SOUTH MARSTON
PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 16th June 2026 at 7:30pm at South Marston Village Hall.

Council Members present	
C McEwen (Chair) S Brown (SB) A Carter (AC)	M Vallender (MV) B Thunder (BT)
Clerk & Responsible Officer:	K Morgan
Borough Councillors present:	M Vallender
Others present:	Mrs Featherstone, Mr Cave-Ayland, Mr Webb, Mrs McEwen, Mr A Meenan

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 31/26-27	Mr Cave-Ayland mentioned that some trees and branches on the perimeter of St Julians were overhanging property and might do damage or cause an obstruction. This was noted and Cllr Thunder to follow up with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust as required. Mr A Meenan was in attendance with a view to potential co-option to the council.	
1. Apologies 32/26-27	Cllr Hole was away.	None
2. Signing of Acceptance of Office form 33/26-27	Cllr Carter signed his acceptance of office form.	
3. Declarations of interest 34/26-27	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 coordinating help and information provision on behalf of a collection of 12 neighbours.	None

	Additionally Cllr Brown declares a direct interest in utility provision and the issue of closure of the Leaze, which she is engaging with SBC and developers about.	
4. To approve and sign the minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 19th May 2026 35/26-27	Minutes were approved. Proposed: BT Seconded: MV Approved: All	None
5. To approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 19th May 2026 36/26-27	Minutes were approved. Proposed: MV Seconded: SB Approved: All	
6. Ward Councillor Update 37/26-27	The update was reviewed: - Party in the Park – pleased to say that sponsorship of at least £5,000 has been promised so far. - Carriers Arms – licensing process is close to completion. - Utilities wayleave permissions are now imminent. - Planning Update – Cllr Vallender declared an interest in this matter given his ward councillor role in planning, and gave an update on the changes to the system. The problems with the new system were discussed. - Keypoint – an issue with foul water discharge on the site was mentioned, which may lead to a pre-application at some point.	None
7. Review of actions 38/26-27	Review of actions currently outstanding.	Clerk
8. Review of Council Calendar 39/26-27	The PC reviewed progress.	None
9. Clerk's Report 40/26 -27	Report was reviewed.	

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	- The main issue noted was the outcome of the internal audit requiring a data audit.	None
10. Planning applications 41/26-27	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 were discussed: **S/RES/26/0667 Parcel R10 (part)** - To be reviewed by SPWG and response submitted. - - Cllr Thunder raised a query about the Nightingale Lane tree line in this area and who would own it eventually. Cllr Brown said that it did not lie within this part of the parcel, but would be relevant when the other parts came forward and would be taken up then. **S/RES/25/1485 West Electricity Substation** - Main issue is how impact to Morses Lane and its environs will be managed and reparations made. Efforts are being made through planners and Cllr Vallender to seek answers. **S/26/0538 9 dwellings off Thornhill Road** - To be investigated whether a further response is required now updated plans have been issued.	SPWG
11. Reports from Working Groups 42/26-27	**Communications Working Group:** Verbal report was given. - Full edition of Community News expected in July. - Use of Affinity software to replace Publisher has been trialled with promising results so far. To be discussed with Orchard Press if the output is suitable for them to use. - Web and Facebook usage figures are hard to manage and it has been agreed to not spend too much time on detailed analysis of the figures, as the benefit of doing so is questionable. **Open Spaces Working Group:**	None

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Report was reviewed.

- Lengthsman – task list reviewed. Cllr Brown suggested the splay at the Morses Lane/Thornhill Road junction needs to be cut back further. Also nettle growth along Morses Lane needs attention soon, as pedestrians and cyclists cannot move aside enough to avoid vehicles.

- Dog excrement issues – situation of waste being left in grass and not collected is becoming more of an issue. Unclear of the best solution but some signage to increase awareness was suggested.

- Path between Bloor Homes development and Oxleaze Woods discussed. How this will be funded to be agreed.

- Village garden fencing – it is not clear who owns the land where the fence is, as it appears from original plans that it may not be on the land belonging to the Parish Council. It was agreed that should the parish council continue to maintain the whole of the garden, a low cost solution would be sought to remove the fence and not replace it and make future maintenance simpler. The option of using the village planters to fill some of the gaps was suggested.

  Chair to speak to residents in advance of any work being done.

Chair/BT

Allotments Working Group:

Report was reviewed.

Rights of Way Working Party:

- Report was reviewed.

- Various changes to schedules of footpath closures were discussed.

- It was noted that Ward Williams have been helpful in seeking solutions for residents impacted by footpath closures.

Village Hall Working Group:

- Report was reviewed.

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12. Transfer of title of the Village Hall to the Parish Council 43/26-27	Matter was discussed. - It was noted that, in response to the formal consultation that had been held regarding the potential transfer of title, a letter was sent to SMRA and copied to the Parish Council that raised a number of issues. Despite the correspondent not being a village resident, a combined response was sent from both organisations that sought to answer the points made. - Council resolved to confirm its acceptance of the transfer of the Village Hall to its ownership from the Village Hall Charity, should the trustees resolve to agree the transfer. Proposed: BT Seconded: AC Approved: All	
13. Reports relating to expansion 44/26-27	**Strategic Planning Working Group** Report reviewed. - It was noted that a number of changes were to be made to management roles of various developers which raises concerns about continuity.	None
14. Other reports 45/26-27	**SMRA:** Report was reviewed. **Parish/borough Liaison:** - A new cabinet member is in place as liaison with the forum. Meeting to be held later in the week.	None
15. Finance 46/26-27	**To review and approve finance statement, bank statements and payments:** - Council resolved to approve payments totalling £7,655.39 as noted on the finance summary.	

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	Proposed: BT Seconded: AC Approved: All **Spending approved at the meeting:** None **Internal Audit Report:** - Report was reviewed. It was noted that minor issues had been or would be dealt with – meeting the requirements of the new Assertion 10 around data protection and usage would take some time. **Agree start year fund balances:** - Council resolved to retrospectively approve the starting fund balances that had been implemented for year 2026/27. Proposed: MV Seconded: AC Approved: All	None Clerk
16. Annual Return Governance Statement 47/26-27	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: AC Seconded: SB Approved: All	
17. Annual Return Accounting Statement 48/26-27	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: MV Seconded: SB Approved: All	
18. To review future agenda items 49/26-27	None.	None

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The meeting closed at 9:07pm

Signed by Chairperson: **Date:**

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