

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 21st July 2026 at 7:30pm at South Marston Village Hall.

Council Members present	
C McEwen (Chair)	M Vallender (MV)
S Brown (SB)	B Thunder (BT)
A Carter (AC)	N Hole (NH)
Clerk & Responsible Officer:	K Morgan
Borough Councillors present:	M Vallender
Others present:	Mrs Featherstone, Mr Cave-Ayland, 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 50/26-27	Mr Cave-Ayland mentioned the issue with the footbridge on footpath 2 which was reported to SBC several months ago – this has been chased by the clerk and Cllr Vallender who are waiting for a further update. Mrs Featherstone raised the matter of the hedge alongside the bungalows on Chapel Lane which is the responsibility of SBC – it was later noted that the grass, hedge and stream banking had been reported to the borough by Cllr Vallender and they had agreed to tend to them. Mr A Meenan was in attendance for the second month as a potential co-optee to the council.	
1. Apologies 51/26-27	Cllr Vallender had hoped to attend but had to send apologies as his meeting at SBC had overrun.	None
2. Signing of Acceptance of Office form 52/26-27	Cllr Hole signed the acceptance of office form.	

3. Declarations of interest 53/26-27	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. 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.	None
4. To approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 16 th June 2026 54/26-27	Minutes were approved. Proposed: AC Seconded: SB Approved: All	
5. Ward Councillor Update 55/26-27	The update was reviewed in Cllr Vallender's absence: - Tree planting in Greenfields to be added to August agenda. - The removal of funding from schools as part of the NEV expansion was discussed.	None
6. Review of actions 56/26-27	Review of actions currently outstanding. - Emergency signage – Clerk has identified a source but it was noted the value of getting these was in question. Clerk to follow up with Cllr Vallender on this.	Clerk
7. Review of Council Calendar 57/26-27	The PC reviewed progress. - It was noted that the Q1 financial report would be prepared and circulated to council prior to the next meeting. A full FWG meeting was not thought necessary as the normal FWG schedule was tied to budgeting, precepting and audit timings. Calendar to be amended.	Clerk
8. Clerk's Report 58/26 -27	Report was reviewed. - Noted that our Google Licensing provider was changing and that a review of IT provision may be considered in budgeting for the next year. - Invoices issued to Ward Williams for various matters have still not been paid – Clerk to chase again.	None

	- SBC's 'Big Town Centre' clean up initiative was mentioned- it was agreed the council would not contribute formally to it.	
9. Planning applications 59/26-27	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/COND/25/1561 Partial discharge of various conditions - It was noted that our previous responses to relevant matters had still not been addressed S/25/0563 Food Vending Van – Highworth Road Layby - This application was not responded to given its remoteness to the village and lack of immediate concerns.	
10. To review and adopt policy documents 60/26-27	Council reviewed the new draft policies – it was agreed to adopt them and noted that the data protection policy would be further updated if required. Proposed: AC Seconded: BT Approved: All	Clerk
11. Reports from Working Groups 61/26-27	Communications Working Group: Verbal report was given. - The Welcome Pack was discussed. It was noted that a small number of copies had been delivered to new occupiers but more would be needed to meet demands as development occupation increase. - It was suggested that the current pack could be added to the website and it may be possible to update parts that require updating. Open Spaces Working Group: Verbal report was given.	None

	- Village garden – some of the older plants need removing and the garden generally needs tidying to make it easier to maintain. This might include a knee high fence and planters. It was agreed to look into options for fencing including approaching the developers to see if they could assist. - Weed spraying has been done by the lengthsman and taken @ 2 hours. It is estimated that it would take three spraying sessions a year to keep things under control. Noted that SBC are still determined that they will resume the service for highways only. - Following signs/flags being put up there appears to have been a reduction in dog faeces in St Julians meaning grass cutting etc is less unpleasant.. Allotments Working Group: Verbal update was given. - Efforts will be made to make improvised noticeboards rather than purchasing them. - It was noted that there may be someone stealing water from the allotment water troughs and actions were being taken to address this. Rights of Way Working Party: - Nothing further was added to matters already discussed. Village Hall Working Group: - Nothing further to report as progress with the change of ownership currently sits with SMRA.	None
12. Reports relating to expansion 62/26-27	Strategic Planning Working Group Report reviewed and a further update had been circulated. - In particular, the possible loss of new allotments that had been included in the original s106 was mentioned. How this was to be dealt with is an ongoing matter with planners from SBC involved.	None

