



SPEEN PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 16th January 2017 AT THE MAJENDIE HALL, ST. MARY'S CHURCH, SPEEN STARTING AT 7.30 P.M.

Present	Parish Councillors	S Larkins (Chair), T Mathers (Vice Chair), J Apicella, A Booth, A Newell-Hart, R Scorey, K Sullivan
	WBDC Councillor	Marcus Franks
	Clerk & RFO	M Gould

Open Session: No parishioners, guests or press were present. The Chair welcomed Cllr Franks to the meeting.

1.	<p>Apologies for absences: Apologies were received from Cllrs Phillips, Tull, Taylor & Winn</p>																									
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest: None</p>																									
3.	<p>Approval of Minutes from 12-12-16</p> <p>The Minutes of the full council meeting held on Monday 12-12-16 were reviewed. In section 17.3, the year was stated as 2017. This should read 2016. No other amendments were required.</p> <p>Proposal: to approve Minutes of the full council meeting held on Monday 12-12-16. Proposer: Cllr A Booth, Seconder Cllr Larkins. Cllrs Scorey abstained. Six in favour. It was duly resolved to accept the Minutes from 12-12-16 and for the Chair to sign the final version.</p>																									
4.	<p>Financial report: The Clerk referred Councillors to documentation sent in advance.</p> <p>4.1 Balance in bank as at 16th January 2017 is £60,558.62CR</p> <p>4.2 Finance report – to end December 2016: bank balance per cashbook at end Dec 2016 was £60,445.46. Income to date is £62,360.55 and expenditure to date is £39,017.19. £31,023 is restricted funding for specific reserves / provisions. Projected unallocated funds at the end of 2016/17 are currently £9,106.</p> <p>4.3 Quarterly budget vs actual review (<i>Cllr Larkins</i>)</p> <p>Variance due largely to seasonal and one-off items, such as the tree survey, not yet invoiced. Fewer play equipment repairs than anticipated. Salt bin & dog-bin emptying are invoiced annually. Salt-bin costs will depend on weather and requirement for grit. Clerk costs higher than budgeted due to clearing backlog and council development work e.g. setting up Dropbox, major review of policies, new governance of committees etc. Clerk's hours will remain higher than budgeted. F&GP have considered this at length and are in support. Little training undertaken so far this year but likely to change in next few months. Environmental maintenance contract costs less than Neighbourhood Warden Scheme as perform a different function with fewer duties. Current actual spend suggests underspend of £10,797 on budget for 2016/2017.</p> <p>Minor error in variance column for Clerk's costs to be corrected. Layout of spreadsheet to be centred.</p> <p>4.4 Proposal: To endorse invoices paid since last meeting:</p>	Clerk / Cllr Larkins																								
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">09/11/2016</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">2406</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Mr Stephen Pearce</td> <td style="width: 15%; text-align: right;">238.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>09/11/2016</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2407</td> <td>Sundog Grounds Maintenance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">658.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>09/11/2016</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2408</td> <td>Triangle Management Company</td> <td style="text-align: right;">900.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>09/11/2016</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2409</td> <td>Carla Alves (Cleaning)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">60.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>09/11/2016</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2410</td> <td>Newbury Office supplies</td> <td style="text-align: right;">94.34</td> </tr> <tr> <td>09/11/2016</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2411</td> <td>Green Gym</td> <td style="text-align: right;">25.00</td> </tr> </table>	09/11/2016	2406	Mr Stephen Pearce	238.00	09/11/2016	2407	Sundog Grounds Maintenance	658.00	09/11/2016	2408	Triangle Management Company	900.00	09/11/2016	2409	Carla Alves (Cleaning)	60.00	09/11/2016	2410	Newbury Office supplies	94.34	09/11/2016	2411	Green Gym	25.00	
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09/11/2016	2412	Thames Water Utilities	43.65
09/11/2016	2413	Dr MM Carr (Gould)	147.80
23/11/2016	2414	PCC of Speen	68.00
23/11/2016	2415	BALC	2.70
23/11/2016	2416	SSE	82.21
23/11/2016	2417	Sandra Hicks (Larkins)	268.05
23/11/2016	2418	RJ Ayres & Son	232.80
30/11/2016	2419	Sundog Grounds Maintenance	400.00
30/11/2016	2420	Triangle Management Company	900.00
30/11/2016	2421	Newbury Office supplies	117.60
30/11/2016	2422	Dr MM Carr (Gould)	970.55

Proposer Cllr Mathers. Seconder Cllr Scorey. All in favour. No abstentions. **It was duly resolved to endorse the invoices paid since the last meeting.**

4.5 Proposal: Cheques for approval & signing up to end Nov 2016:

2423	Mr Stephen Pearce	228.00
2424	Newbury Office supplies	126.80
2425	Triangle Management Company	900.00
2426	The Label People	43.20
2427	Chris Hook	23.97
2428	Dr MM Carr (Gould)	963.38
2429	Sundog Grounds Maintenance	400.00
2303	Canc HMRC cheq - lost?	- 25.67

Proposer Cllr Apicella. Seconder Cllr Booth. All in favour. No abstentions. **It was duly resolved to approve further invoices for payment and signature.**

5. Planning Committee: (Cllr Booth)

5.1 Minutes of meetings: held on 8-12-16 (final) & 5-1-17 (draft) were acknowledged. Cllr Booth reviewed salient points of 8-12-16. Cllr Sullivan enquired into progress on the following:

- 14/02480/OUTMAJ Land Adjacent To Hilltop, Oxford Road, Donnington, Newbury, Berkshire. None of the councillors present had attended the public enquiry.
- 16/02403/FULD Lord Lyon Inn Stockcross Newbury Berkshire RG20 8LL

Proposed erection of ground and first floor side and rear extension: conversion of the extended premises to nine apartments (four with one bedroom, five with two bedrooms) following removal of the rear emergency staircase and first floor privacy screen. Noted that still awaiting decision but some additional information has been provided.

Cllr Newell-Hart informed council of national press articles suggesting that developers could continue to put pressure on Planning Departments of local councils by re-submitting planning applications for sites previously refused. Item to be added to next Planning Committee agenda for general discussion.

Clerk



<p>5.2 <u>Newbury Town Plan Steering Committee</u> Cllr Booth had attended the second meeting of the Newbury Town Plan Steering Committee. A couple of other parishes are now represented and members of public with specialist skills are being recruited. Sub-committees are set up to report back on their specific areas and these are chaired by Newbury Town Councillors. Significant workload involved. Cllr Booth has not joined any of the committees at this stage. SPC planning committee to discuss and nominate deputy to Cllr Booth. Clerk to add item to agenda of next Planning Committee meeting.</p> <p>5.3 <u>Inspectors proposed changes to the Site allocation DPD:</u> Cllr Scorey gave councillors a brief update. Changes are small. No sites have been added or taken out. Only site relevant to SPC is field behind Speen Allotments. This is not the final report but unlikely to see any major changes at this stage. Inspector highlighted that documents are inconsistent with drawings. Access confirmed as via A4 and Lambourn Road, not Station Road. Cllr Scorey to send link to SPC Planning Committee members.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Cllr Scorey</p>
<p>6. Communications WP: (Cllr Sullivan)</p> <p>6.1 <u>Speen Scene newsletter:</u> To be ready for printing approximately 31st January. Ex-councillor Hook has kindly agreed to continue assisting with publication. Needs 2.5 weeks for printing. Aim is to be delivered to parish mid to end-February. AFC Newbury Speen-based teams will deliver for £100 donation provided by Newbury Welding.</p> <p>The following articles to be included. Deadline for inclusion is last week of January 2017:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to new Clerk (Cllr Larkins) • Grade II status of War Memorial (Cllr Booth) • Speen Fete (ex-Cllr Hook) • SSDNAG (Cllr Tull) • Recreation Grounds (Cllr Apicella) • Planning – invitation to contact council, site call for 2036, Cllr Booth representing Speen on Town Steering Committee, Speen Allotment and Speen Moor potential development sites (Cllr Scorey) • Call for new councillors <p>6.2 <u>Website, Dropbox and email:</u> 1and1 website hosting now set up at cost of approx. £1 per month. This will also provide emails. Clerk to design new 'dummy' website in Wordpress & email to trial.</p> <p>6.3 <u>Free NHS checks for parishioners:</u> Speen Scene newsletter will promote the free parishioner NHS health checks which are likely to take place 18th March in association with West Berks District Council. Clerk to liaise with WBDC for final article to advertise the health checks. Clerk has contacted Ed Clintworth at WBDC to clarify responsibilities; WBDC need to book venue and book slots with parishioners. SPC agreed only to promote the event, not undertake practical aspects.</p>	<p>Cllrs Larkins, Booth, Tull, Apicella, Scorey & ex-Cllr Hook</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>7. Finance & General Purposes WP: (Cllr Larkins)</p> <p>7.1 <u>Minutes of meetings:</u> held on 6-12-16 (final) & 9-1-17 (draft) were acknowledged.</p> <p>7.2 <u>Co-option of new councillor:</u> SPC has two vacancies currently. Notice of vacancies have been posted publicly as per statutory duty so these posts can be co-opted. Chair reminded councillors to encourage anyone showing an interest to contact the Clerk.</p> <p>7.3 <u>Health & safety:</u> (items not considered elsewhere on agenda). No items were brought to council attention.</p> <p>Chair Larkins requested that agenda item 7.5 (Library consultation on parish contributions to library service) be considered before agenda item 7.4 (Precept 2017/2018) as decision of SPC on agenda item 7.5 has bearing on agenda item 7.4. All agreed.</p> <p>7.4 <u>WBDC consultation on parish contributions to library service:</u> to consider Berkshire</p>	<p>All</p> <p>Clerk / Chair</p>



Association of Local Councils (BALC) advice to parishes on General Power of Competence statutory spending powers. To consider F&GP recommendations on this basis.

Background:

SPC is being asked to contribute £2,370 from the precept. This is not mandatory, it is voluntary. Deadline for response to consultation is 26th January 2017.

This item had been discussed at the last full council meeting and councillors were generally in support of contributing to the library shortfall. Since then, more information and legal advice has been received. F&GP recommends to full council that SPC does not support the contributions to West Berks Library service by raising the precept 2017/18. This recommendation is based on advice received from BALC (Clerk has forwarded all the relevant communications to councillors) – see section 4.2 Minutes from F&GP held on 9-1-17.

BALC has been in discussion with WBDC. BALC has referred the matter to NALC (National Association of Local Councils) who advise parish councils to be clear that they have appropriate statutory power and also that they are not fettering the parish council to a long term financial agreement. NALCs advice is that a parish may only carry out an activity if there is a basis in law to do so *i.e.* a statutory power.

Legal powers available to parish councils to act depend on the detail of a proposal from WBDC. Statutory Instrument (The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 No. 965) gives councils the power to do anything an individual can do provided it is not prohibited by other legislation. Currently, SPC is **not** an eligible council to act under the general Power of Competence. Chair advised council that very few parishes in West Berks are eligible under this statutory instrument. Non-eligible councils are more restricted in powers.

BALC has asked WBDC to provide parishes with a specific proposal defining exactly what the required monies were for, detailed 'usage of library' figures for each parish and exactly how any contribution is going to be spent. Only then can parishes legally determine what power can be used to support the libraries. This detailed proposal has not been provided to BALC or parish councils.

The Chair advised Council that these questions relate not just to the library service but to all other services which WBDC propose to devolve to parishes in the future.

On this basis, in order to meet the deadline of 26th January, and following consideration of the legal advice from NALC/BALC, Chair asked for comments from councillors as follows:

- *Cllr Apicella:* although in support in principle, there are too many legal questions outstanding.
- *Cllr Mathers:* has read the documentation very closely. SPC does not have currently enough information from WBDC to determine which powers available to allow SPC to contribute. SPC cannot lawfully support the libraries at present.
- *Cllr Newell-Hart:* SPC needs to exercise caution since this sets precedence for all future spending on services devolved from WBDC.
- *Cllr Scorey:* SPC has already taken on a number of devolved services *e.g.* dog bin provision and emptying, salt-bin supply and filling, environmental maintenance. Cllr Larkins commented that these are different in that they have been directly quantifiable and/or been fixed assets & costs.
- *Cllr Sullivan:* costs are being passed onto parish councils because parish councils currently not 'capped' in the annual precept increases whereas WBDC is capped. So, simply passing on costs to parishioners via another route. In future, parishes may also be capped which could then cause parish councils funding difficulties.
- *Cllr Booth:* previously minded to support the proposal. However, SPC pays BALC to represent SPC and therefore council should heed their advice unless SPC has a clear basis not to do so.
- *Cllr Larkins:* budget-shuffling exercise. Just passing costs back to parishioners via the precept.

Proposal: to suspend standing orders to invite public to speak. Proposer: Cllr Scorey, seconder Cllr Mathers, all in favour. **It was duly resolved to suspend standing orders to invite public to speak.**

WBDC Cllr Marcus Franks was invited to comment. Cllr Franks not familiar with the General Powers of Competence Act. Central government are devolving powers so role of local



	<p>governance is changing. Devolution of services from WBDC is not compulsory but may be because a parish especially values that service and is prepared to adopt it because the parish believes it can be done better or more cost effectively. Regarding capping of parish council precepts, devolved services may not be capped – to be confirmed. Belief is that parishioners need to take on more responsibility and do more for themselves.</p> <p>Proposal: to re-instate standing orders. Proposer: Cllr Scorey, seconder Cllr Sullivan, all in favour. It was duly resolved to re-instate standing orders.</p> <p>Proposal: to respond to WBDC that SPC will not financially subsidise the library service. Proposer Cllr Larkins, seconder Cllr Scorey. All in favour. It was duly resolved to respond to WBDC that SPC will not financially subsidise the library service.</p> <p>7.5 <u>Precept 2017/2018 (Cllr Larkins):</u></p> <p>Precept budget breakdown was reviewed in detail. To be requested to WBDC by 31-1-17. This had been reviewed twice by F&GP and is recommended to council – see F&GP Minutes 6-12-16 (final) & 9-1-17 (draft).</p> <p>Proposal to set the Council precept for 2017/18 at £54,700.57. Proposer Cllr Larkins, seconder Cllr Newell-Hart. All in favour. It was duly resolved to set the Council precept for 2017/18 at £54,700.57.</p> <p>7.6 <u>BALC training courses:</u></p> <p>Proposal: Two attendees on Chairmanship course on Tues 13 June 2017 at a cost of £40+VAT (Proposed attendees: Chairman of Council and Chairman of Planning Committee). Proposer Cllr Newell-Hart, seconder Cllr Mathers. All in favour. It was duly resolved to have two attendees on Chairmanship course on Tues 13 June 2017 at a cost of £40+VAT (Proposed attendees: Chairman of Council and Chairman of Planning Committee).</p> <p>Proposal: One attendee on Year-End procedure course on Tues 31 Jan 17 at a cost of £40+VAT (Attendee: Clerk). Proposer Cllr Larkins, seconder Cllr Apicella. All in favour. It was duly resolved to have one attendee on Year-End procedure course on Tues 31 Jan 17 at a cost of £40+VAT (Attendee: Clerk).</p> <p>Proposal: Two attendees on Planning Course on 7 March 2017 at a cost of £40+VAT each (Proposed attendees: Chairman of Council and one councillor). Proposer Cllr Scorey, seconder Cllr Sullivan. All in favour. It was duly resolved to have two attendees on Planning Course on 7 March 2017 at a cost of £40+VAT each (Proposed attendees: Chairman of Council and one councillor).</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Recreation Grounds WP:</p> <p>A Recreation Grd WP meeting is scheduled for 23-1-16. Items arising from that meeting will be brought to full council, as required, on 13-2-16.</p> <p>8.1 Speen Rec Ground: (Cllr Apicella): wetpour works have been carried out. Soil has settled a bit and may need topping up.</p> <p>8.2 <u>Stockcross Rec Ground (Cllr Larkins):</u></p> <p><u>8.2.1</u> Recreation Ground Car Park extension update: this has been approved.</p> <p><u>8.2.2</u> Portacabin planning permission: currently going through planning process.</p> <p><u>8.2.3</u> Tennis Club lease: No progress. Cllr Larkins has emailed a contact and waiting for a response.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Stockcross Pavilion WP (Cllr Larkins) – no further action to date. Cllr Larkins to call a meeting.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>Environmental Maintenance WP (Cllr Larkins read out a report in absence of Cllr Tull):</p> <p>Cllr Tull reports that the litter-picking is not always being done thoroughly. Cllr Tull has reported this to the contractor and it is being addressed. B4000 from A34/A4 junction to Stockcross a problem, especially the new informal lay-by area. Cllr Mathers advised that Moor Lane still untidy and requiring attention.</p>	<p>Cllr Tull</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Governance WP (Cllr Mathers) – update. Meeting planned soon to review second draft of documentation prepared by Clerk. Intention to present to full council in February and</p>	



16.4 <u>Cherubs:</u> (Cllr Scorey) request for an article promoting Cherubs to be included in the Street Scene newsletter. Cllr Sullivan, Chair of Communications, approved this request. Deadline 31 st January.	Cllr Scorey	
16.5 <u>Capping of Precepts:</u> (Cllr Booth) If government is considering capping and is undergoing a consultation then we should be aware. This had been discussed at the last Parish Conference. Consultations are at a higher level than parishes.		
16.6 <u>Pothole & ownership of Stockcross Rec Grd entrance:</u> to be added to agenda and discussed at next Rec Grd meeting on 23-1-16.	Rec Grd WP	
17. Date of next meeting - provisional date 13 th February 2016 Cllrs Phillips proffered apologies for the next meeting.		
There being no further business to conduct, the meeting ended at 9:10pm		
Signed:	Name (print): Position:	Date:

Abbreviations used:

- F&GP WP = Finance & General Procedures Working Party
- SID = Speed Indicator Device
- SPC = Speen Parish Council
- SSDNAG = Speen, Shaw and Donnington Neighbourhood Action Group
- T&Cs = Terms & Conditions
- VAT = Value Added Tax
- WBDC = West Berkshire District Council
- WP = Working Party

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