



SALTFORD PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of the Council held in the Avon Room
at Saltford Hall on Tuesday 3 October 2023 at 7.15pm**

PRESENT

Councillors: Jon Godfrey (Chair), Julie Austwick, Dudley Bartlett, Gary Graveling, David Halton (Vice Chair), Phil Harding (Chair of Planning Committee), Andy Rice and Paul Smith.

Officer: Lottie Smith-Collins.

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 5 September 2023 at Saltford Hall were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair of the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for inability to attend were received in advance of the meeting from Cllrs Shayan Aziz, Emma Hughes and Sally Turner.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Andy Rice declared a pecuniary interest relating to 'Item 9 Planning Matters – 23/02857/FUL – The Old Granary, Homefield Road' and stated that he would not participate in the discussion or the vote.

Cllr Dudley Bartlett declared an interest in 'Item 9 Planning Matters – 23/02047/FUL – Saltford Lawn Tennis Club, Wedmore Road' as a member of the club, and stated that he would not participate in the discussion or vote.

Cllr Phil Harding declared an interest in 'Item 9 – Planning Matters – 23/03382/LBA – The Crown, 500 Bath Road' as Chair of Saltford Environment Group (The Crown having donated funds to SEG for website support) and stated that he would participate in the discussion and vote.

4. PUBLIC TIME

There were 4 members of the public present.

No one requested to address the Council during the Public Time.

5. PRESENTATION FROM SALTFORD SPORTS CLUB

The Council received a presentation from the Vice Chair of Saltford Sports Club. The presentation included detail on the Club's mission statement, and information about achievements and improvement works carried out in recent years (including the use of grant funding from by SPC). The Council also received information about Saltford Sports Club's future plans for sports, the sports club's grounds (as currently leased

from B&NES Council) and clubhouse, which included outline information about projects and initiatives that SPC could potentially support.

Following the presentation, SPC Chair Cllr Jon Godfrey thanked the Vice Chair and Chair of Saltford Sports Club for presenting to the Council and stated recognition for the impressive amount of work and number of initiatives the Club had successfully achieved in such a short period of time. Cllr Godfrey also commented on the preventative health benefits of many of the Sports Club's activities and the sporting opportunities offered by the club to an increasing range of residents.

6. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

SPC Chair Jon Godfrey announced that he had attended a public meeting held on Saturday 23 September about the WECA 'A4 Bristol to Bath' consultation. Cllr Godfrey stated that there were approximately 220 people present, including Jacob Rees-Mogg MP. Cllr Godfrey shared that he had addressed the room at the invitation of the meeting organiser to provide information about SPC's resolved response, the contents of which had been well received by those in attendance.

7. CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Further to Chair's Announcements, the Clerk confirmed that its submission to WECA's A4 Bath to Bristol consultation by email had been received by WECA. The Clerk shared that SPC had also sent a copy to Jacob Rees-Mogg MP, who had responded by letter to state he regarded SPC's views as 'sensible' and had made representations to Dan Norris, West of England Metro Mayor. The Clerk added that a copy of SPC's response had been sent by email and by post to WECA Mayor Dan Norris, and that copies by email had also been sent to relevant B&NES Cabinet Members and B&NES and WECA officers. The Clerk stated that SPC welcomed B&NES Ward Councillor Duncan Hounsell's public declaration of his full support for SPC's response, and that SPC had been informed by the Saltford Business Network (SBN) that they endorsed SPC's response also and had included it in their own submission to WECA. The Clerk added that several Councillors attended the 'A4 Bath to Bristol' public meeting held on Saturday 23 September at Saltford Hall to hear the views of those who spoke at the meeting.

The Clerk confirmed that it had received its external audit outcome and that the External Auditors Report and Certificate 2022-23 and the Notice of Conclusion of Audit 2022-23 was available on SPC's noticeboard and website, and that confirmation of the outcome of the audit would be recorded under item 11.c 'Financial Matters' (below).

