

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 23
November 2021 at 8.00pm in the Village Hall**



Present.

Councillors P Smith (Chairman), R Bruges, S Chown, J Hailey, M Kasasian, S Rimmer, W Scott, C Wade and the Clerk Roger Coleman.

Wiltshire Council Cllr. J Seed attended (Part-time).

There was one member of the public present initially.

1. Apologies.

Apologies for non-attendance were received and accepted from Cllr. V Bodman.

2. Declaration of Interests.

There were no interests declared.

3. Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 13 October 2021.

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

4. Wiltshire Council Report.

Cllr. Seed gave the following brief report:

Housing Market Area (HMA).

He stated that he had received a poor response from the Wiltshire Council Cabinet member responsible for this matter to his request that the move of Semington to the Trowbridge HMA should be reconsidered and for the evidence that supported that original decision by Wiltshire Council should be re-examined. He had stressed the view that Semington should be restored to the Chippenham HMA. The view of the Cabinet member was that these comments and any others would be taken into consideration during the forthcoming Wiltshire Local Plan consultation period. Notwithstanding this, he advised the Parish Council to continue to pursue its campaign for the return of Semington and other local parishes to the Chippenham HMA undaunted.

Semington – Hilperton Cycleway.

Cllr. Seed acknowledged the concerns of the Parish Council regarding the possible upgrading of the existing bridleway (SEM19A/10 and HILP22/10) and the addition of lighting to comprise a 'new' cycleway between the villages. He commented that following discussions with the Wiltshire Council officer concerned it was now clear that there was not to be a major resurfacing of that bridleway or lighting to be installed thereby allaying the fears of the Parish Council that the rural nature of that path – especially suited to horse riders, casual cyclists and pedestrians – would be destroyed. He added that Wiltshire Council will be consulting with the Horse Society to ensure that any local resurfacing is also suitable for horse-riders.

Melksham Canal Link.

Cllr. Seed advised the council that a new planning application for the proposed 'Melksham Canal Link' is likely to be submitted to Wiltshire Council within the next three months.

5. Chairman's Report.

The Chairman reported that he had nothing to add that was not already addressed in this Agenda.

6. Planning and Development.

a. The Council noted the status of extant planning applications thus:

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|----------|
| 21/00649/FUL Amended Plans | 19 Highfield Close Semington BA14 6JZ | To convert an existing detached double garage to an annexe | Approved |
| PL/2021/07764 | 25 St Georges Court, Semington BA14 6GA | Replacement front door and frame to match existing. | Approved |
| PL/2021/09152 Steven Sims | Church Farm, Church Street, Semington BA14 6JS | Repair and refurbish barn and form two garages within it. | Pending |
| PL/2021/09400 Yancy Sun | 4 Manor Close, Semington BA14 6LA | Proposed extension to enlarge existing kitchen and provide additional bedroom at first floor level. | Pending |

b. The Council examined the following planning application received after 17 November 2021 and **resolved** to send comments to Wiltshire Council as shown in italics:

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|------------------------|-----|
| PL/2021/10192 Russell Brown | 22 St Georges Court Semington BA14 6GA | Replacement Front Door | New |
|--------------------------------|---|------------------------|-----|

The Parish Council has no comments and requests that this application is sent to the Conservation Officer for comment.

c. (See also Agenda item 4 above).

The Council reviewed the correspondence that had been exchanged with Wiltshire Council in relation to the Housing Market Area (HMA) and the Chairman tabled the recent correspondence from Cllr. Scott – shown in italics below:

Background

We have told Wiltshire Council about our unhappiness that the Semington parish has been transferred from the Chippenham HMA to the Trowbridge one. Our argument is that this is an inappropriate association for the parish because of our extensive ties over many years with the Melksham Community Area.

We have complained about two particular aspects of the decision-making that occurred:

[i] that we were not properly consulted about the proposed shift

[ii] that the (commuting data) evidence used to justify the move was unconvincing

Wiltshire Council has said that we were consulted along with other parishes, and this is true. Our complaint is that the information that we needed to have was buried deeply in annexes to long documents.

The Council has said that we shall be consulted again in due course. In his last letter to Peter, Cllr Botterill wrote:

“.....we are now focusing on further work to develop the evidence informing the plan including testing the upper and lower levels and spatial distribution of housing need for the plan period. As part of this we will, with the support of our consultants Opinion Research Services, consider your

concern about the HMA boundaries and review the Trowbridge and Chippenham HMAs as they relate to the Melksham Community Area.”

Subsequent to this, we have queried the evidence base used by consultants for their recommendations that led to the decision, and have asked for a meeting between consultants, officers and parish councils to give consultants a chance to explain that the data are as robust as they say. Wiltshire Council has not responded to this.

Proposal

To approach Wiltshire Council [i] to argue that the data (which stem from 2016/7) need to be updated; and [ii] to offer to work with them and the consultants to ensure that valid data are used to inform the next set of decisions.

The Parish Council **resolved** to adopt the proposal above and the Chairman agreed to write along the lines proposed to Wiltshire Council (Cllr. Botterill) – the Clerk is to prepare a draft letter.

d. (See also Agenda item 4 above).

The Council noted the Wiltshire Council proposal for the route of the Semington/Hilperton Cycleway and commented that there had been no meaningful consultation with the villages involved and that the initial plans for the creation of this cycleway are seriously flawed and totally unsuited to an unspoiled rural environment. The Chairman stated that he had received a letter from the Chairman of Hilperton Parish Council that robustly challenged the decision by Wiltshire Council to convert this existing path to a cycleway. Cllr. Smith stated that he would speak to the Chairman, Hilperton Parish Council (Richard Allan) to ensure that his letter can be shared with Semington councillors and that he would write to Wiltshire Council (Cllr. McClelland) – the Wiltshire Council lead on this matter – along these lines: The Parish Council believes that the objective of an improved cycle surface along the byway can be achieved at a fraction of the quoted costs and would like to meet with Wiltshire Council officers to walk the byway route and share an understanding of what might constitute an acceptable solution to all parties.

e. The Council noted the proposed presentation by Mike Kurton (Newland Homes Ltd) at the January 2022 Parish Council meeting and the Council decided that the presentation plus a Question & Answer session should take place between 7pm and 8pm on the 19 January 2022 – finishing promptly at 8pm to allow the Parish Council meeting to proceed at that time. The Chairman stated that he would contact Newland Homes.

The Clerk advised the Council that the Report on the recently completed Rural Housing Needs Survey had been sent to all councillors. The Chairman requested that this was a subject for the next Parish Council meeting.

7. Neighbourhood Plan.

The Chairman reported that at the last Steering Group meeting, consultants had been appointed – Place Studios – and that grant aid is now being sought to help finance this project and a Consultation Working Group had been established to identify the nature and scope of subsequent consultation exercises. He added that it was intended to hold a village-wide event on 12 February 2022 to advise parishioners of progress and to present a draft vision and objectives for Semington over the next 15 years. The Chairman commented that the Wiltshire Council ‘link’ for the Neighbourhood Plan – David Way – had advised the Steering Group that a Neighbourhood Plan is essentially ‘a land use plan’ although other issues can be addressed.

The Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meetings can be found thus:
<https://www.semington.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan-documents/>

For Reference: The email address for correspondence etc relating to the Neighbourhood Plan is:

np@semington.org.uk

8. Finance.

a. The Council noted the current financial position.

Lloyds A/C 2149025

| | | |
|-------------------|---|-----------|
| Bank Statement | £ | 37,064.97 |
| 30 September 2021 | | |

| | | |
|--------|---|------------------|
| Total: | £ | 37,064.97 |
|--------|---|------------------|

Credits (1 October 2021 to 31 October 2021):

| | | |
|------|---|---|
| None | £ | - |
|------|---|---|

| | | |
|--------|---|---|
| Total: | £ | - |
|--------|---|---|

Debits (1 October 2021 to 31 October 2021):

| | | |
|---|---|--------|
| Clerk's Salary (September 2021) (Paid 1 October 2021) | £ | 437.40 |
|---|---|--------|

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--------|
| Place Studios (NH Plan Display) | £ | 240.00 |
|---------------------------------|---|--------|

| | | |
|--------|---|---------------|
| Total: | £ | 677.40 |
|--------|---|---------------|

Balance at 31 October 2021:

| |
|--------------------|
| £ 36,387.57 |
|--------------------|

Credits (1 November 2021 to 23 November 2021):

| | | |
|------|---|---|
| None | £ | - |
|------|---|---|

| | | |
|--------|---|---|
| Total: | £ | - |
|--------|---|---|

Debits (1 November 2021 to 23 November 2021):

| | | |
|--|---|--------|
| Clerk's Salary (October 2021) (Paid 1 November 2021) | £ | 437.40 |
|--|---|--------|

| | | |
|--------|---|---------------|
| Total: | £ | 437.40 |
|--------|---|---------------|

