

# South Marston Parish Council

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Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2015 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Item	
1	<p><b>Apologies: Stuart Young, Tony Leathart</b> Present: Colin McEwen; Sylvia Brown; Anne Featherstone; Ken Millard; Barry Thunder Colin McEwen chaired the meeting Members of the public present: Clive Jeffery; Mary Cooper; Verity Davidson; Margaret Presse; Charles Lewis-Clarke; Brian McGlone; Ray Harley</p>
2	<p><b>Approve Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting</b> The minutes of the last Annual Meeting, held on Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2014 were approved. Proposed: KM Seconded: BT Agreed: All</p>
3	<p><b>Report from the Chairman - SMPC Annual Review 2015</b></p> <p>“May you live in interesting times”</p> <p>Issues relating to the anticipated expansion of the village have again occupied a major part of our energies.</p> <p>Sylvia Brown represented the village at the Examination in Public for the Swindon Local Plan, where we achieved mixed results. On the positive side, key parts of the draft South Marston Supplementary Planning Document were uplifted into the Local Plan. On the downside, for technical reasons, the SPD itself could not proceed.</p> <p>Your Council has been active in promoting a co-operative relationship with the various developers and landowners whose land is approved for development under the Local Plan. The objective has been to seek an integrated and high quality outcome along the lines endorsed by village consultation. Although this has been reciprocated by most, the principal developers remain obdurate in their refusal to join in an integrated plan or to modify their ‘southern bypass’ proposal in favour of a more northerly street to serve the expanded village. They also continue to press for an increase in house numbers.</p> <p>Given this context, the Council resolved in February to pursue a Neighbourhood Plan to give additional planning guidance as to how development should happen. The first draft of the plan has now been published on southmarstonplan.com and is undergoing the first period of public consultation.</p> <p>The writing of the Plan has been led by Sylvia as Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee and myself, with Tony Leafhart drafting the Heritage Report and Barry Thunder and Anne Featherstone leading the Rights of Way group. I would also like to thank all those villagers and Borough officers who have contributed their thoughts and time as we have built the Plan on the groundwork of previous consultations. Together we have produced a draft Plan of which we can be proud.</p> <p>During the year, Barry Thunder has take the lead both physically and in developing both external and internal contacts to maintain and utilise our green spaces. The expanded allotments are now well established and thriving. Oak Tree Corner and St Julian’s Wood now have maintenance plans and have seen considerable activity and this is set to continue during the current year.</p> <p>Anne Featherstone has been growing into her village organisation liaison role, and most recently has taken the lead on ensuring an adequate transport service for villagers following the withdrawal of the village bus service.</p>

	<p>Tony Leathart produced a review of the parish’s dog bin estate, and supervised renewal of a number of recepticals. This may appear an almost flippant issue, but the contract to empty these is £1500 each year, a major part of our expenditure and residents let us know all too often if we are not performing well on provision and emptying of bins.</p> <p>You may have noticed that last year’s disruption from the construction of the Solar Farm at Nightingale Lane has now ended with its formal opening..... Thanks to Barry for his liaison with the solar energy and construction company which has generated a productive relationship on both sides.</p> <p>We continue to support SMRA in its efforts to maintain the Recreation Ground and their management of the Village Hall. We commend them for helping to improve the village more generally, for instance by installing the planters throughout the village that are so colourful at the moment. You may also have seen members of the SMRA attempting to keep the village tidy – any additional recruits to the South Marston litterpickers would, I am sure, be welcomed.</p> <p>Tower and Tap? – even though it is being offered as a paid editorship, we have been unable to recruit someone to fulfil the position. In the meantime, Councillors have been producing a newsletter, roughly quarterly, to keep local residents informed of happenings in the community. However, this is not a sustainable solution and a review is now taking place of the options for future modes of communication within the village.</p> <p>During the year Stuart Young resigned as Chair due to work commitments, but fortunately has been able to remain as a member. His and Ken Millard’s contributions both generally and on vetting planning applications are valued.</p> <p>This brings me to an important point. It is in the nature of things that councillors who jobs or children have less time to devote to council work than villagers who are retired. Their input is none the less valued and this comparative lack of available time should not inhibit them from joining the Council.</p> <p>During the year Stephanie Blair resigned from the Council and we have recently welcomed David Roberts, who brings a national perspective to us.</p> <p>We have also recently received the resignation of our Clerk, Joan. I would like to thank her for her input during the last year.</p> <p>Colin McEwen; Chair; South Marston Parish Council</p>
4	<p><b>Financial Report – Year End Accounts 2014/15 (Copy attached)</b></p> <p>SB explained the detail of the Financial report highlighting that the Council had managed their costs well within budget, given that the budget had not increased significantly on previous years.</p> <p>This year’s precept from Swindon borough Council has increased to £58.95 per Band D residence and is a £1.40 increase per household.</p> <p>It was explained that the designated funds were for specific items and were not to be used as revenue.</p> <p>Sylvia Brown; Vice Chair; South Marston Parish Council</p>
5	<p><b>Any Questions</b></p> <p>Brian McGlone questioned the access to Agendas and minutes posted on the South Marston website. The Clerk will investigate this.</p> <p>He also requested that <u>draft</u> minutes of Parish Council meetings be posted on the website before approval by the Parish Council. This request will be taken to the July Parish Council meeting.</p>
6	<p><b>Neighbourhood Plan</b></p> <p>Colin McEwen gave a brief PowerPoint presentation setting out the background to the Neighbourhood Development Plan that has just been published for pre-submission consultation.</p> <p>This was followed by a review of the Plan policies using the <a href="http://www.southmarstonplan.com">www.southmarstonplan.com</a> website.</p> <p>Villagers were encouraged to use the feedback form on the website to express their views on the proposed Neighbourhood Plan or to take a paper copy of the Plan. Questions:</p>

What is the legal status of the Neighbourhood Plan?

Once the Neighbourhood Plan has been approved, it has the same status as SBC's Local Plan.

Are there any plans relating to the Mercure Hotel?

The Parish Council has held negotiations with the hotel owner, but received no plans except for the land to the rear.

Have the developers agreed the school will remain on its present site?

Plans are to extend the present site. The Developers have never produced a plan to site the school anywhere other than on the existing Recreation Ground.

Private Property signs have been installed on Footpath 2 – is this no longer a public footpath?

Although these signs have been installed, the Footpath remains a public footpath.

The existing graveyard is getting full. The Plan fails to address this lack of capacity. Natural burial is not appropriate for a waterlogged site.

Noted.

Is there to be a diamond interchange off the White Hart roundabout?

Yes. Government funding was recently confirmed.

What is the status of the protection of hedgerows in the Village?

Colin McEwen explained the criteria for the protection of hedgerows (highlighting the section on hedgerows at [www.southmarstonplan.com](http://www.southmarstonplan.com)). This does not protect hedgerows in the centre of the village. The PC are looking into the recent removal of a section of hedge in Thornhill Road.

What is the turnout and majority required for the referendum?

There is no minimum turnout and will be decided by majority.

**Meeting concluded at 10.00 p.m.**

**SOUTH MARSTON PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT TO 31 MARCH 2015**

Revenue Funds	Last yrs Spend	Budget Spend	Actual Spend	Budget Income	Actual Income
Clerks salary	5,438	7,809	8,381	0	
PC travel	114	150	27	0	
PC general admin	1,005	2,635	2,318	0	81
Subscriptions	354	480	334	0	
Insurance & audit	1,992	2,200	2,045	0	
Professional fees & elections	0	300	0	0	
Equipment & misc. admin	454	100	378	0	
<b>TOTAL ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>9,357</b>	<b>13,674</b>	<b>13,484</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>81</b>
Tower & Tap	686	2,587	1,077	1,130	55
Section 137 grants	669	1,000	0	0	
V hall Charity grant	1,000	2,000	2,000	0	
Misc. community support	590	0	926	0	
<b>TOTAL COMMUNITY SUPPORT</b>	<b>2,945</b>	<b>5,587</b>	<b>4,003</b>	<b>1,130</b>	<b>55</b>
Burial Ground	320	1,000	1,220	0	
SMRA agreement	2,000	2,000	2,000	0	
Conservation Areas	0	0	0	0	
Maintenance & dog bins	1,040	2,100	1,489	0	
<b>TOTAL OPEN SPACES</b>	<b>3,360</b>	<b>5,100</b>	<b>4,709</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Allotments	560	600	815	1,380	1,832
Village garden & car park	2,618	2,000	1,568	0	
Other parish property	0	0	0	0	
<b>TOTAL PARISH PROPERTY</b>	<b>3,178</b>	<b>2,600</b>	<b>2,384</b>	<b>1,380</b>	<b>1,832</b>
Contingencies	0	1,000	0	0	
Other Revenue Income				22,172	20,789
<b>REVENUE FUND TOTAL</b>	<b>£18,840</b>	<b>£27,961</b>	<b>£24,580</b>	<b>£24,682</b>	<b>£22,757</b>

- 1 All figures are 'net' value, since VAT will be reclaimed in following year
- 2 Clerks salary was higher than budget due to additional web management and handover
- 3 Income and expenditure on Tower & Tap are both reduced due to its demise during 2014
- 4 Community support includes Section 137 payments to Tots and Toddlers and Youth Club
- 5 Overspend on grass cutting on burial ground is misleading – bills shared with general open spaces which shows a compensatory underspend
- 6 Budget income assumed a further £1500 tranche of Vanguard money which will now not materialise
- 7 Precept received is approximately £500 greater than anticipated, largely due to the final government support grant - note that this is payable this year only

<b>WHERE WE GOT OUR INCOME FROM IN 2014/15</b>	
Precept	20,415

Bank interest	1,956
VAT refund	828
Other/donations to the PC	350
Donations to designated funds	11,000
Section 106 AEE income	56,500
Clerks salary/Admin	81
Tower & Tap	55
Allotments	1,832
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£93,017</b>

Parish Council Funds status			14/15	Year End	These are not cash balances but reflect the VAT to be recovered next year and cheques uncashed from this year		
							Designated funds are restricted in their use by agreements with third parties
	Revenue Fund	Envt & Comm Fund	Conservation Fund (designated)	SMRA fund (designated)	AEE fund (designated)	Total Funds	
<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>£6,597</b>	<b>£47,014</b>	<b>£132</b>	<b>£10,157</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£63,900</b>	
Income	22,757	2,592		11,000	56,500	92,849	
Expenditure (ex-VAT)	20,580	730	38	13,985	250	35,584	
Transfers between funds	4,000			4,000			
	300	300					
		500	500				
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>£5,074</b>	<b>£48,076</b>	<b>£594</b>	<b>£11,172</b>	<b>£56,250</b>	<b>£121,165</b>	

Planned Forward Commitments			
	Revenue Fund	Envt Fund	
Property Contingency		7,500	Emergency repairs to parish property
Election contingency		2,100	To cover SBC charge for 4 yearly election plus risk of by-election costs
Revenue reserves target	5,000		Target level for active revenue fund
Neighbourhood Plan		2,000	To enhance work on SM expansion in 2014/15
Allotments development		0	New allocation of £600 made in Revenue budget for 2015/16
Playing Field Facilities		20,000	Build-up of capital to use for enhanced facilities in future years
IT Fund		300	To receive additions of £150 p.a. from rev budget to fund replacement IT equipment
Road safety improvements		7,000	To help bring forward acceptable schemes
<b>Uncommitted funds</b>	<b>£74</b>	<b>£9,176</b>	<b>TOTAL £9,250</b>

#### Notes

1 Uncommitted funds show the amount available to the Parish Council to fund ongoing works which had not been budgeted for in the previous year

2

£56,500 was paid into a designated fund as a result of AEE solar farm community benefit agreement

- 3 SMRA designated fund income includes a grant of £11,000 gratefully received from F&E Harris Trust for repairs to the play equipment on the Recreation Ground