Following SPC's resolution under item 21 at the September meeting (recommendations to B&NES Council for pavement maintenance in 24/25), the Clerk reported that B&NES Council had responded to say that the Highways Inspector had assessed the condition of the pavements and had agreed that though 'tired' they were not approaching intervention levels deeming them unsafe and in need of

immediate repair. B&NES Council had informed SPC that they would continue to monitor the area twice a year as part of their planned routine highway inspections, but that if deterioration was noted to report via FixMyStreet.

The Clerk shared that further to information under Item 23 at the September meeting (Climate emergency and environmental initiatives), a project map sent from B&NES Council indicated that the environmental project at the green spaces near the Claverton Road play park would include 'bug hotel' benches. The Clerk stated that SPC had followed up to request more information, and that if they were not functioning benches that a request to B&NES Council to install benches at this location would be a future agenda item.

Further to SPC requesting B&NES Council improve or replace the Visually Activated Sign on the approach into Saltford from the direction of Bath, the Clerk shared that following correspondence from B&NES Ward Cllr Duncan Hounsell to B&NES Council officers requesting action this financial year, B&NES Council had confirmed that a larger replacement (e.g. from a different location where no longer required) 30mph VAS sign would be installed at the same location. The Clerk added that SPC and B&NES Ward Cllr Duncan Hounsell had agreed to do a joint press release with a view to remind drivers to slow down at this location.

8. REPORT FROM B&NES WARD COUNCILLORS

Cllr Duncan Hounsell shared that the Saltford B&NES Ward Councillors October 2023 report had been circulated to SPC Councillors in advance of the meeting and that residents could request a copy of the report by contacting Saltford's B&NES Ward Councillors (contact information is on the [B&NES Council website](#)). The report was summarised by Cllr Duncan Hounsell, including the following:

Cllr Hounsell explained that the WECA Metro Mayor, Dan Norris, had sole power over strategic transport (including railway station projects), and that B&NES Council was facilitating the consultation exercise and not endorsing WECA's proposals. Cllr Hounsell shared that WECA's target was a 10% reduction in bus travel times. Cllr Hounsell also clarified his own position, stating that he supported the general aim of improving the efficiency and reliability of the bus service on the A4 but that this did not mean introducing highway changes that were likely to be counter-productive and did not take into account local knowledge. Cllr Hounsell added that there would be a future WECA consultation in September 2024, which would be based on feedback from the recent consultation as well as the results of traffic modelling. Cllr Hounsell stated that he had invited Mayor Dan Norris to meet Ward and SPC Councillors in Saltford to discuss the A4 consultation and the re-opening of Saltford Station. He shared that Mayor Dan Norris had declined meeting to discuss the consultation. Cllr Hounsell stated he would approach him again with regards to meeting in Saltford to discuss the re-opening of a railway station.

Ward Cllr Hounsell provided air quality monitoring data (traffic counts) as measured on the A4 in Saltford following data from the first six months of 2023 becoming

available. Cllr Hounsell provided statistics to demonstrate that the target level for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) had repeatedly gone down over recent years (as measured at points on the A4 near The Crown and on Bath Hill), and that although the Air Quality Management Area Designation would have to be rescinded that B&NES Council would still continue to monitor air quality at these locations.

(ITEM 12 'NORMAN ROAD PHONE BOX – NATIONAL GRID CONNECTION (INCLUDING SPEND) AND PROJECT UPDATE' WAS DISCUSSED NEXT)

9. PLANNING MATTERS

a. Decisions and appeals

The Clerk stated that no information about decisions or appeals had been received.

b. Planning contraventions

It was noted that following SPC having requested to be added as a complainant to a planning contravention case at 2 Mill Cottages, The Shallows (resolved June 2023 8.b 'Planning Contraventions') that a planning consultation at this property had been received from B&NES Council, which SPC would respond to later in the meeting (item 9.d, below).

The Clerk stated that no further updates on planning contraventions had been received.

c. Planning items of urgent information

No urgent items were received.

d. Planning applications – As a statutory consultee, the Council considered the following planning applications in respect of which Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES) Council had invited comments (text taken directly from information supplied by B&NES Council):

23/02857/FUL- The Old Granary Homefield Road Saltford BS31 3EG.

Conversion and extension of existing garage to form 1no new dwelling at The Old Granary (Resubmission). Heather Hopkins

It was resolved that B&NES Council be advised that this Council **SUPPORTS** this application.

23/03333/LBA - 2 Mill Cottages The Shallows Saltford BS31 3EY. Internal alterations for re-roofing, timber repairs and replacement of felt and battens (Regularisation). Mr. Andrew Knibb

It was resolved that B&NES Council be advised that this Council **SUPPORTS** this application.

23/02047/FUL - Saltford Lawn Tennis Club Wedmore Road Saltford.

Installation of a replacement floodlighting system consisting of 18no LED

floodlights fitted to 12No. existing 6m columns. Saltford Lawn Tennis Club

It was resolved that B&NES Council be advised that this Council **SUPPORTS** this application.

23/03458/TCA - Orchard House High Street Saltford BS31 3EJ. T1-Fraxinus excelsior, fell due to stage 2 Hymenoscyphus pseudoalbidus T2-Fraxinus excelsior, fell due to stage 2 Hymenoscyphus pseudoalbidus. Mrs Carol Brotherton

It was resolved that B&NES Council be advised that this Council **SUPPORTS and COMMENTS ON** this application:

SUPPORT with COMMENT: The applicant should be encouraged to plant replacement trees of a species native to NE Somerset to provide ongoing valuable wildlife habitat in Saltford as well as maintaining the Conservation Area's tree cover in the longer term.

23/03382/LBA - The Crown 500 Bath Road Saltford BS31 3HJ. External alterations for repainting frontage of public house. Greene King Plc Greene King

It was resolved that B&NES Council be advised that this Council **SUPPORTS** this application.

- e. **Planning Policy update: B&NES Council Local Plan including SPC's request for 'Saltford South' landscape designation (AGLV or LGS)** – The Clerk confirmed they had contacted B&NES Council's Planning Policy officers in mid-September to request a meeting date so SPC could receive an update on its request for 'Saltford South' landscape designation. It was agreed that the Clerk would follow up this meeting request if required.

10. CURO LICENCE RENEWAL – WICK HOUSE CLOSE ALLOTMENT SITE (INCLUDING ANNUAL RENT SPEND).

The Clerk stated that Saltford Parish Council held a five-year land licence with Curo for the Wick House Close allotment site, which was last signed in November 2018. The Council resolved in principle to sign a new license presented by Curo should it remain the same as the previous licence (with dates from November 2023 to November 2028). However if the licence were to differ, it was agreed that the licence would be discussed at the November meeting.

The Council resolved to continue to pay an annual fee of £100 to Curo each November during the five-year period.

11. FINANCIAL MATTERS

- a. **Monthly Financial Report** – The Clerk gave a summary of the report presented for September 2023, as recorded below. The report was considered and accepted by members.
- b. **Schedule of Expenditure** – The expenditure listed in the schedule for October 2023 as recorded below was authorised and the schedule was signed by the Chair.
- c. **External Audit outcome** – It was recorded that the External Auditor had confirmed that the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return was in accordance with Proper Practices and that no other matters had come to the auditor’s attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met. No other matters affecting the external auditor’s opinion were drawn to the attention of SPC.
- d. **Annual fee for the Wick House Close Allotments** – A payment of £100 was authorised to Curo Places Limited for annual allotment rent (Budget heading: Allotment site rent).
- e. **iTeam Solutions domain hosting**– The Council authorised a spend of £37.50+VAT (total £45) to iTeam Solutions for 1 year’s website domain hosting 01.11.23 – 31.10.24 (Budget heading: Publicity).
- f. **Filing cabinet for SPC Office** – A spend of up to £160 (including VAT and delivery charges) was authorised for a replacement filing cabinet for the SPC Office (purchased via Clerks Expenses) (Budget heading: Office equipment).
- g. **Encryption software subscription** – The Council authorised expenditure of up to £100 p.a. (paid monthly or annually) for encryption software (Budget heading: General Administration).
- h. **BDO LLP external audit fee 2022-23** – Expenditure of up to £378 inc VAT to BDO LLP was authorised for the limited assurance review of Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31 March 2023 (Further to item 11.f on September agenda) (Budget heading: Auditing).

12. NORMAN ROAD PHONE BOX – NATIONAL GRID CONNECTION (INCLUDING SPEND) AND PROJECT UPDATE

The Clerk provided an update on the replacement Norman Road phone box project. With regards to costs, it was shared that National Grid works for an unmetered electricity connection would be £1107.56 plus VAT. To achieve the works, SPC would also need to purchase a mini-pillar (model BDP70) at a cost of £325 plus VAT,

plus any locks and paint options at an estimated cost of £250 plus VAT. The anticipated costs of mini-pillar installation was likely to require SPC to seek three quotes for consideration. (It was also confirmed that a National Grid refund for 1047.82 ex VAT, as agreed at the July 2023 meeting under Item 12, was pending).

Considering the above costs, and as the Council was awaiting confirmation about whether a local business was able to commit to purchasing and maintaining a defibrillator, the Council agreed to not commit spend until a Working Group could be formed to progress the project further.

It was agreed that setting up a working group would be on the November agenda. Any decisions on future actions and spend based on the working group's suggestions would be resolved at a future meeting.

13. FORMAL COMPLAINT TO WECA ABOUT A4 BATH TO BRISTOL CONSULTATION PROCESS

The Council resolved to submit a formal written complaint to the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) about the A4 Bath to Bristol consultation that opened 21 August and ended 1 October 2023.

It was agreed that the following grounds would form the basis of the complaint:

- The consultation website was difficult for users to navigate and that relevant information for Saltford was hard to find / not correctly linked.
- That wording in the online survey 'pushed' responses in a specific and deliberate direction to generate a desired result in favour of WECA proposals.
- That WECA added new and more detailed information for consultation to the website almost four weeks after the consultation opened, and after SPC and others had already submitted their responses. This included information on the 'downloads' page and information on the 'FAQ' page.
- That releasing new and different information both formally on the website and informally through officer information during the consultation influenced responses in WECA's favour of proposals.
- That WECA discouraged responses to be submitted by email or in writing.
- That not having an adequate number of WECA officers present at the drop-in event to listen to the views, concerns and questions of Saltford's residents (despite awareness that high numbers were expected) prevented some residents from raising objections about proposals to WECA.
- That there was a GDPR breach of Saltford residents' personal information at the drop-in event.

Further to the complaint, SPC agreed to urge WECA to conduct the 2024 consultation in a fair and appropriate manner, and to set out clearly from its launch all the information to be included in the consultation to prevent the concerns outlined in SPC's complaint from re-occurring.

The Council resolved that a copy of its complaint to WECA would be sent to Jacob Rees-Mogg MP, WECA Metro Mayor Dan Norris, B&NES Ward Councillors and to relevant B&NES Councillors and B&NES and WECA officers.

14. 'A4 BATH TO BRISTOL 'BRISTOL TO BATH RAILWAY PATH' RESPONSE TO WECA

Further to additional information being made clearly available in the A4 Bath to Bristol consultation following SPC resolving its response at the September meeting, the Council resolved to submit to WECA a response based on information supplied about the section of Bristol to Bath Railway Path (B2B Path) through Saltford.

The Council resolved to share with WECA that it strongly supported the sustainable travel and environmental benefits of the Bristol to Bath Railway Path (B2B Path), and the importance to the community of this travel route that is also a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) adjacent to and within the Cotswolds AONB. In consideration of the consultation information, the Council did however wish to state to WECA the following points:

- That if a lighting scheme were to be placed on the B2B Path, that SPC would want a comprehensive wildlife survey to be carried out in advance to assess the impact on wildlife of any introduction of lighting at this location prior to the 2024 consultation. SPC was conscious of the impact such lighting could have on insects (including glow worms, moths, beetles and bush-crickets), bats and other fauna in the Saltford to Bath stretch of the path, and would wish to see this taken into account in any wildlife survey and proposed lighting scheme.
- If a lighting scheme were to be introduced, that it should be operational in the winter months only to reduce negative impacts on wildlife and for a time period for lighting during peak travel times rather than lighting being on 24/7.
- That if a lighting scheme were to be introduced, that the use of 'motion sensing' lighting be considered.

