

**Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 20th January 2026 at 7:30pm at
South Marston Village Hall.**

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

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 118/25-26	Mr Cave-Ayland raised issues with design of the Thornhill Road roundabout again. He has spoken to European Freight (based on the Thornhill Rd Ind Est) about the issue and they supported complaints. It was mentioned that this is not an issue the parish can intervene with other than raise with borough officers, through Cllr Vallender, if evidence is provided. Mrs Featherstone asked if there was any chance of a pump track being built in the expanded village as had been previously raised. The chair responded that this was not something currently being considered or planned and there was not finance to support it. Cllr Brown added that there were still plans to be reviewed and processed and something may change that might facilitate it. Woodland mountain bike trails were a more realistic option. It would be helpful to have involvement from cyclist residents. Mrs Featherstone also asked if anything could be done to ensure the closure of the Carpenter's Arms public house would not be permanent.	None

	The chair has received an email from Arkell's stating that the intention was to reopen in approximately 18 months when the roadworks had finished. Cllr Vallender also added that it was already known that the lease would not be renewed and this was not a shock - although the closure is a little earlier than expected.	
1. Apologies 119/25-26	None.	None
2. Declarations of interest 120/25-26	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 on behalf of neighbours. Cllr Vallender mentioned that he had spoken to the applicant for planning ref S/25/1689 that would be discussed later in the meeting and would not be expressing an opinion.	None
3. To approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 16th December 2025 121/25-26	The minutes were approved with one minor alteration to a minute ref number noted by the Clerk. Proposed: TL Seconded: MV Approved: All	None
4. Ward Councillor Update 122/25-26	The provided report was reviewed. - 20mph zone – several decisions need to be made for tweaks to the plans. However it was noted that any further considerations or changes, such as extending the zone further, may well delay the planning and decisions again and this may lead to longer delays because of forthcoming elections. Although not a statutory consultee, Council confirmed it was happy to proceed with the planned 20mph zone and for Cllr Vallender in his ward role to liaise with SBC to progress it. Proposed: CM Seconded: SB Approved: All Clerk to email MV and confirm council's acceptance of the plans.	Clerk

	- The issue with keeping Old Vicarage Lane cleared of mud and slurry was discussed. It was mentioned that some of the wheel washing had been stopped and that this was a major concern. SB to follow up with developers to ensure they resolve the issues.	SB
5. Review of actions 123/25-26	Review of actions currently outstanding. - It was noted that council has formerly raised concerns with SBC about the new road naming policy that is overly restrictive and would limit roads being given locally relevant names.	None
6. Review of Council Calendar 124/25-26	The PC reviewed progress. - It was noted that the annual review of service contracts would be added to the calendar for action in Sep/Oct to avoid the busier period of budget setting.	Clerk
7. Clerk's Report 125/25-26	Report was reviewed. - Old Post Office new build– councillors to review the situation with the fencing and report back in February meeting. - Council approved the Orchard Press quotation for 450 copies of CN x 6 issues for 2026-27 at price of £6,549: Proposed: SB Seconded: AC Approved: All - Advertising costs – council approved the increase to advertising costs. Clerk to update Schedule of Charges and publish. Proposed: AC Seconded: BT Approved: All	Clerk
8. Planning applications 126/25-26	It was noted that there are currently multiple ongoing applications and these are responded to by the Strategic Planning Working Group as and when possible. Submitted responses can be viewed on the Swindon Planning Portal. These applications will be responded to after the meeting: S/25/1680 Change to vehicle site etc Thornhill Industrial Estate	

	- Several issues identified, to include blocking future residential development– SPWG to consider outside meeting and submit appropriate response. S/AV/26/0010 Installation of signage, Unit 1, Panattoni Park - No adverse comments, Clerk to submit response. S/25/1689 Variation of Usage, Bruce Manor, Highworth Road - Agreed that provided there is no expansion of the workspace then this is acceptable. Clerk to respond as such.	Clerk Clerk
9. Reports from Working Groups 127/25-26	Communications Working Group: Nothing to report other than appears elsewhere on the Agenda Open Spaces Working Group: Report was reviewed. - A pruning course has been proposed for 12 people to be run in the village hall for a cost of £120. Funded by the Trees for Climate Change grant from SBC - MV asked if there was any more planned tree planting. It was noted that currently there is none planned but a follow up needs to be organised to review/replace those already planted. Allotments Working Group: Report was reviewed. - The main outstanding issue is deciding the amount of increase to rents to cover water bills. Rights of Way Working Party: - Positive meeting with the new owner of Haybarns - new fence has been erected alongside footpath 15 and they are happy to maintain this going forward. - Footpath 6 has been slightly diverted and a new stile put in place by the landowner, in coordination with Martin Fry from SBC.	None

10. Reports relating to expansion 128/25-26	Strategic Planning Working Group Report reviewed. - The cut through and crossing to the bridleway by the new Thornhill Road roundabout is still not resolved and is waiting on responses from SBC. - Village Centre – the revised design was circulated and responded to in the new year. Awaiting further update from the designers.	None
11. Other reports 129/25-26	SMRA and Play Working Group report: Report was reviewed. - Council resolved to approve the increase in Rec Maintenance Payment to £8,137 and to maintain the Village Hall support grant at £5,395. Proposed: NH Seconded: AC Approved: All - Council noted that a request for funding a replacement door or refurbishing the existing one may be forthcoming. SMRA to discuss options. Parish/borough Liaison: - Interactions with the borough remain frustrating. Progress with the protocol and other matters are likely to be delayed by the elections in May.	Clerk
12. Finance 130/25-26	To review and approve finance statement, bank statements and payments: - Council resolved to approve payments totalling £5,587.12 as noted on the finance summary. Proposed: BT Seconded: AC Approved: All Spending approved at the meeting:	None

	- Increase in Recreation Ground maintenance grant to SMRA to £8,137 - Maintaining the annual Village Hall support grant at £5,395 To review Q3 Financial Report and minutes of Finance Working Group meeting: - Council reviewed and noted the report. To discuss and agree precept requirement for 2026-27: - Council discussed the projected finances and expenditure, including where there are potential demands to secure the Council's position relating to housing development and Council assets. - Council resolved to approve the recommended increase in precept of 6% to £81,562. This represents an increase of £10.06 per annum per average Band D dwelling. Proposed: AC Seconded: BT Approved: All Form was signed and completed, clerk to submit to SBC.	Clerk
13. Matters b/f 131/25-26	BT raised the issue of meeting start times. Matter was discussed but raised a number of concerns. Issue to be added as an agenda item for February meeting. NH raised the matter of forthcoming elections and the number of likely candidates. SB raised the matter of the forthcoming Have Your Say event and the need to consider content for it.	None

The meeting closed at 9:27pm

Signed by Chairperson:

Date: