

**Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 21st January 2025 at 7:30pm at
South Marston Village Hall.**

Council Members present	
C McEwen (CM) (Chair)	M Povey (MP)
S Brown (SB)	N Hole (NH)
B Thunder (BT)	A Carter (AC)
T Leathart (TL)	
Clerk & Responsible Officer:	K Morgan
Borough Councillors present:	Cllr Vallender
Others present:	Mr Cave-Ayland, Mrs Featherstone

Acronyms used in these minutes:

SBC – Swindon Borough Council, PC – Parish Council, NP – Neighbourhood Plan, NPC – Neighbourhood Planning Committee, SMRA – South Marston Recreation Association, OSWG – Open Spaces Working Group, CWG – Communications Working Group, SM website – www.SouthMarston.org.uk, ML – Mandy Larcombe (bookkeep

Agenda item & minute number	Summary	Action
Open 10 Minutes 129/24-25	Mrs Featherstone raised the issue with water levels and muddy water in South Marston Brook and thanked those involved for their help. She also said that when the recent increase in levels happened it was not raining and if it was would this cause properties to be threatened. Cllr Hole reported that he had spoken to the Panattoni site manager further to his report and that water from other culverts feeding into this may have fed the unusual levels recently seen. These have been partially restricted with silt while works are under way to slow this down. Mr Cave-Ayland raised concerns that some drug paraphernalia had possibly been found by the teen shelter. This information has been passed to the police. Cllr Brown mentioned previous instances of such behaviour in the village. Mr Cave-Ayland also thanked the parish council for its support in running village events over recent years. The thanks was reciprocated.	
1. Apologies	None.	

130/24-25		None
2. Declarations of interest 131/24-25	Cllr Brown has an ongoing general interest due to the proximity of her property to development sites, the proposed roads and the likely opportunity for mains services to her residence, as well as meetings she is helping coordinate. Council continues to note this.	None
3. To approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 17 th December 2024 132/24-25	The minutes were approved. Proposed: AC Seconded: NH Approved: All	None
4. Ward Councillor Update 133/24-25	The following points were raised: - Cllr Vallender encouraged any info on the previously mentioned drug issues to be passed to the police or through him. - The meeting with the police in the Village Hall to discuss car crime went well although they reported that only one person had reported an incident to the police. - The flooding meeting with SBC had gone well within the limits of what it could achieve. - The Swindon planning department restructure was mentioned, and it was confirmed that a similar update for the Highways department was due in April. - The ongoing matter of Greenfields trees and vehicles mounting grass verges was mentioned. It was agreed that given the sensitivity of querying such behaviour the best approach would be to plan to plant trees where they were not exposed to the vehicle access. - It was mentioned that some signage will be added at either end of Morses Lane – Cllr Brown declared an interest in this matter and suggested that given her experience this would not help long term and the solution would be to block the road with a bollard. - Cllr Thunder thanked Cllr Vallender for his help with getting the borough tree team to remove a large branch in Oxleaze Woods.	

	- Work to enable the hedge cut through off Thornhill Road for the crossing point is making progress.	
5. Review of actions 134/24-25	Review of actions currently outstanding. Clerk to update the following: - Aug 23 65/23-24 Website Changes work is currently underway with updating content - Sep 24 81/24-25 Maintenance Backup The possibility of Allbuild providing a worker for certain tasks under our control was mentioned. -	
6. Review of Council Calendar 135/24-25	The PC reviewed the calendar. - It was noted that the SMRA MOU and grant would be determined during budget sign off in February.	None
7. Clerk's Report 136/24-25	Report was reviewed. Council confirmed it was happy to proceed with Rosie DM for the internal audit. Clerk to confirm. Proposed: SB Seconded: MP Approved: All War Memorial refurbishment was discussed. The chair mentioned that the cross needed some attention and should be cleaned at the same time. SB proposed £600 + VAT maximum for the war memorial work to include cleaning the cross and upper levels which council resolved to approve. It was noted that if possible the cleaning should be done before end of February in preparation for tree planting on the site. Clerk to contact contractor and enquire if they can clean the cross and seek an updated quote. Proposed: SB Seconded: CM Approved: All	Clerk Clerk
8. Planning & Highways 137/24-25	Several applications had been dealt with prior to the meeting and responses sent as appropriate: S/24/1430 Burton Grove Farm S/OUT/24/0128 Crown Timber	

	S/24/1472 Stirling Court S/HOU/24/1479 Priory Lodge S/RES/24/0923 Parcels R8 and R9 Land North of A420 S/OUT/23/1514 Redlands Phase 2 The following applications were discussed: S/24/1480 Re: Renovation of existing brick building to provide all driver amenity and demolition/removal of flat roof prefabricated building, covered seating area, and three shipping containers. At: Swindon Truck Stop, Oxford Road, Stratton St Margaret Swindon Deadline: 30th January 2025 - There were no adverse comments raised. Clerk to submit response. S/COND/22/1820 Re: Discharge of condition 27 (Old Vicarage Lane/A420) from Outline Planning Permission S/OUT/13/1555 – signalised junction At: Land North Of A420, Eastern Villages Swindon Deadline: 27th January 2025 - There were no adverse comments raised. Clerk to submit response. S/ADV/24/1517 Re: Display of Estate Signage. At: Land At Laines Way, Swindon Deadline: 4th February 2025 - There were no adverse comments raised. Clerk to submit response. S/24/0981 Re: Change of use from agricultural land to residential curtilage, boundary treatment and ancillary works. At: Priory Lodge, Thornhill Road South Marston Swindon Deadline: 29th January 2025 - There were no adverse comments raised. Clerk to submit response.	
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9. Risk Assessment Documentation 138/24-25	Council resolved to approve adoption of the amended Risk Documentation. Clerk to update and file. Proposed: SB Seconded: BT Approved: All	Clerk
10. Reports from Working Groups 139/24-25	Communications Working Group: Report was reviewed. - It was noted that Will Stone MP has asked to provide input to Community News. It was agreed that if he would provide material on specific issues requested by the working group then that would be beneficial. Open Spaces Working Group: Report reviewed: - It was noted that the next phase of tree planting could be challenging depending on availability of volunteers. - It was noted the Wilts Wildlife Trust will be running some fruit tree pruning training sessions. - 1st March is the proposed date for tree planting on the village garden/ memorial Allotments Working Group: Report was noted: - It was noted that there are several vacant allotment plots, which is exacerbated by long term tenants leaving and several large legacy plots being divided into smaller ones. - Some help is required with getting new tenants so assistance from ward councillors was requested. It was noted that direct approaches to parishes might be helpful as some have waiting lists. Post to be put on Facebook and shared with other groups. Rights of Way Working Party:	Clerk/BT

	- The suggested requirements for footpath maintenance by SBC were explained by Mr Cave-Ayland. Council agreed that these should be forwarded to Martin Fry at SBC. The details should also be passed to Cllr Vallender so any work required by Network Rail alongside this can be arranged. - Chair mentioned the footbridge over the railway line and asked Cllr Vallender if he knew of any plans yet for connectivity to this on the other side of the bridge. There is no further information or planning for this yet.	Clerk
11. Reports relating to expansion 140/24-25	Strategic Planning Working Group Report was reviewed: - Cllr Brown mentioned an application for a pumping station that appears to be outstanding from 2023 and 2024 and which is essential for development. To be followed up.	
12. Other reports 141/24-25	SMRA and Play Working Group report: Report was reviewed: - It was noted that if the Parish Council wishes things to be include in the next Have Your Say event then these should be prepared. Parish/borough Liaison: Verbal report was given. - Chair summarised the situation with the possibility of Swindon merging with other larger authorities. Also mentioned that SBC is working with the larger parishes to focus on issues in their areas alongside the new Swindon Plan. - The idea of something like 'Parish Plans' to enable more effective progress with projects was mentioned. - It was noted that Public consultation on revision of the Local Plan has been put back to summer 2025	None
13. Finance 142/24-25	To review and approve finance statement, bank statements and payments:	

	- Council resolved to approve payments totalling £3,522.29. Proposed: AC Seconded: BT Approved: All Spending approved at this meeting: - Up to £600 + VAT for war memorial refurbishment Q3 Management Report Report was reviewed and council resolved to accept the report. Proposed: AC Seconded: BT Approved: All Precept Requirement for 2025-26: Report was reviewed and discussed. The fall in Band D equivalents and the additional village maintenance work, as requested by residents last year, increased our projected deficit for next year. The need to preserve our current reserves to be sustainable over the next few years led to the conclusion about what deficit was acceptable. Council resolved to approve an 18% increase to the precept requirement with an annual precept of £72,704. Proposed: NH Seconded: BT Approved: All Clerk to submit form to SBC.	None
14. Matters b/f 143/24-25	None.	None

The meeting closed at 9:17pm

Signed by Chairperson:

Date: