

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on
20 September 2023 at 7.30 pm in the Village
Hall**



Present.

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

There were no members of the public present.

1. Apologies.

There were no apologies. All councillors were present.

2. Declaration of Interests.

There were no interests declared.

3. Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 19 July 2023.

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

4. Wiltshire Council Report.

In the absence of Wiltshire Council, Cllr. Seed no report was given.

5. Community and Communication.

a. The Chairman reported that recent correspondence from Post Office Ltd confirmed that they were reconsidering the issue of opening hours for the Village Post Office and that he was awaiting a reply from Post Office Ltd to his latest correspondence dated 28 August 2023.

b. The Clerk advised the Council of the Wiltshire Council PEAS Scheme (Winter Preparations) and following this explanation the Council and in respect of extreme cold weather, it **resolved** to request five bags of salt and two tabards. The Chairman agreed to contact Wiltshire Council.

The Chairman added that in future years it would be necessary to develop and adopt a Flood Plan and a Cold Weather Plan if the Parish Council wished to access items under the PEAS Scheme.

c. Cllr. Bruges explained in detail the proposed Community Event – a Bonfire Celebration – to be held at Outmarsh Farm on 4 November 2023. He emphasized the community nature of the event with many local organisations taking part and he stressed that it was intended that parishioners and their children would be central to the celebrations with the event timed to encourage wide participation. Parish councillors expressed their support for the proposed event and thanked Cllr. Bruges for taking the initiative to sponsor the event. Cllr. Bruges explained the proposed budget for the event and invited the Parish Council to make a financial contribution. The Clerk confirmed that LGA 1972, especially s145 permitted such a contribution subject to it being proportionate to the event and that the parishioners of Semington would benefit from it.

The Parish Council **resolved** to donate £900 towards the event.

d. The Council noted the offer of a Christmas tree from a parishioner but recognising that the Council, regrettably, no longer had the facilities for felling and transporting such a tree **resolved** to refuse the offer, albeit thanking the Parishioner for the offer.

Following a request from Cllr. Wade, the Council **resolved** that a maximum of £300 be allocated for the purchase and delivery of the village Christmas tree this year.

Cllr. Wade confirmed that there is to be a Defibrillator Training Event to be given by South West Ambulance Service at the Village Hall at 7pm on 16 October 2023 and all interested parties are invited to attend.

Cllr. Wade confirmed that the new Noticeboards are awaiting installation.

Cllr. Chown raised the following matters and agreed to investigate the issues further, if necessary:

- The new website is performing well and is being well used.
- Councillors need to decide whether they each, personally, wish to adopt Parish Council email addresses or to remain using their own personal ones.
- There is historical/legacy documentation residing on the old website and it needs to be removed/deleted.
- If a user is directed to the old website does there need to be an automatic redirection to the new website.
- An offer has been received by the Cybercrime Project Officer to give a presentation on being 'safe on-line' to interested parties. Councillors supported this proposal, and a suitable venue and date were being sought.

Cllr. Wade offered to contact the old website's owner to discuss legacy and associated issues.

Cllr. Scott raised the question of the relationship of email addresses to Freedom of Information requests. Cllr. Chown agreed to investigate and send details to councillors.

6. Recreation and Wellbeing.

a. The Clerk reported that the latest exchange of correspondence with Forrester Sylvester Mackett (Solicitors) and a recent site meeting between parish councillors and representatives from Newland Homes Ltd. addressed many of the outstanding queries.

b. The Council **resolved** that subject to clarification of the boundary issue, the latest Transfer Document TP1 and Conveyance Plan (Allotments) attached to J Frayling email dated 12/9/23 was agreed.

c. Cllr. Chown confirmed that the transfer of the Wessex Close Play Area Asset from Wiltshire Council to Semington Parish Council was progressing satisfactorily, and she invited all councillors to review the latest documentation – the Wiltshire Council Section 52 Side Agreement – and to let Cllrs. McGarvey and Hailey have their comments as soon as possible so that the transfer can proceed. Copies of any comments are to be sent also to Cllr. Chown. Cllr. Chown added that it would be necessary for the Parish Council to raise an invoice for Wiltshire Council to credit the Parish Council with the £1000 in order to complete the transfer and that it may be wise to invite the 'Wessex Close Play Area Group' to arrange to have its own Bank Account – with support from the Parish Council – in order to also be able to access additional grants.

d. Cllr. Smith stated that there was considerable support for naming the winding path at Jubilee Wood at Littlemarsh after a previous councillor who was instrumental in creating more woodland in the village which can now be enjoyed by all parishioners.

8. Environment and Streetscene.

a. Rights of Way.

Cllr. Scott had reported that he has had a recent exchange of correspondence with Wiltshire Council in respect of the new SEMI9a/HILP22/10 'Cycleway' Safety Audit and associated Report and was disappointed to learn that the Audit is to proceed before the outcome of the police investigation into a recent major accident on the Cycleway had been concluded.

b. The Council **resolved** that, subject to discussions and agreement with the owner and adjacent landowner, that councillors and other volunteers would clear the overgrown vegetation obscuring the Pill Box and that a sum not exceeding £250 be spent on acquiring a refuse skip.

c. The Chairman remarked that the Rights of Way Group and Wiltshire Ramblers had been particularly busy recently clearing many of the Rights of Way in Semington Civil Parish and on behalf of the Council and the parishioners of Semington he thanked the group, and especially, Cllr. Hailey for coordinating this task and for maintaining a record (a spreadsheet) of the current state of the Rights of Way. The Clerk requested that he be advised when the Brush Cutter (ex. S106 asset) is received by the Group to enable him to record it as an asset on the Asset Register and to also ensure that it is on the Insurance Schedule.

Cllr. Hailey reported that the Parish Council had received requests from parishioners for additional Litter/Dog Waste bins to be installed along the Canal Towpath and within the village. She commented that the Towpath is in Melksham Without Parish Council and that she had advised the relevant parishioner accordingly. Cllr. Carberry agreed to investigate the viability and cost of placing additional bins within the village.

Cllr. Bruges stated that many of the local drains, gullies and gutters were blocked and needed clearing. The Chairman replied stating that he had raised this matter with the Parish Steward and had learned that Wiltshire Council intended to take action to clear these in the very near future.

Councillors commented that the street lighting in some parts of Semington was very poor and cited the area of Highfield Close/Pound Lane and Path 41 as examples. The Chairman stated that he would ask Stuart Renfrew of Wiltshire Council for options and advice to resolve the matter.

8. Transport and Traffic.

a. Cllr. Wade stated that he had attended the recent LHFIG and that there was no progress in respect of reconsidering the redeployment of the possible Bus Gate cameras or relocation of the Bus Gate. Cllr. Wade added that it was likely that Melksham Without Parish Council would be requesting Wiltshire Council to undertake a Traffic Survey to ascertain the extent of the problem before seeking funding.

b. There were no other issues raised.

9. Planning and Development.

a. There were no planning applications received after 13 September 2023.

b. The Parish Council noted that the Wiltshire Council Local Plan for Trowbridge had been approved by Wiltshire Council Cabinet and that comments on it were invited in the period 27 September to 22 November. The Chairman stated that the Draft comments from the Parish Council would be on the Agenda for approval at the October Parish Council meeting.

c. The Council reviewed the Green Square Accord Village Consultation in respect of Land North of St George's Road (Planning application 20/01306/OUT). Cllr. Hailey stated that she would send a copy of her summary report on the consultation/presentation to all councillors for information.

The Council **resolved** that a formal response from the Parish Council to the Planning application is to be sent to Wiltshire Council by 30 September 2023. Cllr. Scott agreed to draft such a response. The Council **resolved** that any comments on the Application from councillors are to be sent to him and Cllr. Hailey no later than 23 September and that agreement on the final comments to be sent to Wiltshire Council would be agreed by email exchanges.

10. Finance.

a. The Clerk gave a financial report, and the Council noted the following financial position:

Lloyds A/C 2149025

Bank Statement 30 June 2023	£	22,317.08
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Total:	£	22,317.08
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Credits (1 July 2023 to 31 July 2023):

None	£	-
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Total:	£	-
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Debits (1 July 2023 to 31 July 2023):

Place Studios	1120	£	107.37
WWT	1129	£	36.00
Clerk's Salary (July)	1138	£	426.46
Clerk's Salary (August)	1139	£	426.66
HMRC PAYE Month 4	1140	£	106.80
HMRC PAYE Month 5	1141	£	106.60
Clerk's Expenses (June)	1142	£	15.45
Clerk's Expenses (June)	1142	£	36.52
RB Road Signs	1144	£	76.98
NAS Fee	1148	£	66.00

Total:	£	1,404.84
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Balance at 31 July 2023 (A/C 2149025):	£	20,912.24
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Credits (1 August 2023 to 31 August 2023):

None	£	-
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Total:	£	-
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Debits (1 August 2023 to 31 August 2023):

Info. Comm. Fee	1143	£	40.00
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1461

L Callaghan (Plants)	1146	£	32.50
PS - Plants	1147	£	26.91
PKF Littlejohn (Audit Fee)	1150	£	378.00
AM Print & Copy	1151	TBA	
	Total:	£	477.41

Balance at 31 August 2023 (A/C 2149025): £ **20,434.83**

Credits (1 September 2023 to 20 September 2023):

Groundwork UK (14/9/23)		£	4,465.00
	Total:	£	4,465.00

Debits (1 September 2023 to 20 September 2023):

Equinox Explorer	1145	£	450.00
Place Studios	1149	£	457.40
	Total:	£	907.40

Balance at 20 September 2023 (A/C 2149025):

£ 23,992.43

Lloyds A/C 7754288

Bank Statement
30-Jun-23

	£	57,765.61
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Credits

10-Jul-23	Interest	£	39.25
18-Jul-23	HMCTS	£	1.28
09-Aug-23	Interest	£	42.76
17-Aug-23	HMCTS	£	1.28
09-Sep-23	Interest (Approx)	£	35.00
17-Sep-23	HMCTS (Approx)	£	1.16

Total:	£	120.73
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Debits

None

	£	-
	£	-

Balance at 20 September 2023 (A/C 7754288):

£ 57,886.34

Total Balance in Hand at 20 September 2023:

£	81,878.77
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Payments to be authorised (20 September 2023)

Clerk's Salary (September)	£	320.06
HMRC PAYE Month 6	£	213.20
Clerk's Expenses (July)	£	42.20
Clerk's Expenses (August)	£	21.00
AM Print & Copy (WW2 Defences Booklet) - s137	£	157.00
Place Studios - email Agreement (Neighbourhood Plan)	£	420.00
Village Hall Hire (Neighbourhood Plan)	£	202.00
Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust	£	50.00
	£	1,425.46

The Clerk presented the following Bank Reconciliation as at 31 August 2023:

Bank reconciliation

Name of smaller authority: **SEMINGTON PARISH COUNCIL**

County area (local councils and parish meetings only): **WILTSHIRE**

Financial year ending 31 August 2023

Prepared by ROGER COLEMAN – Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer

Date 1 September 2023

Balance per bank statements as at 31 August 2023:	£	
Lloyds Bank A/C 21490	20434.83	
Lloyds Bank A/C 7754288	57850.18	
Stroud & Swindon A/C S6535672	(0.19)	
	<u>78284.82</u>	78284.82
Petty cash float (if applicable)	0	
Less: any un-presented cheques at 31 August 2023		
		450.00
Cheque No.1145		457.40
Cheque No. 1149		<u>907.40</u>
		<u>77377.42</u>
Add: any un-banked cash at 31 August 2023	0	0

Net balances as at 31 August 2023	77377.42
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The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book (receipts and payments account) for the year to 31 August 2023, as follows:

CASH BOOK:

Opening Balance 1 April 2023 (Prior year Box 8)	84000.43
Add: Receipts in the year (to 31/8/23)	6855.38
Less: Payments in the year (to 31/8/23)	13478.39
Closing balance per cash book [receipts and payments book] as at 31 August 2023 (must equal net balances above)	77377.42

Cllr. Scott, on behalf of the Parish Council, thanked the Clerk for providing this information.

b. The Community Development Fund Working Group (CDFWG) stated that no other qualifying applications for funding had been received. Cllr. Hailey added that a new member of the Community Development Fund Working Group is soon to be appointed.

c. The Parish Council **resolved** to make a donation of £50 to the Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust.

d. The Council **resolved** to make the payments shown under 'Payments to be authorised' above at Agenda item 10a.

The Parish Council **resolved** that the Clerk is to invite St George's PCC to provide a figure and a breakdown of any proposed donation from the Parish Council and to request justification of the significantly higher sum for the hire of the Village Hall for the 2023 suite of Parish Council meetings.

e. There were no additional payments.

11. Neighbourhood Plan.

a. Cllr. Smith reported that the need to undertake a Strategic Environment Assessment in respect of one site identified in the Draft Neighbourhood Plan has introduced a delay of some four to six months of the formal Regulation 14 formal consultation.

b. The Council **resolved** that the request for Place Studios to undertake additional work was in accordance with a previous email agreement.

c. The Council **resolved** to that this item be the subject of a confidential discussion as per Schedule 12 of the Local Gov Act 1972 because the nature of the discussion could prejudice the public interest by reason of the disparate issues to be addressed.

d. The Council **resolved** to invoke the confidentiality requirement.

e. The Chairman reconvened the public meeting of the Parish Council.

12. Date of the next meeting.

The Council noted that the next Ordinary Parish Council meeting would be held on Wednesday 18 October 2023 commencing at 7.30pm.

The meeting ended at 9.45pm.

Chairman, Semington Parish Council

18 October 2023