

SEMINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2016 at 8.00pm in the Village Hall

Present.

Councillor Robert Oglesby (Chairman) and Councillors P Bowyer, K Lockwood, S Rimmer, R Robinson, W Scott, P Smith, B Smyth, C Wade and the Clerk, Roger Coleman.

Wiltshire Council, Cllr. J Seed attended.

There were sixty-nine members of the public present initially with twenty-five remaining after Agenda item 8.

1. Apologies.

Apologies for non-attendance were received from PCSO Helen Wilson of the Community Policing Team.

2. Declaration of Interests.

Cllr. Lockwood declared an interest in Planning application 16/06564/OUT. There were no other interests declared.

3. Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 20 July 2016.

The Chairman observed that these minutes had already been approved and signed.

4. Minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 27 July 2016.

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record. The Chairman signed the minutes.

5. Community Policing.

PCSO Helen Wilson had sent the Clerk a written report prior to the meeting and her report is reproduced here in italics:

02/09/2016 – Transport RTC – A350 Junction with the A361 - RTC NON INJ INSECURE LOAD.

I have one crime however, that happened in Bulkington that I thought you should be aware of:

07/09/2016 – Crime / Burglary – High Street, Bulkington - Unknown suspect(s) have smashed front door window, and entered the house via front door, they have completed search of the house, and stolen items from within.

Property - 3 x watches and some loose change.

Helen Wilson PCSO 6171

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People First Honesty & Integrity Teamwork Professionalism Personal Responsibility

6. Adjournment.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting

The Chairman introduced representatives from Oxford Law Ltd (Land Development Specialists) namely Anthony Crean, Mike Crean and Dave Stout and their Planning Consultant Peter Frampton who wished to give details of their planning application 16/06956/OUT (Land North of St Georges

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Road) and to engage with members of the public present and to address any queries they may have regarding the application.

Anthony Crean, assisted by Peter Frampton, gave a short presentation that was followed by numerous questions from the public regarding details of the planning application.

The Chairman thanked Oxford Law and Mr Frampton for attending the meeting.

The Chairman reconvened the Parish Council meeting.

7. Wiltshire Council Report.

Cllr. Seed explained the current planning policy and the means by which planning applications are determined.

Cllr. Seed explained that he is taking action regarding the safety concerns on the A361 near to Littlemarsh and that the installation of dropped kerbs and a new central refuge may ameliorate the current dangerous situation. He added that he is currently in discussions with Wiltshire Council Highways regarding this proposal.

Cllr. Smyth commented that parish councillors had cut back some of the vegetation that was impairing visibility at the Littlemarsh roundabout to improve road safety at that point and Wiltshire Council had sent letters to other nearby properties requesting that the householders take similar action.

8. Planning.

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

16/01678/OUT	Land at St Georges Road	Erection of up to 24 dwellings etc.	Pending
16/05783/OUT	Land to the North of Pound Lane	The erection of 75 dwellings etc.	Pending
16/06639/FUL	ILC, St Georges Road	Change of use of part of the premises (first floor, east end) etc.	Approved
16/07164/LBC	ILC, St Georges Road	Internal alterations to facilitate change of use of part of the premises (first floor, east end) etc.	Approved
16/06564/OUT	Land North of 554 Canal Bridge	Outline application relating to access – Erection of two detached dwellings and new access.	Pending

b. The following planning application was considered by the Parish Council:

16/06956/OUT	Land North of St George's Road	Outline Application – All Matters Reserved (Residential development of up to 72 units)	NEW
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The Council noted the strong opposition to this planning application expressed by members of the public during the Adjournment and councillors expressed their own concerns that this additional development was unsuited to a small village such as Semington. In particular, councillors expressed concerns regarding the following:

- The development would be contrary to the Wiltshire Core Strategy.
- The inappropriate scale of the development.
- The negative impact on the countryside
- Unsuitable highway access.

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- Sewerage and flooding problems.

The Parish Council **resolved** to object to this proposed development and it **resolved** to send comments to Wiltshire Council as shown at ANNEX A, attached to these minutes.

c. There were no planning applications relating to Semington received after 5 September 2016.

d. The Council noted the response from Wiltshire Council (Jane Scott) in relation to the failure of Wiltshire Council to identify a five year land/housing supply. Cllr. Scott offered to reply to this correspondence on behalf of the Parish Council. The Parish Council **resolved** to accept the offer by Cllr. Scott

9. Finance.

a. The Clerk reported that the current financial position at 14 September 2016 was as follows:

Lloyds A/C 2149025

Bank Statement 30 June 2016	£	13,738.19
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Total:	£	13,738.19
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Credits (1 July 2016 to 31 July 2016):

HMRC PAYE Month 4	£	116.40
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Total:	£	116.40
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Debits (1 July 2016 to 31 July 2016):

Clerk's Salary (June)	£	290.94
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Clerk's Expenses (June)	£	9.24
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Total:	£	300.18
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Balance at 31 July 2016:

£ 13,554.41

Credits (1 August 2016 to 31 August 2016):

None	£	-
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Total:	£	-
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Debits (1 August 2016 to 31 August 2016):

Clerk's Salary (July)	£	290.94
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HMRC PAYE Month 4	£	116.40
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Codewater Solutions	£	140.00
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Filcris Ltd (Information Boards)	£	1,385.40
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Total:	£	1,932.74
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Balance at 31 August 2016:

£ 11,621.67

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Credits (1 September 2016 to 14 September 2016):

None		£	-
	Total:	£	-

Debits (1 September 2016 to 14 September 2016):

Clerk's Salary (August)		£	290.94
	Total:	£	290.94

Balance at 14 September 2016:

		£	11,330.73
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Minus Semington War Memorial Monies Remaining:

		£	375.99
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Parish Council Balance at 20 July 2016:

		£	13,178.42
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Lloyds A/C 7754288

Bank Statement 31-May-16		£	7,601.21
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Credits

Interest		£	0.32
Interest (Approx)		£	0.30
Interest (Approx)		£	0.28
Interest (Approx)		£	0.26
	Total:	£	1.16

Debits

None		£	-
	Total:	£	-

Balance at 14 September 2016:

		£	7,602.37
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Total Balance in hand at 14 September 2016:

		£	20,780.79
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Payments to be authorised (14 September 2016).

Clerk's Salary (September)		£	290.94
Office Expenses (July)		£	21.01
Office Expenses (August)		£	16.38
R P Coleman HMRC/PAYE (Month 5)		£	116.40
Village Hall Hire		£	450.00
	TOTAL:	£	894.73

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Donations/Subscriptions to be considered (14 September 2016).

None	£	-
	£	-
TOTAL:	£	-

b. The Council **resolved** to make all the payments under 'Payments to be authorised' above including a payment to Cllr. Robinson for the expense incurred in installing the Information Boards and the anchor points for the Christmas Tree.

Cllr. Wade handed the Clerk a cheque for £27.09 for the credit of Semington Parish Council – an initial payment in respect of the compensation awarded by HMCTS Cumbria and Lancashire for the Jubilee Mugs. This sum had initially been sent to Cllr. Wade by HMCTS and not Semington Parish Council.

10. Allotments.

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

11. Highways/Environment.

a. The action taken to improve the road safety at Littlemarsh/A361 was reported under Agenda item 7 (Wiltshire Council Report).

b. Cllr. Robinson confirmed that the two Information Boards now been installed in the village. The Chairman, on behalf of the Council, thanked Cllr. Robinson for undertaking this task.

c. The Chairman reported that a letter had been received from a parishioner offering to cut back part of the overgrown hedge that runs alongside the pathway next to the Village Hall. The Chairman read the letter out in full. Councillors expressed their gratitude to the parishioner for his offer and the Council **resolved** that the offer be accepted. The Clerk was requested to write to the parishioner.

The Council noted that it had received a petition from a number of signatories in respect of car parking in High Street. The Chairman asked that this matter be placed on the Agenda for the next meeting.

Cllr. Scott reported that Wiltshire Council had confirmed that the application for land in Semington to be classified as a Village Green was a 'valid' application and would now be processed accordingly.

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

There was nothing reported except confirmation by Cllr. Robinson that the subject of road safety at Littlemarsh/A361 had been raised at the CATG meeting.

13. Wilts & Berks Canal.

Cllr. Scott commented that he suspected that there were a number of key issues being discussed in relation to the Wilts & Berks Canal but that such information had not been made available to Semington Parish Council even though Semington would be directly affected by this development. The Council **resolved** that it is to seek representation on the appropriate body or bodies responsible for this development. The Clerk was asked to write to the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to request that Semington Parish Council is represented.

14. Tennis Court.

Cllr. Lockwood reported that the hedge at the Tennis Court required cutting back as it was encroaching on to the Tennis Court.

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15. Any Other Business.

The Clerk reported the following:

- Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Magazine had been received. This was passed to the Chairman.
- Community First AGM on 12 October 2016.

Cllr. Robinson reported that there were still many weeds in the village that needed clearing. Cllr. Smyth replied that this was on the Schedule of Tasks for the Parish Steward.

Cllr. Rimmer reported that Tanya Evans, a parishioner, had voluntarily undertaken weed clearance in Highfield Close and part of St Georges Road. The Council **resolved** to thank Ms. Evans for undertaking this task.

Cllr. Rimmer reminded councillors that a Christmas Tree still had to be sourced and Cllr. Smyth commented that the 'Switch on' was to be on Sunday 4 December.

Cllr. Oglesby stated that the Independent Living Centre Annual Meeting is to be held on 25 October at 2.30pm.

