

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF Seend Parish Council

Meeting Type: Council, Wednesday 13th May 2026

Time: 18.30 – 19.00

Venue: Irene Usher Hall, Seend, Melksham

(Meeting convened in accordance with **Schedule 12, Local Government Act 1972**)

1. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT AND OPENING OF MEETING

The Chairman declared the meeting open at **18.30**, having confirmed that the meeting had been **properly convened** in accordance with **Schedule 12, paragraph 10 of the Local Government Act 1972**.

2. PRESENT

Councillors Present:

- Cllr Savage (Chair)
- Cllr Bridget Johnstone (Vice Chair)
- Cllr Paul Manning
- Cllr Pamela Akerman
- Cllr Jamie Halliday
- Cllr Phil Springate
- Cllr William Lack

In Attendance:

- Proper Officer / Clerk – Hayley Bell
- Cllr Tamara Reay
- 11 Residents

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

- Cllr Helen Robinson Gordon, Cllr Drewett, Cllr A Drewett.
- Apologise accepted, **Proposed** Cllr Halliday **Seconded** Cllr Savage

Council considered the apologies in accordance with **Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972**.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with:

- **Sections 28–34, Localism Act 2011**, and
- **The Council's Code of Conduct**,

Councillors were invited to declare **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs)** and **other interests**.

- No declared an interest.

5. DISPENSATIONS

No dispensations were requested under **Section 33, Localism Act 2011**.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on **31st March 2026** be approved as a **true and accurate record**, in accordance with **Schedule 12, paragraph 41, Local Government Act 1972**.

Proposed Cllr Halliday **Seconded** Cllr Akerman

Chair End of year Speech

Good evening, everyone — it really is lovely to see you all here this evening.

As we come to the end of another busy year, I want to take a moment to reflect on what we've achieved together, and where we're heading next.

When Cllr Paul Manning suggested last year that I should stand for Chair, I was apprehensive. But I stepped up — and I want to thank you all for the support you've given me throughout the year.

It's fair to say this year has been quite a learning curve. With a newly formed council and a new Parish Clerk, there has been plenty for all of us to get to grips with. But what has made it not only manageable, but genuinely enjoyable, is the way we've worked together — with patience, good humour, and a shared commitment to doing what is right for Seend.

And because of that spirit, we have achieved a great deal.

One of the most positive changes has been holding our meetings in the lovely Irene Usher Hall. It's such a welcoming, accessible space, and it's been wonderful to see more parishioners joining us — more voices, more ideas, more engagement. That is exactly what healthy village life looks like.

We've also all enjoyed the wildflower meadow on the Lye Field. With summer on its way, the meadow is already springing into life, and we're looking forward to seeing it in full bloom as the warmer weather arrives. The Parish Council's contribution has clearly been well spent — bringing colour, and a real sense of joy, to the heart of the village.

Another highlight was the Open Gardens in Seend last June. It was an amazing success — people came from far and wide, and with 19 gardens open, the village looked stunning. Everyone enjoyed the tea and delicious cakes at the Pavilion, organised by Anne Ewing and her wonderful team on behalf of the Church — a real treat, and a perfect example of community spirit at its best.

The event raised over £10,000 for the Church —an incredible achievement, and a testament to the generosity and hard work of everyone involved.

This year, it's Seend Cleeve's turn — on Saturday 13th June — so please do spread the word. And if you're available to help on the day, please pop an email to the Clerk, and she'll forward your details to Neil Yockney.

And of course, we were incredibly proud to be awarded Best Kept Large Village. That success was thanks to the hard work and organisation of John Williams last year. This year, we're hopeful for another excellent result under the direction of our newly appointed councillor, Paul Taylor. So here's a gentle nudge — please keep your frontages tidy, pavements clear of weeds, and hedges trimmed. These small acts of care really do make a big difference. And if you can spare an hour or two — or even three — this Saturday morning for our village tidy-up, please come along. We're meeting at the Community Centre at 9.30am.

And we mustn't forget Speedwatch. What can I say — another huge thank you to John Williams and his band of "Speedos", who are regularly out educating the vehicles that use the High Street. Their presence genuinely makes a difference, and they're always looking for more volunteers.

If you can spare just half an hour — once a week or once a month — every little helps. Thank you to everyone involved.

We also finally persuaded Wiltshire Council to relocate some of the waste bins — and I think we can all agree it has improved the aroma in the High Street bus shelter. A small victory — but a very welcome one.

Looking ahead, we know there are potential housing developments being discussed around Seend. These conversations can feel daunting, and they can stir up strong feelings, but they also present an opportunity. If we want our school to thrive, if we want our church to remain at the heart of village life,

and if we want Seend to continue being a place where young families can settle and grow, then we do need to approach these proposals with open minds.

Welcoming new people into our community keeps our village vibrant and alive.

And that brings me to our Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan gives us a real voice in shaping the future of Seend Parish — what is built, where it goes, and how our village evolves. We are very fortunate that Carola Thorpe has agreed to lead the Steering Group for this important work.

If you'd like to be involved —even in a small way —please do get in touch with Carola – email clerk@seendparishcouncil.gov.uk

The more voices we have, the stronger and more representative our plan will be.

So, all in all, it has been a year of progress, teamwork, and genuine community spirit. I want to thank my fellow councillors, our Parish Clerk, and all of you who come along, ask questions,

challenge us, support us, and care about this village. Seend is special because its people care — and that is something we should never take for granted.

I'm really looking forward to what we can achieve together in the year ahead.

Debbie Savage

7. Election of Chairman

One nomination by Cllr Savage for Cllr Halliday, Proposed by Cllr Savage and Seconded by Councillor Johnstone.

8. Election of Vice Chairman

One nomination by Cllr Halliday to Cllr Savage, proposed by Cllr Halliday, Seconded By Cllr Taylor.

9. To appoint members to the following external bodies;

Devizes Area Board, Cllr Akerman, Cllr Halliday

Devizes, Cllr Halliday and Cllr Manning

Police Rep Cllr Akerman

Seend Community Centre, Cllr Halliday and Cllr Springate

Seend Lye Field, Cllr Taylor and Cllr Savage

Seend CLT and AT, Cllr Taylor

Footpath Rep – To be confirmed at the June meeting

10. To appoint members to the Parish Committees

Planning – Cllr Lack, Cllr Savage and Cllr Bridget Johnstone

Precept – All Councillors

Highways – Cllr Taylor and Cllr Manning

Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr Johnstone and cllr Taylor, Cllr Savage

Flood Action – Cllr Springate and Cllr Lack

Assets and Maintenance – Cllr Savage and Clerk

Parish Steward – Cllr Halliday and Cllr Savage

Items to note – None

CLOSURE

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at **18.55**

SIGNATURE

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman: _____ Date: _____