and that now, unlike the situation many years ago, it could not be used either by members of the public (i.e. local children who did not attend the school) or during out of school hours. It was agreed that enquiries would be made by the Chairman to see if the situation could be reversed.

Cllr. Smith commented that if it could be reversed then any 'new' Play Equipment at Wessex Close could supplement that currently at St Georges School.

b. There ensued a lengthy discussion regarding the future of the Wessex Close Play Area and it was the view of councillors that the management of the facility, including the Play Equipment, should be supported by the local community and that a Community Group should be formed comprising parishioners and parish councillors to manage the facility and that parishioners should comprise the majority membership. It would then be up to that Community Group to seek additional grant funding and to totally manage the facility, including undertaking the mandatory safety inspections and effecting any necessary remedial action and/or the refurbishment/replacement of obsolescent Play Equipment. Councillors were adamant that the facility would not be solely managed by the Parish Council. At the conclusion of the discussion the Parish Council **resolved** the following:

- The Parish Council supports the proposal for a Play Area and Play Equipment to be located in Semington.
- The Parish Council is to apply to Wiltshire Council for the additional funding of £6000.

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- The Parish Council is to canvass the parishioners of Semington to establish their views regarding the continuance of a Play Area and Play Equipment at Wessex Close and to seek volunteers to establish and be members of a joint Local Community/Parish Council Working Group to manage the facility.

c. The decision whether to acquire the Wessex Close Play Area was deferred until the views of parishioners (see Agenda item 15b above) were known.

16. Tennis Court.

There were no matters raised.

17. Membership of Wiltshire, Swindon and Oxfordshire Canal Partnership.

Cllr. Scott reported that he had informed the Chairman of this Group that Semington Parish Council would be represented at the forthcoming meeting and that the representative is likely to be him.

18. Any Other Business.

Cllr. Oglesby explained that the future of the Post Office at the Village Hall, Semington was uncertain. He commented that the Semington facilities are run from Seend, and the current change of ownership/management of the Seend Post Office is causing some uncertainty about the future of the service at Semington. It was feared that Post Office Ltd might take the opportunity to reduce the service at Semington when changing the current arrangements at Seend.

Councillors expressed their concern at this news and commented that the Post Office at Semington is a valuable and well-used service and any change, such as a reduction in days it operates (i.e. reduced from two to one) and/or a reduction in the hours it is open would be most unwelcomed – especially for the more elderly customers who rely on the service it offers.

The Chairman invited councillors to make their own representations to those directly concerned in the current negotiations.

19. Date of Next Meeting.

The Council noted that the dates of the next Ordinary PC Meetings were 4 March 2020, 15 April 2020, 13 May 2020 (commencing at 7.30pm), 17 June 2020 and 15 July 2020.

The meeting concluded at 10.05pm.

Brian Smyth
Semington Parish Council

4 March 2020

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Presentation by Mr Adrian Hampton – Wiltshire Council, Head of Local Services.

Wiltshire Council is seeking to delegate all 'town-based' Streetscene activities to the fifteen towns in Wiltshire over the next two years. This includes existing Play Areas within those towns. Significant progress towards this goal has already been achieved. There are some Play Areas in villages for which Wiltshire Council has responsibility – these are few in number and are relatively small Play Areas. Wiltshire Council is encouraging Parish Councils and local Community Groups to accept the transfer of these Play Areas and Play Equipment if, locally, there is a demand for their retention beyond the two-year point. A grant of £1000 from Wiltshire Council will accompany that transfer. Wiltshire Council has no budget for the maintenance of these Play Areas nor has it a budget for the replacement of obsolete or unserviceable play equipment. Whilst these Play Areas remain the responsibility of Wiltshire Council safety inspections by Wiltshire Council will continue but any 'unsafe' play equipment will be quarantined and either removed or put out of use. The future of these 'village-based' Play Areas that have not been transferred outwith Wiltshire Council within the two-year period will be determined at a later stage by Wiltshire Council, but reinstatement/retention of these Play Areas by Wiltshire Council is not an option. Mr Hampton indicated that further funds (£6000) may be available from Wiltshire Council for the improvement of Play Areas and/or for capital items and he invited Semington Parish Council to seek these additional funds in relation to the existing Play Area in Semington.

There ensued a Question and Answer Session during which Mr Hampton gave assurances that the term 'Play Area' – when used by him - referred solely to that area containing items of play equipment (usually surrounded by a fence) and the actual play equipment. It did not refer to the larger, grassed, area – often used for football practice – such as that at Wessex Close which often surrounds or is contiguous with the Play Area. He commented that Wiltshire Council would continue to be responsible for cutting the grass and for husbandry of the trees within the Wessex Close recreational area.

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ACTION TABLE 5/2/20						
Action Serial	Meeting Date Agenda Item	Completion Date	Actionee	Action	Progress	PCM 4/3/20 Agenda item
54	13/11/19 11c	11/12/19	Cllr. Rimmer	Wildflower Meadow progress	In Hand	TBA
56	13/11/19 16	11/12/19	All Cllrs.	WW2 Anniversary commemorations	In Hand	TBA
58	11/12/19 8 & 17	13/1/20	Cllr. Smyth	Meeting WC/PC/ Cllr. Seed 13/1/20	Complete	TBA
60	11/12/19 18	8/1/20	Cllr. Wade	To obtain quotation - Tensioning Wires	In Hand	TBA
61	8/1/20 9b	24/1/20	Clerk	To send Precept request to WC	Complete	TBA
62	8/1/20 10	5/2/20	Cllr. Smyth	To arrange and publicise a Litter Pick	Complete	TBA
63	8/1/20 11c	5/2/20	Clerk	To contact PCC- Brambles/Fence	Complete	TBA
64	8/1/20 12	5/2/20	Cllr. Rimmer	To produce costed plan for oak tree planting.	Complete	TBA
65	8/1/20 14	5/2/20	Clerk	To investigate Traffic Survey application.	In Hand	TBA
66	8/1/20 18	5/2/20	Clerk	To write to School (Congratulations – Results)	Complete	TBA
67	5/2/20 15a	4/3/20	Cllr. Smyth	To discuss St Georges Play Area with Headteacher	In Hand	TBA
68	5/2/20 15b	4/3/20	Clerk	To apply to WC for Additional Funding (£6000)	In Hand	TBA