16. Date of Next Meeting.

The Council noted the date of the next meetings thus:

- 12 October 2016, commencing at 8pm – Ordinary PC Meeting.
- 23 November 2016, commencing at 8pm – Ordinary PC Meeting.

The meeting concluded at 10.30pm.

R A Oglesby
Chairman, Semington Parish Council

12 October 2016

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ANNEX A

Wiltshire Council Planning Application 16/06956/OUT

The Parish Council wishes Semington to retain the character of a small village community and to stay the sort of place where people like to live. Our opposition to this development is influenced by this view, and by Wiltshire Council's Core Strategy which only envisages developments of small sites within villages such as Semington, typically with fewer than 10 dwellings. Wiltshire Council's Core Strategy also says that development in large and small villages will be limited to that needed to help meet the housing needs of settlements and to improve employment opportunities, services and facilities. This proposal does none of this.

There has already been strong opposition from the village to this proposed development, with over 50 letters of objection sent to Wiltshire Council even before the meeting with the developers on September 14th. At that meeting, this widespread opposition was confirmed. The principal objection is to a huge increase in the number of houses in a village where there are few facilities, with all the houses to be built outside the established settlement boundary at the very western edge of the village, which would push the village limits well into the countryside. The Parish Council shares this objection, and we think that there are no village benefits within this proposal, only harmful impacts and future risks.

Our conclusion is that the planning balance comes down strongly against the proposal, and we ask Wiltshire Council to reject the application on four planning grounds which are summarized below:

The inappropriate scale of the development

- i. There is already outline planning permission granted to Hannick Homes for 24 homes to be built on a greenfield site in the village which will increase the number of dwellings in the community to around 425. The Parish Council approved this development because [i] it was supported by villagers and [ii] catered for the extra housing identified in the 2014 Wiltshire Council Semington housing needs survey. Thus, housing need in the village is fully catered for and additional homes are not needed. Nothing in the developer's case shows otherwise. There is no gain to the village by this development; only the loss of a well-used greenspace and agricultural land.
- ii. This development would increase the number of houses in the village by some 19% to around 500. However, if all the houses now proposed for the village were to be built, the number of dwellings in the core part of the village would increase by around 60%. Wiltshire Council's housing development plan calls for only 130 houses to be built in the villages in the Melksham area, and it seems unreasonable that around 80% of these (72 + 24 out of 130) should be built in one small village. Further, as there have already been over 700 houses built in the Melksham HMA, it is hard to see why a further 72 now need to be built in Semington.
- iii. Taking into account the additional school places required in housing already registered / approved but not yet built in the village, Education officers at Wiltshire Council have stated that St George's school is effectively full and has no spare places available, even when the school is expanded by one class (30 places). Officers say that as it is not possible to expand the school any further, pupils would need to be transported into Melksham where the schools are also all effectively full with no spare capacity. This is not sustainable and is a clear indicator that the village has no capacity for further development.

The negative impact on the countryside

- i. In 1989, West Wiltshire District Council said that the development of fields to the west of the village would set an undesirable precedent for the further development of the enclosed land to the north-west of the village, and would "constitute a most undesirable physical and visual intrusion in an otherwise attractive and unspoilt rural area, to the particular detriment of the setting of the adjacent canal amenity feature." This area (and the adjacent Kennet

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and Avon canal) remain “attractive and unspoilt”. This will be a serious loss of amenity for the village.

Unsuitable highways access

- i. We are very concerned that Section 1.1.7 of the developer’s transport submission says that, in addition to access on to St George’s Road, “...there may also be a requirement for a second access at the northern site frontage on Pound Lane.” Our considerable concerns about the unsuitability of Pound Lane for existing traffic, let alone that accruing from a further 70+ houses, has already been spelt out at length in our response to the Richborough proposals (16/05783/OUT). Put simply, as the school governors have already noted, the Lane is already dangerous, and this would make it much worse.
- ii. St George’s road is very narrow in places, and we think that access problems have been under-estimated by these proposals, especially as the presumed use of public transport for commuting, shopping, etc, is hugely exaggerated and unrealistic.
- iii. Further, we now know from an email exchange between a villager and Wiltshire Council’s major projects officer for another application, that we can expect around 160,000 journeys a year from 72 new houses. This is based on the rule of thumb that an average house in a village will generate about 7 trips per weekday (where a trip is a one-way traffic movement), and around 3 to 4 trips per day at weekends. The data supplied by the developer are, therefore, a huge underestimate of traffic movements along St George’s Road. Further, their assumptions about car sharing in Table 9 do not fit with the data they provide about typical car sharing activity in this part of Wiltshire
- iv. We also think that these proposals will lead to a large increase in the number of cars being parked along St George’s Road, adding to congestion along the road and the dangers of using it.

Sewerage and flooding problems

- i. We are very concerned that these proposals hugely under-estimate the risk of flooding and sewerage problems. We refer you to the comments already made by Mr Renfrew who sets these matters out more fully and articulately than we can: