SOUTH MARSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 17th June 2025 at 7:30pm at South Marston Village Hall.

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

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 (bookkeeper)

Agenda item & minute number	Summary	Action
Open 10 Minutes 25/25-26	Mrs Featherstone referred to the rights of way report and mentioned footpath 2 by the church, and that it is becoming quite difficult to use now. The chair summarised how over some time the route of the path has become overgrown and the edges have been filled with debris - the path also regularly gets muddy when wet as it is shaded and does not dry out. The possibility of placing some aggregate on the path to improve the surface was mentioned and was referred to later in the meeting. Mrs Featherstone also raised the state of the grounds of the former Post Office again – Cllr Vallender said that environmental health have checked and there is currently no enforcement that can be enacted from their perspective. Cllr Vallender will ask SBC officers if a letter can be sent mentioning the concerns in the hope of encouraging some action, and also to investigate whether action can be taken because the general state of the property is not in keeping with the surroundings.	None
1. Apologies 26/25-26	None	None

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2. Signing of acceptance of office – Chairman 27/25-26	Cllr McEwen signed the acceptance of office.	None
3. Declarations of interest 28/25-26	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
4. To approve and sign the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 20th May 2025 29/25-26	The minutes were approved. Proposed: TL Seconded: AC Approved: All	None
5. To approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 20th May 2025 30/25-26	The minutes were approved. Proposed: AC Seconded: TL Approved: All	None
6. Ward Councillor Update 31/25-26	Cllr Vallender gave an update: - Confirmed that the application for St Helier on Thornhill Road has been approved – council was aware of this. - Panattoni phasing plan has been adjusted – Cllr Brown noted that would probably be a result of Units 8 etc being brought forward for development instead of Unit 5 as originally planned. - A resident has reported that the Sevor Farm permissive footpath was overgrown – Clerk to chase as this should be regularly cut as part of our maintenance agreement. - Cllr Vallender will start surgeries at the coffee mornings this week – hoping to have regular attendees from other organisations.	Clerk

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	- Mentioned that reporting hazard issues at the A420 Carps junction and at Supermarine had resulted in sight lines being cut.	
7. Exclusion of press and public 32/25-26	The public and press were not excluded as the confidential update was moved to the end of the meeting following the last agenda item.	
8. Confidential ward councillor update 33/25-26	Update given.	
9. Review of actions 34/25-26	Review of actions currently outstanding. Clerk to update the following: **Oct 24 90/24-25 Hodinotts Corner** – Clerk to email Cllr Vallender as a reminder of the disputed responsibility for the hedges on the bend. **Apr 25 182/24-25 Thames Water works on Thornhill Road –** it was agreed that TW will be contacted whenever more works occur. Cllr Hole to inform clerk as appropriate.	Clerk Clerk
10. Review of Council Calendar 35/25-26	The PC reviewed progress. - It was noted that a meeting of the Finance Working Group would be held in July to tackle some reallocation of reserves.	None
11. Clerk's Report 36/25-26	Report was reviewed. There were no particular points raised.	Clerk
12. Planning applications 37/25-26	The following applications were discussed: Panattoni warehouse construction applications: S/RES/25/0603 S/RES/25/0604 S/RES/25/0605 S/RES/25/0606 S/RES/25/0607 - Cllr Hole summarised the applications given their similarity. The only major concern is the absence of the footpath/cycleway from Oak Tree Corner to Keypoint which was expected – it is hoped this will be discussed on	Clerk

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	the next site visit to take place later this week. Responses to be submitted following that visit. **S/25/0615** Haybarns, Morses Lane South Marston Swindon SN3 4FX - Variation of Condition 4 (Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan) from Planning Application S/24/1169). - Response submitted prior to the meeting with no adverse comments. **S/COND/25/0650** Re: Partial Discharge of Condition 9 - Character Area Design Code At: Land North Of A420, Eastern Villages Swindon - Considerable work to be done to cover this – SPWG to meet, review and prepare a response. **Other applications** It was also noted that two important items had not been circulated to the PC as usual related to Open Spaces and Primary Street planning for the new developments. SPWG to respond to these, now that they have been spotted on the Portal. **Allotments provision** It had come to light that the developers believed they had approval and our support to change the allotment allocations for development pockets R8/R9. The maintenance schedule indicated the original 20 allotment site was to be changed to an area of tree and wildflower planting with only 3 allotments. The PC had not agreed this and SPWG are insisting that it returns to being 20 plots as per the original planning approvals.	
13. Reports from Working Groups 38/25-26	**Communications Working Group:** Verbal report was given. - ENECO have been approached to resurrect the sponsorship arrangement which lapsed due to an admin omission several years ago. - Claire Fleming @ SBC is being approached for funding towards the new production of the Welcome Pack that is required.	

