

# South Marston Parish Council

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## South Marston Parish Council

### Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2016 at 7:30pm at South Marston Village Hall

| Council Members present        |                               |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Mr C McEwen (CM)               | Mrs S Brown – Vice Chair (SB) |
| Mr S Young (SY)                | Mr T Leathart (TL)            |
| Mr K Millard (KM)              | Mr B Thunder (BT)             |
| Clerk & Responsible Officer:   | Mrs C Penny (Clerk)           |
| Members of the public present: | Mrs Anne Featherstone         |

Acronyms used in these minutes:

SBC – Swindon Borough Council, PC – Parish Council, NP – Neighbourhood Plan, NPC – Neighbourhood Planning Committee, SMRA – South Marston Recreation Association, OPWG – Open Spaces Working Group, SM website – [www.SouthMarston.org.uk](http://www.SouthMarston.org.uk),

### Minutes:

| Agenda item & minute number | Summary   | Action | Supporting information                |
|-----------------------------|---|--------|---------------------------------------|
| Apologies<br>AP1/16         | None  | None   | None                                  |
| Minutes<br>AP2/16           | To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting that took place on Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> June 2015.<br>Proposed: SY<br>Seconded: BT<br>Approved: All   |        | See the South Marston village website |
| Chair's report<br>AP3/16    | The Chair presented his report.   | None   | <a href="#">Report</a>                |
| Financial report<br>AP4/16  | SB presented the financial report.<br><br>In 2015, the PC took the decision to recruit a Parish Clerk with appropriate skills who would 'grow' with the role in response to the expansion of South Marston. Without this, we would struggle to manage the business of the council effectively.<br>In addition, we had failed to recruit a replacement editor for Tower & Tap and opted for the new clerk taking on the wider communications role including website management. We provided an appropriate budget for this, but there was no | None   | <a href="#">Report</a>                |

|                         |  |      |      |
|-------------------------|--|------|------|
|                         | <p>income from advertising whilst the new Community News was in development. These two factors led to an increase in cost of administration this year. The increase will become more significant over coming years, but eventually be matched by the gradual rise in precept income as the housing development comes on stream. Apart from this, we are managing our ongoing expenditure well within our annual income from Council Tax. The use of the Community Payback team and of volunteer groups has proved a cost effective way of improving our green spaces.</p> <p>TL queried what constituted Open Spaces. SB confirmed grass cutting, dog waste bins, hedge trimming etc</p> |      |      |
| <p>Questions AP5/16</p> | <p>Mrs Featherstone queried how long DR has been on the PC. Confirmed over 12 months.</p> <p>SB queried what Mrs Featherstone thought of Community News. Mrs Featherstone confirmed she liked it and it had useful content. SB stated she was pleased and it showed that the number of people that attended the exhibition today.</p> <p>Discussion about the increased engagement from the younger members of the village.</p>  | None | None |
| <p>Meeting closure:</p> | 19:58pm  |      |      |

## Chairs report:

The New Eastern Villages expansion will have the greatest impact on the lives of South Marston residents. The Parish Council has continued to exert influence over it through developing and consulting upon a Neighbourhood Plan which sets out a vision for the expanded South Marston. The plan is now with an independent Examiner who must decide if it meets with the statutory Basic Requirements before it can be put to the village in a referendum. Thanks are due to the villagers who have been active in developing the plan and its supporting reports.

The planning system assumes that a Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan will be in place so as to guide planning applications that are then submitted by developers. In practice this has not happened and plans have been submitted for the New Eastern Village strategic development area and for brownfield sites adjacent to the village itself, such as Crown Timber and the Hotel.

Having said this, we are confident that the eventual outcome will be significantly closer to our vision for the expanded village than was feared when the original Eastern Development Area plans were published back in 2009.

### Parish Council Services

Maintenance of the closed Churchyard, Memorial Garden and other areas is subject to competitive tender. For a number of years this has been provided by Stratton Garden Contractors – we are grateful the work that they do.

Over the years the restrictions on their finance has led to the services that the Borough provide reducing in a number of areas. They have told Parish Councils that predicted increases in the cost of elderly care mean that by 2020 they will no longer be providing services such as verge and hedge cutting where highway safety is not compromised. Such services in South Marston are modest and we will be considering taking them over during the coming year on a third party contract basis.

SMRA and volunteers continue to maintain the Recreation Ground. This will be doubled in size under the expansion plans and its transformation into a village centre is one of the major challenges in the year ahead. Whether this will be maintained on a volunteer or third party contract basis has yet to be decided. I would like to thank the SMRA and volunteers for their work.

Councillor Barry Thunder has again been active in maintaining the leisure spaces in the village. He has been particularly successful in liaising with the Community Payback Service to get work done at Oak Tree Corner the Churchyard, allotments and Oxleaze Wood.

We have a new parish clerk

This year we welcomed Claire Penny as Clerk. Claire brings a 'can do' attitude and we look forward to facing the challenges of the expanding village with her.

I said last year that the community was living in interesting times and this has not altered.

*Colin McEwen, Chair*

## Financial report:

| <b>2015/16 Fund summary</b>  | Income         | transfers<br>between<br>funds | Spend                                   | Carried<br>Forward | Purpose of Fund  |
|--|----------------|-------------------------------|---|--------------------|--|
| Revenue<br>Administration<br>Community Support<br>Open Spaces<br>PC Property | 22,161         | -1,979                        | 15,899<br>641<br>3,725<br>880<br>21,145 | £2,996             | Day to day operation of Parish Council responsibilities            |
| Environment & Facilities   | 5,584          | -8,000                        | 2,253                                   | £35,944            | General fund for extraordinary expenditure                         |
| Communications   | 0              | 4,619                         | 3,169                                   | £1,450             | To support website, Community News and other village communication |
| Neighbourhood Plan   | 0              | 0                             | 2,032                                   | £3,013             | Budget agreed in March 2015 to develop the Neighbourhood Plan      |
| Allotments   | 1,223          | 600                           | 1,469                                   | £354               | To provide, improve and maintain allotments in the parish          |
| Conservation Areas   | 250            | 0                             | 476                                     | £368               | Woodlands at Oxleaze, St Julians, The Orchard and Oak Tree Corner  |
| SMRA designated Fund   | 3,800          | 4,760                         | 4,560                                   | £15,172            | Funds on which SMRA can draw to invest in recreation facilities    |
| AEE designated fund  | 0              |                               | 120                                     | £56,130            | Income resulting from the Sevor Solar Farm for restricted purposes |
| <b>TOTALS</b>  | <b>£33,018</b> |                               | <b>£35,222</b>                          | <b>£115,428</b>    |  |