SPC also resolved to request that should this matter be on the 2024 consultation, that WECA provide considerably more detail on the type of lighting scheme proposed so that the Council and Saltford's residents could submit an informed response.

15. ANNUAL REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT RISK REGISTER

The Council agreed updates to the Saltford Parish Council Governance and Management Risk Register and resolved to accept the revised document.

16. ANNUAL REVIEW OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Council agreed proposed updates to Saltford Parish Council Financial Regulations, and the Council resolved to accept the revised document. This included resolving to update information under 11.b about a recent revision to The Public

Contracts Regulations (changed from '£25,000+VAT' to '£30,000 including VAT') following advice from SPC's Internal Auditor.

17. REVIEW OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

The Council resolved to adopt an updated version of the SPC Social Media and Digital Communications Policy following its annual review.

18. DATE FOR ST MARY'S CHURCHYARD SAFETY INSPECTION

SPC is responsible for safety management of the closed churchyard at St Mary's Church, Saltford. It was agreed that Cllrs Dudley Bartlett and David Halton would accompany the Clerk to carry out the biennial churchyard inspection in October.

19. INVITATION TO WECA MAYOR DAN NORRIS TO MEET TO DISCUSS THE RE-OPENING OF SALTFORD STATION

The Council discussed whether to invite West of England Combined Authority (WECA) Mayor Dan Norris to meet with members of SPC at the former Saltford Station site to discuss the re-opening of Saltford railway station. The Council agreed that as Ward Cllr Duncan Hounsell had already invited Mayor Dan Norris to meet with Ward and SPC Cllrs, the Council would await to hear from Cllr Hounsell about any response received.

20. REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 2023

The Clerk provided a brief update on plans for Remembrance Sunday 2023 as organised by 1st Saltford Scouts. It was agreed that Cllr Julie Austwick would represent Saltford Parish Council at the church service and War Memorial in the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, and that if required Cllr Phil Harding would attend also on behalf of SPC.

21. REQUEST TO B&NES COUNCIL TO CREATE A DEDICATED OFFICER POST FOR WATER SAFETY AND WATER QUALITY

On the recommendation of the Local River Side Working Group, the Council resolved to request that that B&NES Council Cabinet Members consider the creation of a dedicated officer post for water safety and water quality (cleanliness).

22. MEET YOUR COMMUNITY POLICE OFFICER EVENT

The Council agreed that it would not arrange a 'Meet your Community Police Officer' (formally named 'Neighbourhood Watch AGM') event. The Council recognised that Avon and Somerset Police's Keynsham Beat Team could better meet resident need through arranging their own 'surgery' in Saltford (as occurs at other locations) enabling officers to engage in a more private setting to discuss concerns that Saltford residents may wish to raise to the attention of the police.

23. EXCESSIVE LITTER BY PARADE OF SHOPS AND BUSINESSES NEAR A4 (491-507 BATH ROAD)

The Council resolved to move this item to the November agenda.

24. CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

Further to information about the environmental initiative at the Claverton Road Open Space as raised under Clerk's Announcements (Item 7), it was shared by Councillors that works to create the wildflower meadows had commenced.

25. DATA PROTECTION AND GDPR UPDATES

Cllr Jon Godfrey updated Councillors about upcoming Microsoft changes to enhance security.

26. PUBLICITY

The Council discussed ideas for SPC's page in the Christmas edition of SCAN.

27. REPORTS FROM LINK MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The Clerk shared that they had represented SPC at the B&NES ALCA meeting held on Monday 11 September and that feedback to Councillors had been provided by email, including information about the ALCA AGM on Saturday 7 October.

The Clerk also shared that they had attended the Keynsham Area Forum on Thursday 28 September and that they had circulated information to Councillors following the meeting, including an update on the 'Waterspace Connected Project' at the Somerdale site.

