

Great Somerford (incorporating Startley) Parish Council

Meeting held in The Community Room on the 4th March 2026 at 7.30pm

Minutes

Present; Cllrs Griffiths (Chair), Todd, Gravell, Evans, Phillips, Harrison, Sturgis (Vice Chair) & Harper

Also present: Claire Mann (Locum Parish Clerk), Cllr E Threlfall (WC) and 1 member of the public

PQT Public Question Time (limited to 10 minutes)

The member of the public stated that the Gt Somerford Community Fund would like to tidy up the entrances to the Village with planting that would require minimum maintenance by volunteers, a proposal will be put to the Parish Council at the next meeting. It was suggested that the Village might wish to enter the Best Kept Village Competition.

WCR Reports from Wiltshire Councillor and any items for consideration from Local Groups.

Cllr Threlfall reported that WC had set its budget at the last Full Council meeting; a loss has been incurred from Central Government due to Labour incentives favouring northern counties. There is a 4.9% increase on Council Tax and U-turn decisions have been made by the new administration on the proposed closure of Household Recycling Centres and the defunding of the Link Scheme. Household recycling and refuse collections will be made three weekly rather than fortnightly and the introduction of soft plastic and food waste recycling will come in. Other concerns of note from Cllr Threlfall as follows;

- Increase in parking charging hours
- Parish Steward hours are to be cut/services to Parishes
- The Local Highways and Footpaths Improvement Group is being pressed to subsidise substantive bids over smaller applications for funding.
- The new administration plans to borrow £15m to fund highways and road maintenance.
- The Conservatives had proposed 'lane rental' when closing roads to help save £2m.
- The Wiltshire Local Plan is likely to be rejected by Planning Inspectors.

Cllr Threlfall has received assurances that the pot holes in West Street in the Parish will be patched, the request for a SID in Top Street has been put forward and the 'No HGVs' initiative in Winkins Lane is progressing.

Following discussion it was agreed that Cllr Sturgis will write to the portfolio holder for Highways to request that highway resurfacing is placed as higher priority than a 20mph speed limit in Malmesbury.

01/26

Introduction

a) Apologies

Apologies received from Cllr Barker.

b) Declarations of Interest

None received

02/26

Minutes

a) To approve and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 5th February 2026

Subject to the amendment of a minor typo, Cllr Evans proposed the approval of the Minutes, this was seconded by Cllr Sturgis and all agreed. Cllr Griffiths signed the minutes.

b) To approve and sign the Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on the 19th May 2025

Cllr Griffiths proposed the approval of the Minutes, Cllr Evans seconded and it was agreed by all.

c) To note the status of actions detailed on the Action Register

It was noted that Cllr Sturgis is continuing to establish land ownership and actions for Manor Park trees. The soakaway and drainage issues at Frog Lane has been completed and Cllr Evans will post on the Village Facebook requesting that vehicles do not park on pavements on the Dautsey Road.

Other Items on the register would be covered later in the agenda.

03/26

CIL Projects

It was agreed that the eroded capping stone at the Church Wall would be replaced by Corinium Stone. It was noted that there is a leak in the Bus Shelter at Startley but that it is covered by warranty.

a) To receive update on the MUGA Feasibility Report

Cllr Phillips had circulated the report. It was noted that a licence is to be acquired and the Glebe Field is the preferred location. Actions to be taken are to communicate with the Free Gardens CIO, consultation with residents and to undertake a referendum for all residents. Further discussion on next steps will take place at the next Parish Council meeting.

04/26

Planning

a) To discuss planning applications received since last meeting

PL/2026/01256 – Coppins, Hollow St - Beech trees - Side prune and Re-pollard to achieve a minimum restricted 3.5m safety clearance from overhead lines.

Resolved - No objection

PL/2026/00491 – Greenleaves, Hollow St - Solar panels on detached garage roof

Resolved – No objection

PL/2026/01282 – Somerleaze House, Gt Somerford - T1 Oak - Reduce by 25%; T2 Willow - Reduce by 25% & Remove 3-4 extending branches

Resolved – No objection

PL/2026/00987 - Braefel, Startley - Single-storey extensions and associated improvements; New detached garage/carport.

Resolved – No objection

PL/2026/00913 – Tangles, Gt Somerford – Judas Tree, fell

Resolved – No objection

b) To discuss Housing Developments in the parish

No updates

c) To discuss Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Sturgis reported that this is progressing, there will be planning reforms in July 2026. The Local Plan is being checked as information is gathered. A smoother process is anticipated.

05/26

Finance

a) To ratify and approve the Finance Report detailing transactions since the last meeting and reconciliation of the Treasurer's Account to 28th February 2026.

Payments were ratified and approved.

b) To consider way forward with banking arrangements for Locum Clerk

It was agreed that the Locum Clerk will forward invoices to Cllr Phillips who will then pass to signatories for approval at the bank.

06/26

Managed Facilities

a) Winkins Lane Playground

Cllr Phillips had circulated his report to all members, he will investigate prices for equipment required.

b) Community Room

The School will be asked if the lights could be turned on for the evenings of Parish Council meetings.

07/26

Environment

a) Any actions for the Parish Steward or Council

It was noted that the Parish Steward isn't currently undertaking usual duties and they are all repairing pot holes across Wiltshire.

b) To note correspondence from IdVerde and determine next steps

Following discussion it was agreed to seek quotes from alternative waste and recycling companies. Cllr Threlfall will ask if IdVerde, through Wiltshire Council, are able to take on the emptying of the three bins.

08/26

Standing Items; To discuss updates regarding

i. Startley Cemetery

It was noted that there are currently six plots reserved at the Cemetery and others are likely to be.

ii. Communications

No update.

iii. Gt Somerford and Startley Defibrillators

No additional information.

iv. Book Exchange

This has been tidied up and Cllr Todd will contact volunteer.

v. Emergency Plan

No update.

vi. School's Liaison

It was noted that there is a meeting this Friday.

vii. War Memorial

A tidy up is planned at the War Memorial this coming weekend.

viii. Website

There are currently no issues with the website.

09/26

Notice

To confirm date of next Parish Council meeting

It was agreed that the next Parish Council meeting would take place on the 8th April at 7.30pm.

Meeting closed at 8.50pm