

LITTLE SOMERFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting Tuesday 9th May 2024 held Little Somerford Village Hall

Minutes

Present

Cllr P Cameron
Cllr R Simmons

Cllr A Beer

In Attendance

R Nuttall (Clerk)
Cllr Threlfall (Wiltshire)

Representative of Wiltshire Police
6 members of the public

- 24APM/1 Apologies for Absence received from Cllr D Orchard and Cllr S Orchard.
- 24/APM/2 No declarations of interest
- 24/APM/3 The Minutes of the last APM held 9th May 2023 were approved and signed as a true record of the meeting.
Proposed: Cllr Cameron; Seconded: Cllr Simmons
- 24/APM/4 Cllr Cameron gave the **Chair's Report**, a copy is appended to these minutes. The Parish Councillors expressed their thanks to Councillor Cameron for her hard work as Chair over the past year.
- 24/APM/5 The 2023/24 figures are currently with the auditor for review. They will be put to the Parish Council for formal approval next month. The Council made an in-year surplus of £590 and ended with £20420 in the bank. The main source of income is the Precept. The main expenditure is on salary for the Clerk (15 hours per month) and grass cutting.

The Council has set a £4418 deficit budget for 2024/25 to allow it to invest in self-closing gates and improve verges in some areas including adjacent to the post box in The Street. The Precept has increased by £500 to £11500 which equates to £2.25pa extra per band D household.

Public Bodies

- 24/APM/6.1 Wiltshire Council
Wiltshire Council has set a balanced budget and is not relying on its reserves. It has allocated £1m for pothole repairs and £2m for preventative measures to maintain the highways. New machinery is being invested in for road maintenance.
Wiltshire Council will be surveying all road gulleys and will clear all gulleys annually. Cllr Threlfall is working with the landowner and the highways team to resolve the flooding issues at the railway bridge.

A new version of the My Wilts reporting app is soon to be launched, giving more feedback and updates. Wiltshire Council is working on a new Local Plan; land supply figures are being decreased, reducing pressure on land for new houses. More emphasis and financial resource are being put into planning enforcement. Regarding Lime Down Solar Park, Wiltshire Council has asked the Secretary of State for more clarity.

24/APM/6.2 Wiltshire Police

Wiltshire Police Community Officer gave a report. We are a very low crime area, a very safe area. The Speed enforcement officers had recently been in Little Somerford, and there was an above average incidence of speeding, some of whom will be receiving fines. The crime figures for the Malmesbury Villages area are very low, with the highest incidences being for violence, theft and burglary.

Members of the public are reminded to use 999 if they suspect a crime in progress or 101 to report a crime that has already happened.

24/APM/7.1 Somerford's Walter Powell School – numbers have increased to over 50. The School has recently received a 'Good' Ofsted report. The School is part of The Vine Schools group with Christian Malford and Seagry Primary Schools, sharing a headteacher/leadership team and local governing board. Due to issues within the Diocese of Bristol Academy Trust, The Vine Schools will be assigned to a new academy trust within the next few months.

24/APM/8 **Public Question Time**

No public questions.

Chairman report May 2024

Thank you to Elizabeth Threllfall (Wiltshire Council) for her support over the past year and all her help for working on issues to get good outcomes. There has been a couple of planning enforcement issues which she has worked hard to move forward and get them resolved.

We welcomed Alice Beer and Robert Simmons to the Parish Council earlier this year after a mail drop requesting people to volunteer. We thank Tina Oakley who left earlier in the year for her help whilst on the Parish Council and also David Matthews who has now resigned. We welcome Rob Taylor to join us who will replace Tina and Claire Bowles also will replace David once all the notices have been completed. We will then have a full Council.

Planning applications over the year

Planning applications include Trees surgery, House extensions, Stables & Stores, Tennis Court, agricultural barn and Cabins.

Communications

We now have a lot of residents signed up to a mailing list making it easier for us to get communications out to everyone. Residents without email are encouraged to contact the Clerk who can send out paper communications.

Paddock & Cemetery

The small paddock in Meadow Lane has been re let to a local resident in Great Somerford for a further 2 years. Roadside hedge has been cut during the winter.

The Cemetery has had 1 burial this year and 1 internment. Wild flowers continue to be encouraged along the cemetery fence and wall to return year on year. The unused side of the cemetery will only be cut and collected at the end of the season. We have had some volunteers cleaning up the older graves and more volunteers always welcome. This is a truly peaceful and calm place to be.

Allotments/Community Orchard

All the allotments are being used very productively. The annual allotment holders meeting took place in April and all the allotments are being used productively. Network rail and the brambles are as usual a concern, Network Rail have been contacted again regarding the brambles. The water to the allotments was turned off for the winter to prevent freezing and pipes bursting.

The Community Orchard trees have been pruned and are growing well. The raspberries have been cut back so hopefully we will have plenty of raspberries and blackberries this year. Paths in the orchard are there so that the fruit can be accessed.

