

KINGSTON SEYMOUR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Kingston Seymour Parish Council held on
Monday 13th January 2025 at 19.45
At the Kingston Seymour Village Hall, Ham Lane, Kingston Seymour

Councillors Present:

Mike Sewell (MS) Chairman
Paul Cox (PC)

Richard Barber (RB) Vice Chairman
Andy Gillam (AG)

Zoe Bartlett (ZB)
Susie Humphries (SH)

In attendance:

Steve Dixon (SD) Clerk & RFO

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Councillor Malton and District Councillors Bridger & Griggs

2. To record declarations of interest in items on the agenda

SH declared her interest in item 4.

3. Members of the public are invited to address the council

No members of the public wished to speak.

4. To discuss and agree the Parish Council's position on the following application

Planning Application No 24/P/2221/FUH

Proposed erection of a single storey side extension, single storey rear extension and first floor side extension above existing garage at **Willow Cottage, Rookery Close, Kingston Seymour BS21 6XY**

The applicants were in attendance to explain what they hoped to achieve. There had been no objections lodged by other parties and councillors had studied the plans which they felt they were in keeping with the area and it was proposed by PC, seconded by RB and supported unanimously.

Action; Clerk to convey decision to NSC on the planning file.

5. To confirm the minutes of the following meeting

Full Council Meeting – 13th November 2024

It was proposed by RB, seconded by ZB and supported unanimously that these were a true record.

Action: Clerk to post the approved minutes on the website

6. Police and Neighbourhood Watch

The Police team were unable to attend and there were no reported issues from the Neighbourhood Watch coordinator.

7. EDF Saltmarsh Proposals. Status/Next Steps

MS reported that he had attended a call with EDF and the chairs of the other impacted parishes and EDF had written to landowners since the new year to tell them that their plans were being delayed so the start of the formal consultation process would also be delayed. These calls are set to be monthly.

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Action: MS to put a note on village Facebook and update monthly thereafter. The content will also be loaded onto our website which has a repository of information about the EDF actions.

The North Somerset Levels Action Group is preparing a file of evidence for EDF and this will be submitted by the end of January. A letter of comfort is being sought from the EA concerning the certainty of sea wall protection whatever the outcome. It is hoped that this will be received by next week and will provide our parishioners with leverage over their insurance companies.

Action: Clerk to ensure that letter from the EA is received and appropriate and is then shared with councillors and parishioners.

8. Infrastructure. To receive updates and to agree the next actions on:

8.1 Tutshill Route and the Duck Lane Link

Following their incorrect installation, we had been promised that the two “Quiet Lanes” signs on the Lampley Road would be removed but this has yet to be done. There are no direction signs on the link either.

Having written to NSC, we are now advised that the recommendations of a Road Safety Audit (RSA3) are being discussed and agreed in NSC this week and that once all of the necessary measures have been agreed, work will be contracted out as a “package”.

Action: Clerk to obtain a copy of the RSA3 and to ascertain what is being done.

8.2 Roads

Following a suggestion from a parishioner, the clerk had written to NSC about the potential dangers of the junction at Middle Lane and the Triangle. Following investigation, NSC Highways had advised that as the incident record at this junction was good, they were not prepared to take any action. They did suggest that a mirror could be installed on the railings opposite the junction and at the parish council’s risk and, after consideration, councillors agreed that they would not adopt this suggestion.

8.3 Footpaths

AG is pursuing the issue of cuttings in the rhyne alongside 11/2/10 and is researching the options for replacing the bridge on footpath LA 11/5/10. At the northern end of this path, some sheep escape prevention measures have been put in place by the landowner. This could be better served by the installation of proper gates.

Action: Clerk to refer to NSC to establish whether the installation of a gate would be possible.

8.4 Village Maintenance

The annual maintenance contracts were discussed, and it was agreed that quotations would be obtained for the same specification of cuts to be undertaken in 2025.

Action: Clerk to approach our usual contractors for quotes and clarify the legal situation regarding use of flail cutting in April and July. A decision will be taken at the March meeting

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9. Services, Resilience & Community. To receive updates and agree any necessary actions:

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9.1 Climate Emergency & Sustainable Travel

Parishioners had expressed concerns about the light pollution that was crossing the eastern side of the village from the premises of Smart Systems – based in Arnolds Way, Yatton. It is felt that the lighting is excessive and needs to be moderated.

Action: Clerk to contact the company and request their help in controlling this.

9.2 Bristol Airport Expansion Plans

RB stated that Bristol Airport is pushing ahead with more plans for expansion from the current measured 10mppa to the authorised 12mppa - and up to 15mppa in the shorter term and 20mppa by 2040. A draft letter from the PCAA had been circulated but after discussion, it was felt appropriate that RB lodge a Kingston seymour specific response to their public consultation.

Action: RB and the clerk to create and submit a response.

10. Administration and Communication

10.1 Review the council's Financial Regulations

RB had reviewed the new Financial Regulations on behalf of the council and was content to recommend their adoption. It was proposed by AG, seconded by SH and supported unanimously that they be adopted.

Action: Clerk to post the newly adopted Financial Regulations on the website.

10.2 Review the council's Equality and Diversity Policy

The clerk reported that there had been no advice to change the structure of this document and he proposed that the existing version was readopted. It was proposed by ZB, seconded by RB and supported unanimously that this should be the case.

Action: Clerk to post the readopted version on the website.

10.3 Review the council's Electronic Communication Policy.

AG had crafted a new Electronic Communication policy to complement the Social Media policy which the council had adopted in September 2024. The clerk had issued the document for review and councillors had done so with one minor piece of clarity to be resolved.

After discussion, it was proposed by RB, seconded by SH and supported unanimously that this policy should be adopted.

Action: Clerk to work with AG to clear the outstanding issue and to put the adopted version on the website.

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11. Finance

11.1 Receive the current Financial Report

The clerk reported that the council had £2.1k net (after payments due) in its current account and £9.4k in its reserves. Income and expenditure were in line with budgeted figures and it is now likely that there will be no further major expenditure in this financial year so the parish should have financial assets of just under £10k at year end (31st March).

11.2 Consider draft budget for 2025-2026, discuss the precept options and agree a precept figure.

The clerk had provided a draft budget, information about precepts across the other 38 parishes and towns in the North Somerset Council district and set out options for the precept level.

After discussion and in recognition of having suppressed the increase in recent years to between 0% and 3%, and the rising costs for supporting activities across the village, it was proposed by RB that we should ask for a 10% increase in the precept. This would mean that a Band D property in the parish would be charged £72.66 per annum rather than this year's £66.06.

After discussion, it was proposed by ZB, seconded by AG and agreed unanimously that this figure should be notified to NSC.

Action: Clerk to submit precept request to NSC

The parish had been asked by NSC to contribute £500 to the funding of a member of staff in the PROW team for 24/25. ALCA had expressed some concerns about the legality of this request. After discussion, it was proposed by SH, seconded by ZB and supported unanimously that we would not give this funding to NSC. The draft budget would be adjusted and discussed again at the next meeting.

Action: Clerk to advise NSC of the decision and update the draft budget.

12. External Meetings

MS advised that he had attended meetings with EDF in December and January and that there was another one scheduled for early February.

The clerk had attended (alongside a member of the NS Levels Action Group) a "Meet the Regulator" session with the Environment Agency in November and a Marine Management meeting in December. Much information had been shared and this may become more relevant as the EDF challenge goes forward.

RB was set to attend a PCAA meeting this week to discuss the airport's desire to move to 15mppa and then ultimately 20mppa. The clerk is to attend a briefing from NSC in late January about the commencement of three weekly black bin collections

ZB advised that there would be a new public access defibrillator becoming available at the Acorn Lakes premises shortly.

13. Very Recent Correspondence

The clerk had received information about the nascent Local Nature Recovery Strategy and would study it and brief councillors at the next meeting

Action: Clerk to brief councillors on key points and relevance to our parish

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14. To Agree items for the meeting on the 10th March 2025

To follow up on outstanding actions from this meeting. The draft agenda will be sent to councillors in advance of issue and for any additional items to be added.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 21.40.

Steve Dixon

Steve Dixon,
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer,
16th January 2025