

L I T T L E S O M E R F O R D P A R I S H C O U N C I L

Parish Council Meeting Tuesday 3rd March 2026 Little Somerford Village Hall

Minutes

Present	Cllr P Cameron (Chair)	Cllr S Orchard	Cllr Tilley
In Attendance	R Nuttall (Clerk) Wilts Cllr Threlfall		

Public Question Time

No members of the public present

Reports from Unitary Councillor

The new LibDem administration set its budget at the last Full Council meeting: Council Tax rise is set to rise 2.99%, plus the usual 2% Adult Social Care levy, making a total increase of 4.99% - like the majority of councils.

Happily, the administration has U-turned on the proposed closure of Household Recycling Centres for now - however visits will have to be booked via an online system (despite evidence this increased fly tipping during COVID). They have also reversed the decision to defund the Link Scheme - which is very welcome.

Kerbside collections are changing: from 2027 food waste will be collected weekly from every household; plastic film will be collected with other recycling every two weeks, but the collections of waste will take place every three weeks (rather than fortnightly as now). (There are worries about the impact of this on certain households including those with small children).

Other budget items which I am concerned about:

- Increase in WC car park charges also hours extended to run 7am to 7pm and to include Sundays.
- Changes to Parish Steward arrangements for Parishes
- The Local Highways and Footpaths Improvement Group will focus on substantive bids over smaller applications for funding.

- The new administration plans to borrow £15m to fund highway maintenance over the next 3 years instead of finding it from the current budget.
- Nonetheless the total being spent on road repairs is going down.
- A Conservative proposal to start ‘lane rental’ has been adopted (i.e. charging utility companies when they close roads to raise revenue and reduce congestion).

A separate piece of disappointing news is that the Wiltshire Local Plan (which will include the Gypsy and Traveller Plan) is to be rejected by Planning Inspectors; in conjunction with the fall in housebuilding activity, this will only increase the pressure to grant planning applications for new housing even when they are speculative and against local and national policy.

- 26/03/1 **Apologies for Absence** – Cllr Beer, Cllr D Orchard, Cllr Simmons, Cllr Taylor

- 26/03/2 **Declarations of Interest** None

- 26/03/3.1 **Minutes and Matters Arising** the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 13th January 2026 were approved and signed.
Proposed: Cllr Cameron; Seconded: Cllr Tilley

- 26/03/3.2 It was agreed that all items shaded green on the Action Register were completed, and others coloured amber were in progress.
Other outstanding actions were updated and agreed.

- 26/03/4.1 **Planning Matters**
There were no planning applications to be considered.

- 26/03/4.2 **To ratify decisions made between meetings.**
PL/2026/00622 NO OBJECTION Notification of proposed works to trees in a conservation area, POUND HOUSE, LITTLE SOMERFORD, CHIPPENHAM, SN15 5JW

- 26/03/4.3 **Determined by Wiltshire Council**
PL/2026/00070 APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS
Consent under Tree Preservation Orders
SOMERHILL HOUSE, LITTLE SOMERFORD, CHIPPENHAM, SN15 5BH

- 26/03/4.4 **Other Planning Issues**
No update on enforcement notice served on land off B4042. Planning Enforcement Officers are investigating the positioning of the solar array at Somerhill House

