

# KINGSTON SEYMOUR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Kingston Seymour Parish Council held on  
**Monday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at 19.45**  
At the Kingston Seymour Village Hall, Ham Lane, Kingston Seymour

Councillors Present:

|                                 |                   |               |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Richard Barber (RB), Vice Chair | Zoe Bartlett (ZB) | Paul Cox (PC) |
| Andy Gillam (AG)                | Fred Malton (FM)  |               |

In attendance:

|                              |                                          |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Steve Dixon (SD) Clerk & RFO | Wendy Griggs (WG)<br>District Councillor |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------|

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Councillors Sewell and Humphries and from District Councillor Bridger.

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

None

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

No members of the public wished to speak

**4. To confirm the minutes of the following meeting**

**Full Council Meeting – 12<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

It was proposed by FM, seconded by AG and supported by those that were present, that these were a true record.

*Action: Clerk to post the approved minutes on the website*

**5. Police and Neighbourhood Watch**

The clerk reported that PCSO Harris had attended a coffee morning and had been well received by parishioners. The Neighbourhood Sergeant, Ed Harris, had reported that Violence Against the Person (VAP) offences continued to be high in the district but were not displaying an upward trend. This title being a group of offences including harassment, stalking and controlling behaviour as well as physical violence and are commonly “domestics”. There were no other issues affecting Kingston Seymour in particular at present.

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

**6.1 Bus Shelter**

AG reported that the request for comments on the bus shelter proposals – which was carried in the last village magazine – had received a handful of responses but with no clearly favoured option.

Accordingly, and after further discussion, it was agreed by councillors that we would proceed with a solid stonework back and with sides consisting of a metre stonework wall topped with slatted wooden sides. These would allow more visibility into and from the shelter. It was also agreed that we would defer the decision as to whether the new shelter should commemorate Queen Elizabeth or celebrate King Charles.

AG will act as Project Manager and work with a key parishioner to progress the work. Others would be asked to help as was necessary and appropriate. A budget of £1500 would be earmarked. Timescale will depend on the weather and availability of materials and resources.

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This approach and way forward was proposed by PC, seconded by ZB and supported unanimously.

*Action: AG to lead the project for the council and report at future meetings until the work is completed.*

## **6.2 NSC Shared Highway Support Proposals**

The clerk advised that NSC had written offering additional verge maintenance and the use of a “parish gang” to do specific pieces of work alongside the lanes. It had been assessed that we have 12.3km of maintained highway in our parish. The service would, however, require a financial commitment of several hundreds of pounds per annum.

After discussion including noting that our parish already pays for similar work to keep our lanes as safe as possible, that we would continue with that model and directly fund what we believed needed to be undertaken.

*Action: Clerk to decline the NSC offer.*

## **6.3 Village Maintenance 2026**

The clerk requested permission to approach contractors for quotes on the two current village maintenance contracts. One is for machine cutting certain areas in the village and the other is for hand cutting other areas during the course of the year.

After discussion, it was agreed that there was no need to change these contracts and they would be offered out and quotes obtained for agreement at the next meeting.

*Action: Clerk to approach contractors with specifications and request quotations.*

Discussion followed on the maintenances of the Pier to Pier route section that used the parish lanes and the clerk will approach NSC to understand what they intend to do to maintain safety in these lanes

*Action: Clerk to write to NSC concerning focussed maintenance of the route.*

Whilst this is clearly the responsibility of the highways authority and landowners, it was also suggested that the parish consider undertaking an extra cut along the route - in March 2027 - and RB and the Clerk are to draw up a specification and approach a contractor.

*Action: RB and clerk to create a new specification for this – potential – work.*

## **7. Services, Resilience & Community. To receive updates and agree any necessary actions:**

### **7.1 Climate Emergency & Sustainable Travel**

Concern was expressed about the light pollution that continues to emanate overnight from Smart Systems in Yatton and despite the assurances that had been given.

*Action: Clerk to write to Smart Systems again to reiterate our concerns.*

### **7.2 Defibrillator status update**

The clerk reported that the manufacturer of the pads had restarted production but that there was no delivery date fixed yet. Their advice remained to leave the existing pads in place.

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## **8. Administration and Communication**

### **8.1 IT Support and Assertion 10 progress**

The clerk advised that he is working through the requirements of the new audit Assertion 10 – Digital and Data Compliance. These included the new website domain and email addresses which we have already achieved, but also includes requirements for alignment to accessibility guidelines, freedom of information and data protection and GDPR. Much is also to be encapsulated in a new IT Policy.

AG is supporting the clerk in the creation of an IT Policy, and our web provider has offered to do an initial Accessibility Audit on our site for a fee of £50. Councillors also agreed to personally complete a Data Protection Awareness checklist.

*Action: Clerk to progress in all necessary areas and to provide an update on progress at the next meeting.*

### **8.2 Annual review of Financial Regulations and Equality and Diversity policies**

The clerk had studied new information as relating to these policies and had confirmed that the professional bodies were suggesting no change. Accordingly, the clerk recommended that council re-adopt these policies for another year. It was proposed by FM, seconded by ZB and supported unanimously that both policies would be readopted for a further year.

*Action: Clerk to refresh the policies and place on the website.*

## **9. Finance**

### **9.1 Current Financial Report**

The council currently has £8k in its general funds and a further £6.2k in its War Memorial Reserve account. This year's budget is tracking to plan and funds will be available to invest in the bus shelter as noted above.

### **9.2 To agree a draft budget and to set the required precept for 2026-27**

The clerk advised that because of NSC calculations regarding council tax support, we have effectively "lost" 3.7 properties meaning a loss of £368 versus last year. As last year, we are facing increased costs in the services we do provide (including the clerk's salary) and councillors have concerns that the District Council will continue to back away from local support issues and will leave the Parish to take up the burden.

Accordingly, it was agreed that the parish would ask for a precept of £15k for 26-27 (up by £1,115) which would show as a 10.2% increase on the parish line of council tax bills. This way forward was proposed by AG, seconded by PC and supported unanimously.

*Action: Clerk to notify NSC of the decision and to build this figure into the draft budget for 26-27.*

## **10. External Meetings**

The clerk had attended a planning workshop with NSC from which the "headlines" were: NSC remain in deep financial difficulty and the Government's Fair Funding" review has not helped. NSC have asked the Government to allow them to increase charges by more than the statutory 5%. The Local Plan is going through the last stages of consultation before being submitted to the Planning Inspectorate – probably in March.

The Chairman had attended a call with EDF where they reported that testing of new Acoustic Fish Deterrent had been going very well and that they intended to notify their regulators around the end of this month and, hopefully, proceed to a "hard stop" on other activities (saltmarsh creation), by May.

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RB and the clerk had met with our highways officer recently and PC expressed concern about the sunken road surface in Yeo Bank Lane and about potholes in general.

*Action: Clerk to contact Simon Hazell and request action*

## **11. Receive information about very recent correspondence**

No new information that wasn't already covered in the meeting.

## **12. To note items for the meeting on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March**

An update on progress against the Assertion 10 requirements, the bus shelter project, the draft budget for 26-27 and a review of the road situation will be included. Other items of importance that arise will be included, and Councillors will be asked to add other items when the draft agenda is issued in early March.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 20.55.

*Steve Dixon*

Steve Dixon,

Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer, 14<sup>th</sup> January 2026