Footpaths

We are working with landowners to install self-closing gates on footpaths 7, 9 & 10 we have 10 gates purchased. Ones completed are LSOM 10 on Mill Lane and the inner field gate, LSOM 9 on Mill Lane, LSOM 7 - 2 x inner field gates. If anyone is able to help with this it would be much appreciated. The continuous rain has made it difficult to get the inner field ones installed. It has been suggested that each gate is named after the field it accesses.

Playpark

The playpark has had its yearly Rospa report which was very good, the wood chipped areas have been dug over once and really need doing again. Small maintenance jobs and regular checks are ongoing throughout the year. Its always lovely to see so many children playing football at the play park. A bug



hotel has been built in the corner of the play park so that should get lots of inhabitants this year. An area along one edge continues to left to grow to increase the biodiversity in the play area.

Litter Pick & keeping our village tidy

There has been 2 very successful litter picks this year. Many bags of litter picked up and rescued from our hedges and ditches. We encourage people to report litter on the My Wilts App for areas outside the 30mph zones. Thankyou to all who helped out at the litter picks and those who continue to pick up litter on a weekly basis, I'm sure our village would not look this good without these people as it always keeps coming back.

Book Exchange

The book exchange continues to be used, every now and then there are things left that should not be but otherwise there are some interesting books in there.

Highways matters

The list of jobs is updated on a monthly basis of things such as potholes, drains needing clearing, sign cleaning, strimming etc for the Parish Steward to complete.

The Parish Council are working with highways to get the village name sign moved and maybe some road marking so that Field View and the other houses are recognised at the start of the village and it is hoped people will adhere to the 40mph better. There was a metro count recently to look at traffic numbers and with the increase in housing in Great Somerford there is a definite increase in traffic. I understand there was a police speed camera on The Hill recently: they managed to highlight a few speeders (this should be a bit deterrent for speeders). A separate report follows regarding the Speed Indicator Device (SID).

Millenium Green

Grounds maintenance continues with Greenscape for 3 years. The Christmas tree on the Green was purchased from Hortico Sherston. Thank you to all the residents involved in collecting and setting up the Christmas tree, it looked lovely lit up again this year. The small one is doing well for the future generations.

Carols on the green took place around the tree this year which was a perfect evening for it apart from being very wet under foot. The Salvation Army band played carols for us all, and took some requests, our sincere thanks go to them for playing out in the cold. A collection was made on the night and raised £161.10 for the worthwhile work they do.

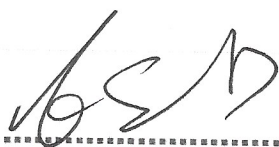
After consultation with all the residents it was decided to go back to cutting the grass on the green on a regular basis. There was a lot of positive feedback for maintaining the wildlife friendly area so maybe we can visit this again sometime.

Defibrillator

We have had a couple of times when the defibrillator has been out of action, we are able to take it out of use by Facebook, putting a note on the cabinet and removing it from the list of available defibs that the ambulances use. It was rectified quickly but can I ask anyone passing it to always check that the green light is flashing and let one of us know if it's not.

Donations

The Parish Council has supported the Signpost with a £100 donation. It is a vital source of information for our residents and we as a Council use it to print minutes and meeting dates etc. Also Malmesbury Food Bank with £100 for the vital work they do.

Approved  Chair 9/5/25 Date

Wildlife Friendly Village

This long-term project to increase the biodiversity in our village, first discussed in October 2020. The grass cutting regime to encourage and increase biodiversity continues in the Cemetery and Community Orchard encouraging our green areas to become less fertile and wildflowers to come back with pathways cut through. The long-grassed areas were cut and cleared at the end of season and wildflower seeds have been spread in the Cemetery and Community Orchard.

Thank you to all the Councillors and our Clerk for the help they have given the Parish Council over the last year.

Pauline Cameron (Chairperson)

Approved



Chair

9/5/25

Date

Little Somerford Parish Council

Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Income:	Actual	Actual	Budget
Precept	10500	11000	11500
Grants	1083	250	250
Allotment	220	160	160
Burials	1390	1045	400
Paddock Rent	100	170	100
VAT Refund	1081	1532	1600
Donation from MGT	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0
Bank Interest Received	16	89	60
	£ 14,390	£ 14,246	£ 14,070
Expenditure:			
Wages and Salaries	2146	2470	2766
Clerk Employ't Exp & mileage	200	200	280
Admin and Office Equipt	270	232	400
Website	133	84	291
Chairman's/Counsellor exp	39	0	250
Staff Training/Subs	127	128	200
Audit	245	260	285
Hall Hire	75	140	175
Grants/Donations	950	200	200
Insurance	378	426	500
Insurance Millennium Green Tru	210	264	300
Repairs, Maint & Defib	500	69	900
Grass Cutting	3635	3687	4800
Cemetery	138	30	311
Allotments, Paddock inc Water	1348	814	1290
Play Area	374	504	650
Capital Project	1409	2585	3500
VAT	1532	1564	1390
	£ 13,709	£ 13,657	£ 18,488
Surplus/(Deficit)	£ 2,668	£ 589	-£ 4,418.00

Bank Balances at 31 March 2024

Current Account	11935	
Deposit Account	8485	
TOTAL	£ 20,420.00	£ 16,002.00

Approved Chair Date