- 26/03/5 **Finance**
- 26/03/5.1 **To approve Payments & Receipts**
 The Finance report was received, and the Parish Council ratified payments of £3,046.37; and noted receipts of £ 53.30.
 Proposed: Cllr Cameron; seconded Cllr S Orchard
- 26/03/5.2 The Receipts and Payments to the 2nd March 2026 were noted and the bank reconciliation for January signed by the Chair.
 The current account stands at £15255, and the year-to-date deficit is £190.
- 26/03/5.3 The Parish Council **agreed** to make a S137 donation of £50 to The Signpost Magazine and £50 to Malmesbury Foodbank, it was agreed to allocate a reduced donation from budgeted, due to unexpected costs through-out the year. Proposed: Cllr Cameron; Seconded: Cllr Tilley **Action: Clerk**
- 26/03/5.8 **To approve the budget for 2026/27 including Capital Project items.**
 The Parish Council had before it the budget for 2026/27. The budgeted expenditure is £21235 and includes normal recurrent spend plus a Capital Project for improvements to public spaces – including the Cemetery and Rights of Way.
 The Parish Council **approved** the final budget for 2026/27. Approving this budget does mean that the Council is approving a budget deficit for 2026/27.
 Proposed: Cllr Cameron; seconded: Cllr S Orchard
- 26/03/6.1 **The Code of Conduct** was reviewed and **agreed** .
 Proposed: Cllr Tilley; Seconded: Cllr S Orchard
- 26/03/6.2 **The Standing Orders** were **agreed**.
 Proposed: Cllr Tilley; seconded: Cllr S Orchard
- 26/03/6.3 **The IT Policy** was **agreed**.
 Proposed: Cllr Tilley; seconded: Cllr Cameron
- 26/03/6.4 **The Data Protection Policy** was **agreed**.
 Proposed: Cllr Cameron; seconded: Cllr S Orchard
- 26/03/6.5 Cllr D Orchard will be asked to confirm website compliance and to include an accessibility statement. **Action: Cllr D Orchard, Clerk**
- 26/03/6.6 5th May was set as the date of the APCM and APM. The meeting will start at
 26/03/6.7 7pm. Cllr Orchard will be Chair and Cllr Taylor or Cllr Beer will be Vice Chair.

Each Councillor will be asked to write a short annual report on their area of responsibility and to present this at the meeting. **Action: All**

26/03/7.1 Highways Matters

The Parish Steward will be asked to fix the footpath sign at the top of Clay Street and clear the ditch grill on the lane near the church.

Action : Cllr Simmons

26/03/7.2 The Discretionary Gully Service Report was reviewed, it was decided to go back to Highways Dept. regarding the flooding at the railway bridge. Whilst this may not be a high-speed road, or causing internal flooding, it is the main road from Great Somerford; a 2025 traffic survey showed 1500 vehicle movements per day on this road. In addition, there is no pavement so pedestrian access to and from Little and Great Somerford and to the cemetery and allotments involve walking through the flood.

The ditch on the barn side of Meadow Lane needs to be dug out to allow for the blocked drain to be flushed, clerk to find out landowner.

Action: Clerk

26/03/8.1 Clerk to contact landowner at Blackberry Farm regarding gate options.

Action: Clerk

26/03/8.2 Annual Allotment Meeting date to be set and 2 Parish Councillors to attend, clerk to contact allotment holders.

Action: All Councillors, Clerk

26/03/8.3 The Spring Litter Pick will be on Sunday 22nd March at 9am, starting from Millenium Green.

26/03/9 Clerk's Report

The landowner with water discharge to highway will rectify once weather is drier and land can be easily accessed.

There are new signs at the Park and Allotments with Clerk's phone number.

Two extra keys have been obtained for the Parish Council Noticeboard, Cllr

Cameron to have one, Cllr Simmons to have one.

Action: Clerk

Update on Standing items.

26/03/10.1 The Paddock Clerk to advertise

Action: Clerk

26/03/10.2 Cemetery – Memorial Bench has been installed; there will be a price increase for the emptying of the bin from April 1st; a second quote will be sought for the path edging.

Action: Cllr Cameron

26/03/10.3 **Footpaths and Rights of Way**, Annual report due at next meeting. Wiltshire Council can add 3 gates to their next order; we need to inform them of which gate - the Marlow 1m or 1.2m pedestrian gates are the most DDA compliant. All gate installations need authorisation by the highway authority. Stephen Leonard to be sent contact details of the landowners so he can send then authorisation schedules to allow for the structures on the network.

Action: Cllr Beer

26/03/10.4 **Playpark** – slide needs painting. Bark to be turned and weeded.

Action: Cllr Cameron, Cllr Tilley

26/03/10.5 **Telephone Book Exchange** – nothing reported.

26/03/10.6 **Speed Indicator device** to be moved to The Street

26/03/11 Dates for Future Meetings 2026 –5th May (APCM), 2nd June, 7th July, 1st September, 3rd November.

DRAFT