

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on  
7 February 2024 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall**



Present.

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

There was one member of the public present.

**1. Apologies.**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. R Bruges and Wiltshire Council Cllr. J Seed.

**2. Declaration of Interests.**

There were no interests declared.

**3. Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 17 January 2024.**

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 Cllr. Seed no report was given:

**5. Community and Communication.**

a. The Chairman reported that there had been no further information relating to the Post Office.

b. Cllr. Chown enquired whether the existing Parish Council website should be reclassified as a 'Village Website' and local organisations be encouraged to use it for promulgating information relating to the Semington community. The Chairman asked the Clerk to include this matter on the Agenda for the March Parish Council meeting.

Cllr. Wade stated that, to date, he had been unable to confirm that the 'old' Semington website had been removed when searching for the 'new' Semington one.

The Chairman confirmed that Mr Turpin was continuing to progress the application for the two names to be added to the War Memorial and that Mr Turpin had been requested to ask the Parish Council to provide a letter in support of the project, if required.

**6. Recreation and Wellbeing.**

a. The Chairman confirmed that the allotment site now belonged to the Parish Council with effect from 2 February and that this transfer would be marked by a small ceremony.

Cllr Wade confirmed that all fourteen plots had now been allocated and that the tenancy agreements were in the process of being signed. He added that there appears to be an enthusiasm by the tenants to form an Allotment Association. The Chairman commented that investigations were in hand to identify a suitable shed to be placed at the allotment site for use by all tenants that accorded with any extant planning requirements. Cllr. Wade added that a request had been made by the tenants for the Allotment Car Parking area to be marked as such by means of a sign to deter 'non-tenants' from using that area for parking cars. The Council **resolved** to allocate a maximum of £250 for the purchase of a sign. The Council further **resolved** to allocate £100 for the hire of the Village Hall for meetings relating to the allotments.

b. The Chairman confirmed that the formal transfer of the Wessex Close Play Area to the Parish Council would take place on 1 April 2024 and that he was arranging a 'final' meeting with Wiltshire Council (Craig Campbell) which would include the Parish Council representatives to confirm some relatively minor residual issues. A date and time of 28 February and 2pm respectively was agreed. Cllr. Smith stated that three persons had now completed the Safety Inspection course. Councillors commented that there needed to be various procedures agreed for the regular maintenance and inspection of the Play Area and that prior to meeting with the Friends of Wessex Close Play Area Group it would be helpful for the councillors involved in this project to meet first. It was agreed that they would meet at 11am on 25 February.

c. The Chairman stated that a neighbour of his had offered to clean the surface of the Tennis Court. The Council asked the Chairman to accept his offer and to thank him for being prepared to undertake this work. The Council **resolved** to meet the cost of any necessary materials.

## 7. Environment and Streetscene.

### Rights of Way.

a. The Parish Council noted that following concerns expressed relentlessly to Wiltshire Council regarding the safety of the 'Cycleway' (SEMI9A/10 and HILP22/10), Wiltshire Council was intending to reclassifying this path as a 'restricted byway' by means of an 'experimental road traffic order' (ETRO). The ETRO will come into force at Wiltshire Council's discretion which is likely to be in the Spring and would prohibit vehicles using the Byway as a 'through route' and would permit it to be used for 'access only'. The Chairman added that this order would last for eighteen months and Cllr. Scott cautioned that it was only during the first six months that its utility would be assessed by Wiltshire Council. Cllr. Scott requested the Clerk to write to Wiltshire Council and to obtain details of the criteria to be used by Wiltshire Council to judge success, or otherwise, of the 'experimental traffic order'.

b. Councillors expressed their dissatisfaction at the failure of Wiltshire Police to respond to the request from the Parish Council for the accident report relating to an earlier incident on this byway and that it had been necessary to chase Wiltshire Police for a reply that also involved the MP making representations. The Parish Council was unimpressed with the holding reply received from Wiltshire Police stating it was a masterclass in obfuscation. The Clerk was asked to write regularly to Wiltshire Police until the accident report was received or a satisfactory explanation was provided for the refusal of Wiltshire Police to release it.

c. Cllr. Carberry stated that he had contacted Wiltshire Council to obtain a statement on the current Waste Bin Policy (including size, location, contents, emptying) to ensure that any proposals he makes accord with current policy.

d. Cllr. Hailey reported that Path SEMI28 was now in a reasonable condition, although there was a need to cut back some overgrown vegetation.

Cllrs expressed their concerns regarding the failure of some dog walkers to clear up after their dogs and that the presence of dog faeces on public footpaths had increased over the years. It was agreed that a note alerting parishioners to this problem would be included in the Newsletter.

### Other Matters.

e. The Chairman confirmed that further work to clear vegetation from the base/apron area of the Pill Box was necessary and he proposed 16 March or 23 March as possible dates for the next Working Party visit. The Council acknowledged that clearing the inside of the Pill Box and disposing of the accumulated rubbish would prove more difficult. It was agreed to take no action in respect of the inside of the Pill Box for the time being.

Securing the entrance door and embrasure was discussed and the fabrication of metal 'gates' was suggested and Cllr. Carberry agreed to make enquiries regarding their manufacture. Councillors remarked that the owner of the Pill Box which is located on adjacent farmland needs to be consulted

regarding any work involving the Pill Box or access to it. Also, it was noted that any tree work to expose the Pill Box needed further careful consideration.

It was agreed that a litter Pick is to take place on 9 March – meeting at the Village Hall, 10am.

## 8. Transport and Traffic.

a. Councillors noted that the Parish Council had received the Wiltshire Council Report on the Bus Gate monitoring and violations following the Wiltshire Council traffic survey and the correspondence from Wiltshire Police regarding their intended enforcement action.

Cllr. Wade commented that there had been some 1300 movements recorded, of which perhaps 800 were violations of the No Entry sign, and he was very disappointed that Wiltshire Council had made light of these results. The Council noted that Wiltshire Police are now taking some enforcement action and that this action had been publicized on Facebook.

Councillors expressed their thanks to Insp. Andy Lemon for taking a more proactive approach and that they look forward to welcoming him and/or his team to a Parish Council or Parish meeting.

There ensued a discussion on the availability, acquisition, use and associated cost of obtaining a camera to monitor the Bus Gate – as had previously been proposed. The Council decided that the cost of this project could be prohibitively expensive and not be justified. Cllr. Smith was asked to raise the findings of the Wiltshire Council Report at the forthcoming LHFIFG meeting and to invite those present to propose possible enforcement methods.

b. Cllr. Scott stated that the Parish Council was still awaiting a written response from the Melksham Area Board to the Highway matters raised by the Parish Council at the recent Area Board meeting – as had been promised.

Cllr. McGarvey stated that residents in Pound Close had complained to her regarding the speed of some traffic along that road. The Chairman stated that he would address this matter via a note in the Newsletter.

## 9. Planning and Development.

a. There were no planning applications received for consideration by the Parish Council.

b. There were no other matters raised.

## 10. Finance.

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

### Lloyds A/C 2149025

Bank Statement	£	23,350.66
31 December 2024		
	Total:	<b>£ 23,350.66</b>

### **Credits (1 January 2024 to 31 January 2024):**

None	£	-
	Total:	<b>£ -</b>

### **Debits (1 January 2024 to 31 January 2024):**

SLCC Membership	1179	£	144.00
Christmas Tree	1182	£	205.00
Clerk's Salary (January)	1183	£	338.39
Office Allowance	1184	£	250.00

1498

Clerk's Expenses (December)	1185	£	38.00
HMRC PAYE Month 10	1186	£	225.20
CPRE Subscription	1188	£	26.00
	Total:	£	<b>1,226.59</b>

**Balance at 31 January 2024 (A/C 2149025):**

**£ 22,124.07**

**Credits (1 February 2024 to 7 February 2024):**

None

£ -  
Total: £ -

**Debits (1 February 2024 to 7 February 2024):**

None

1182 £ -  
Total: £ -

**Balance at 7 February 2024 (A/C 2149025):**

**£ 22,124.07**

**Lloyds A/C 7754288**

Bank Statement  
31-Dec-23

£ 58,092.77

**Credits**

11-Jan-24 Interest - Approx  
21-Jan-24 HMCTS - Approx

£ 68.00  
£ 1.28  
Total: **£ 69.28**

**Debits**

None

£ -  
£ -

**Balance at 7 February 2024 (A/C 7754288):**

**£ 58,162.05**

**Total Balance in Hand at 7 February 2024:**

**£ 80,286.12**

**Payments to be authorised (7 February 2024)**

Clerk's Salary (February ) Net £ 338.39  
HMRC PAYE Month 11 £ 225.20

Clerk's Expenses (January)	£	33.98
Place Studio Ltd (Invoice 6085)	£	1,320.00
	<b>£</b>	<b>1,917.57</b>

The Council reminded the Clerk to transfer additional funds from A/C 2149025 to A/C 7754288 such that no less than £15,000 is to be left in A/C2149025. The Clerk replied that this was in hand.

b. Cllr. Hailey, on behalf of the Community Development Fund Working Group (CDFWG) stated that no other qualifying applications for funding had been received.

The Clerk explained the details of the use of CIL funds and that an annual report has to be submitted to Wiltshire Council regarding its disbursement. An annual report will be required from the Parish Council in March 2024 for CIL expenditure in FY2023/24 and the Clerk was asked to examine the proposed FY2024/25 Budget and to identify items that would qualify for CIL funding. Cllr. Scott commented that it may be necessary to identify the total CIL expenditure to date for the development of the Neighbourhood Plan and this would include expenditure in FY2022/23.

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

d. The Parish Council **resolved** to make a payment of |£20.47 to P Chown for the purchase of software to support the Semington Website.

#### 11. Neighbourhood Plan.

a. The Chairman confirmed that the Draft Neighbourhood Plan is now out for public consultation from 1 February 2024 to 15 March 2024 under Regulation 14. The Chairman confirmed that this public consultation is being very well advertised and added that there was to be a Public Consultation meeting at the Village Hall on 24 February.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Council, thanked the Webmaster (Mr Paul Chown) for ensuring that the Neighbourhood Plan was available, in full, on the Semington Website.

b. There were no further actions.

#### 12. Date of the next meeting.

The Council noted that the next Ordinary Parish Council meeting would be held on Wednesday 13 March 2024 commencing at 7.30pm.

The meeting ended at 9.45pm.