The Clerk stated that the Saltford Fairtrade Group would hold its Coffee Morning on Friday 13 October from 11am to 12:30pm in the Avon Room at Saltford Hall.

Cllr Phil Harding informed the Council that Saltford Environment Group and Saltford Community Association were planning to work in partnership for the benefit of the community to secure the future of SEG's 'History of Saltford' project, which included approximately 3,000 items comprising of digital images and documents as well as artefacts and documents.

28. ITEMS OF URGENT INFORMATION FROM COUNCILLORS

No items were received.

The meeting closed at 9.59pm

Date confirmed/...../.....

Signed.....

Next SPC meeting:

The next full council meeting will take place at 7:15pm on Tuesday 7 November 2023 in the Avon Room at Salford Hall.

SALTFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Schedule of regular expenditure during October 2023
 – for authorisation by the Council at its meeting on 3 October 2023.

Description	Amount	Method	Budget heading
October staff costs total inc. salary, pension, HMRC tax and National Insurance	2530 estimate, 2580 maximum	Online BACS	Office staff
September SCA Hall hire	40 estimate 60 maximum	Online BACS	Hall hire
October inTouch Communications Ltd phone system	27 (plus VAT) estimate 35 (plus VAT) maximum	Direct Debit	General administration
October Ambience Landscapes churchyard maintenance	175 (inc VAT) estimate 195 (inc VAT) maximum	Online BACS	Churchyard Maintenance
October monthly One Drive subscription	2 (inc VAT) 3 max	Direct Debit	General Administration
Stationary, IT supplies, and postage	10 estimate 60 max	Online BACS / Clerks expenses	General Administration

The following sums have been transferred from the Business Instant Deposit Account into the Current Account to cover outstanding invoices and expenditure:

Date: N/A **Amount: N/A**

I certify that the above payments made or to be made have been authorised at the meeting of the Parish Council on 3 October 2023.

SIGNED.....
 CHAIR / VICE-CHAIR

DATE:.....

Saltford Parish Council

Monthly Financial Report for September 2023 - Month 6

Quarter period 2

Budget to date Actual to date Budget Year end position

RECEIPTS:

Precept & any grant	£24,767	£24,767	£49,534
Interest on Investments	£15	£235	£30
Other Income: Allotments	£85	£79	£170
VAT Reimbursements	£800	£2,308	£800
Other	£0	£0	£0
Subtotal without CIL	£25,667	£27,389.63	£50,534
CIL Payments	£0.00	£0	£0
Total Income	£25,667	£27,390	£50,534

PAYMENTS:

General Administration	£625	£323	£1,250
Office accommodation	£750	£1,500	£1,500
Office Staff	£15,925	£15,173	£31,850
Office Equipment	£150	£30	£300
Training	£600	£860	£1,200
Auditing	£500	£285	£500
Insurance	£550	£3,890	£550
Publicity	£875	£653	£1,750
Subscriptions	£20	£85	£40
Chairmans Honorarium	£150	£150	£300
Councillors' expenses	£50	£0	£100
Hall / Room Hire	£275	£318	£550
Maintenance: Church Yard Grounds	£1,250	£844	£2,500
Allotments	£75	£408	£150
Churchyard Special Maintenance Projects	£500	£640	£1,000
Allotment site rent	£50	£0	£100
Miscellaneous Grants	£500	£1,000	£1,000
Council led schemes	£750	£25	£1,500
Environment schemes	£500	£0	£1,000
VAT	£500	£1,210	£1,000
Subtotal without CIL	£24,595.00	£27,395.42	£48,140.00
CIL-related expenditure	£0	£0	£2,582
Total Payments	£24,595	£27,395	£50,722

BALANCE AT END OF MONTH:

Current account	£718
Business Instant Access account	£45,433

Cash £0
TOTAL CURRENT BALANCE **£46,151**

CIL-related cashflow	Balance at 31/03/23		CIL-income 23/24	CIL-expend 23/24	CIL balance
	£5,163		£0.00	£0	£5,163