Balance at 23 November 2021:

| |
|--------------------|
| £ 35,950.17 |
|--------------------|

Lloyds A/C 7754288

| | | |
|----------------|---|----------|
| Bank Statement | £ | 7,704.72 |
| 31-Aug-21 | | |

Credits

| | | | |
|-----------|-------|---|------|
| 04-Aug-21 | HMCTS | £ | 1.32 |
|-----------|-------|---|------|

| | | | |
|-----------|----------|---|------|
| 09-Aug-21 | Interest | £ | 0.07 |
|-----------|----------|---|------|

| | | | |
|-----------|-------|---|------|
| 02-Sep-21 | HMCTS | £ | 1.32 |
|-----------|-------|---|------|

| | | | |
|-----------|----------|---|------|
| 09-Sep-21 | Interest | £ | 0.07 |
|-----------|----------|---|------|

| | | | |
|-----------|-------|---|------|
| 06-Oct-21 | HMCTS | £ | 1.32 |
|-----------|-------|---|------|

| | | | |
|-----------|----------|---|------|
| 11-Oct-21 | Interest | £ | 0.07 |
|-----------|----------|---|------|

| | | | |
|-----------|-------------------|----------|------|
| 09-Nov-21 | Interest (Approx) | £ | 0.07 |
| | | Total: £ | 4.24 |

Debits

| | | |
|------|---|---|
| None | £ | - |
| | £ | - |

Balance at 23 November 2021: £ 7,708.96

Total Balance in Hand at 23 November 2021: £ 43,659.13

Payments to be authorised (23 November 2021).

| | | |
|--|-----|--------|
| Clerk's Salary (November) To be paid 30 November 2021 (Cheque) | £ | 262.20 |
| Clerk's PAYE (Month 8) (Cheque) | £ | 175.20 |
| Clerk's Expenses (Sept - £2.90 & Oct - £5.10) | £ | 8.00 |
| Road Signs (P Chown) | £ | 99.76 |
| P Smith (Plants) | £ | 58.81 |
| Southview Nurseries (Christmas Tree) | £ | 190.00 |
| C Wade (Christmas Tree Sundries) | £ | 10.70 |
| Neighbourhood Plan - email Account | TBA | |
| | £ | 805.86 |

HMRC PAYE Month 7 (£174.80) - Paid to HMRC Directly by Clerk (1/11/2021)

HMRC PAYE Month 8 (£175.20) - To be paid to HMRC Directly (1/12/2021) by Parish Council

b. The Council noted the Financial Forecast (FY2021/22) and commented that no action was necessary.

| ITEM (Description) | Budget FY21/22 AGREED | Actual Expenditure 31-Oct-21 | Estimated Expenditure FY2021/22 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <u>Income:</u> | | | |
| Precept | 13500 | 13500 | 13500 |
| Grants | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Lloyds A/C 7754288 | 2 | 18 | 2 |
| Lloyds A/C 2149025 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| VAT Reclaim | 100 | 0 | 180 |
| Donations | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Tennis Court Maintenance Fund | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Income | 13602 | 13518 | 13682 |
| <u>Expenditure:</u> | | | |
| Clerk Salary | 5250 | 3062 | 5406 |

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--|
| Expenses | 250 | 66 | 150 | |
| Office Allowance | 175 | 0 | 200 | |
| Chairman | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| Hire Hall | 525 | 0 | 650 | |
| Audit | 125 | 120 | 120 | |
| Subscriptions | 120 | 76 | 120 | |
| Insurance | 900 | 834 | 834 | |
| Community (Section 137) | 5000 | 1304 | 3000 | |
| Projects (e.g. Tree/Bulb planting) | 3000 | 250 | 1000 | |
| Road Safety Improvements | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| Wessex Close Play Area | 3000 | 621 | 1000 | |
| Tennis Court | 500 | 500 | 500 | |
| Website | 400 | 0 | 400 | |
| Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| Elections | 1000 | 0 | 0 | |
| Neighbourhood Plan | 0 | 0 | 0 | NH Planning |
| Environment/Streetscene | N/A | N/A | N/A | Trees/Bulbs |
| Transport & Traffic | N/A | N/A | N/A | SLOW Marking |
| Recreation & Wellbeing | N/A | N/A | N/A | Wessex Close NW Watch Allotments |
| Community & Communication | N/A | N/A | N/A | Noticeboards |
| | 20245 | 6833 | 13380 | |
| Net Income | 13602 | 13518 | 13682 | |
| Net Expenditure | 20245 | 6833 | 13380 | |
| Surplus | -6643 | 6685 | 302 | |

Forecast Balance C/F at 31/3/22 : £37,277.00

Annual Return (31/3/21) + Income (FY2021/22) - Expend (FY2021/22)

AVAILABLE BALANCE at 31/3/22 (Minus T Court Fund) = £30,959.00

NOTE

Tennis Court Fund at 31/3/22 = £6,318.00 APPROX

c. The Council discussed possible expenditure for FY2022/23 in relation to the 'Theme Groups' and Neighbourhood Planning the following was identified:

Neighbourhood Planning - £1000

Environment/Streetscene – Trees/Bulbs £500, Kissing Gates £1600.

Transport & Traffic – SLOW Marking £250.

Recreation & Wellbeing – Wessex Close Play Area £5500, NH Watch £450, Allotments £5000.

Community & Communication – Noticeboards £1600.

The Chairman stated that the Budget and Precept will be agreed at the December Parish Council meeting and he invited all councillors, especially Theme Leads, to be ready to propose their financial requirements for FY2022/23.

The Clerk commented that following a query from a councillor he had examined the level of uncommitted reserves held by the Council and it was higher than official guidance would suggest. The Clerk added that this needs to be considered at the Budget meeting and identified and agreed projects for FY2022/23 should be earmarked and reserves committed to them.

d. The Council **resolved** to make the payments shown under 'Payments to be authorised' above at Agenda item 8a including a payment £50 to Mr R Heard for an audio version of his 'Melksham Remembers' book and a payment of £91.87 to Mr I Parsons for Planter Topsoil.

9. Environment and Streetscene.

a. Rights of Way.

There was nothing reported.

b. Other Matters.

The subject of 'Noticeboards' was transferred to the Community and Communication Theme Group.

The Clerk passed the recent correspondence entitled 'The Environmental Toolkit' to Cllr. Bruges for information.

The Parish Council **resolved** to make a donation of £100 to the charity 'End Polio Now' following the gift to the Parish Council of 2500 crocus bulbs from Trowbridge Rotary Club.

The Parish Council **resolved** to purchase and to present a Memorial Wreath each year for Remembrance Day, commencing in November 2022.

The Chairman proposed a Village Litter Pick to take place on 18 December 2021.

The Clerk confirmed that he had sent the latest Form A (dated 18/10/21) to Wiltshire Council in respect of the preferred names for the roads associated with the new housing development at St Georges Road.

10. Transport and Traffic.

The following matters were reported:

Speeding Traffic.

Excess speeding through the village has been reported on a number of occasions – around St Georges Road/Somerset Way. Cllr. Wade proposed that the speeds of vehicles are checked by Wiltshire Council and he would raise this at the forthcoming CATG meeting (25 November).

Train Services.

Cllr. Scott advised councillors of the recent email stating that many of the local train services are to be cut – especially those involving Westbury, Salisbury and Waterloo. He invited councillors to make their views known to Network Rail via the online petition. Following a **resolution** by the Council, the Chairman stated that he would respond on behalf of the Parish Council.

11. Recreation and Wellbeing.

a. Cllr. Wade reported that he is continuing to progress the acquisition of allotment plots and continues to liaise with the developers – Newland Homes - to obtain further details.

b. The Chairman, on behalf of the Parish Council, thanked Cllr. Chown for organising the recent, very successful, Christmas Fair in the Village Hall.

Cllr. Chown reported that she had a meeting to discuss the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme with a person interested in becoming the Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator and Chris Holden had advised on set up arrangements. Cllr. Chown added that she is proposing that the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme for Semington is a village-wide scheme and that the whole community will become engaged in the scheme. She anticipated holding regular public meetings for parishioners to gain advice and alerts and to contribute to the work of the Neighbourhood Watch team. The Parish Council **resolved** to endorse a village-wide scheme. She stated that some new Neighbourhood Watch signs will be required and she agreed to investigate this further.

12. Community and Communication.

The Council **resolved** to investigate the purchase of two new Noticeboards for the Village Hall and Cllr. Chown agreed to investigate possible designs and costs.

13. Date of the next meeting.

a. The Council noted the date of the next Ordinary Parish Council meeting – Wednesday 15 December 2021 at 7.30pm.

b. To note the agreed dates for Parish Council meetings in 2022 – 19 January 2022 (Presentation by Newland Homes 7pm, Parish Council meeting commencing 8pm) all subsequent meetings commencing at 7.30pm - 16 February, 16 March, 13 April, 18 May, 15 June, 13 July, 17 August, 14 September

The meeting ended at 10.27pm

Peter Smith
Chairman Semington Parish Council