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	- The funding of the Communications budget needs to be addressed and some reallocation of reserves is required. To be covered by FWG at next meeting. - A limited number of Community News advertisers may need to be sought if current renewals lapse . **Open Spaces Working Group:** Verbal report was given. - Community Payback dates have been irregular which is an issue. Hopefully to be resolved when staff return. - Watering arrangement of the young trees using Allbuild is satisfactory but damage by deer is being reported. Efforts being taken to address this. - The new lengthsman settling into the role well and undertaking a number of tasks. - Cutting of village verges is needed urgently, in particular sight lines on village road junctions and Morses Lane/Nightingale Lane – this has been requested and to be chased with Allbuild to be actioned as soon as possible. - Some hedging is dying – to be investigated. - Commemorative requests – following the request to plant a pet memorial tree in the Orchard, and the decision not to permit this or other similar requests, a policy is to be considered. This would perhaps allow some memorial planting as part of a wider initiative in certain locations rather than one-off instances. **Allotments Working Group:** Verbal report was given. - Plot vacancies rapidly being taken up. - A wasp nest has been discovered in one of the tool stores and needs to be removed urgently – removal has been arranged at a cost of £70. Council approved this. Proposed: NH	Clerk

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	Seconded: AC Approved: All - Car parking area - soil banking being planted with various plants. - Rotavator - cost of purchasing an additional rotavator is being investigated. **Rights of Way Working Party:** Report noted. - Mr Cave-Ayland suggested the lengthsman could be used to clear some of the ditch and overgrown areas near footpath 2. It was discussed and agreed that this was possible but the landowner should be invoiced for the lengthsman time spent. - Mr Cave-Ayland to prepare a map for potential use of hardcore/aggregate to resurface kissing gate areas, in preparation for approaching developers to ask for their assistance in providing materials. - Network Rail to be approached about clearing paths. Mr Cave-Ayland to provide details, clerk to report online.	Clerk
14. Reports relating to expansion 39/25-26	**Strategic Planning Working Group** Report noted. - Issues remain with the footpath/cycleway right of way onto the Keypoint bridleway. A full land search is required – Clerk/Chair to undertake. - Still awaiting developer appointment of designer for the new village centre, which is now behind schedule. - Management of the future open space in the new developments remains an ongoing issue, with no real progress with the developers regarding the PC's consideration of taking this on. - School redevelopment process ongoing, Chair to attend meeting with SBC and other parties in July.	None
15. Other reports	**SMRA and Play Working Group report:**	

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40/25-26	Verbal report was given. - Goalmouths worn and being reseeded, and are in need of watering. Allbuild to be approached to add to current watering schedule when they are onsite. - First Sovereign Play report received for play equipment, very positive results. Some minor issues raised. - Party in the Park risk assessment done. £1000 sponsorship has been received from the developers towards the event. - MOLA will be doing another evening presentation covering the archaeology discovered during the developments. **Parish/borough Liaison:** Report was noted. - Chair remains disillusioned with the forum and lack of progress.	None
16. Finance 41/25-26	**To review and approve finance statement, bank statements and payments:** - Council resolved to approve payments totalling £6,369.98 Proposed: SB Seconded: NH Approved: All **Spending approved at this meeting:** - £70 for wasp nest removal **Internal Audit Report** - The report was briefly reviewed and discussed. No issues were raised.	None
17. To approve the Annual Return Governance Statement 42/25-26	Council reviewed and approved the Governance statement. Form was signed by clerk and chairman, papers to be submitted to external auditor and published online. Proposed: SB Seconded: AC	Clerk

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	Approved: All	
18. To approve the Annual Return Accounting Statement 43/25-26	The clerk presented the signed Accounting statement which was reviewed and approved by council. Chairman then signed the form - papers to be submitted to external auditor and published online. Proposed: SB Seconded: NH Approved: All	Clerk
19. Matters brought forward 44/25-26	None.	None

The meeting closed at 9:28pm

Signed by Chairperson: **Date:**

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