



**SPEEN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HELD AT SPEEN PAVILION SPEEN RECREATION GROUND ON WEDNESDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2023 AT 7PM**

<b>Parish Councillors present</b>	Ian Wilson (Chair), Stuart Gourley (Vice Chair) Antony Amirtharaj, Keith Phillips, Clive Hunt, Sasikumar Sadagopan, Jeanette Clifford, Sam Slater, Alan Booth (from 8.50pm)
<b>In Attendance</b>	District Councillor Martha Vickers No Members of the Public
<b>Clerk/RFO</b>	Jean Lindsell

Resolution	Item	Action
Resolved	<p><b>1. Election of Chair</b></p> <p><b>Proposal:</b> To elect the Chair for the 2023-24 term and receive the Chair's signed Declaration of Acceptance of Office.</p> <p>Cllr Wilson was nominated as Chair.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Amirtharaj Secunder: Cllr Gourley All in Favour</p> <p>Cllr Wilson was duly elected Chair and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.</p>	
Resolved	<p><b>2. Apologies for Absence:</b> Cllr Philip</p> <p><b>3. Co-Option of New Councillors</b></p> <p><b>3.1 Proposal:</b> To co-opt new Councillor and new Councillors to sign Acceptance of Office and Register of Councillors' Interests</p> <p>The Clerk advised the applicant was unlikely to be able to attend the meeting and the item would be deferred to the next meeting.</p> <p><b>3.2 Proposal:</b> To co-opt new Councillor and new Councillors to sign Acceptance of Office and Register of Councillors' Interests</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Clifford Secunder: Cllr Hunt All in Favour</p> <p>Cllr Slater was duly co-opted to the Council and signed the Acceptance of Office and Register of Councillors' Interests.</p>	
Resolved	<p><b>4. Election of Vice Chair</b></p> <p><b>Proposal:</b> To elect the Vice Chair for the 2023-24 term and receive the Vice Chair's signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.</p> <p>Cllr Gourley was nominated as Vice Chair.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Wilson Secunder: Cllr Amirtharaj Abstention: All in Favour</p> <p>Cllr Gourley was duly elected Vice Chair for and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.</p>	
	<p><b>5. Declarations of Interests</b> – none declared</p>	

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Resolved	<p><b>6. Open Session – no Members of the Public present</b></p> <p><b>7. Minutes – to approve the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 22-03-23 (draft)</b></p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Gourley          Seconder: Cllr Amirtharaj          Abstention: 5          In Favour: 2</p>	
Resolved	<p><b>8. Finance Committee</b></p> <p><b>8.1 Proposal:</b> To consider and resolve upon membership of the Finance Committee for 2023-24</p> <p>Council unanimously resolved that the Finance Committee should continue to be formally constituted for 2023-24 with membership comprising Cllr Wilson, Cllr Gourley, Cllr Hunt, Cllr Clifford and Cllr Slater</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Wilson          Seconder: Cllr Hunt          All In Favour</p>	
Resolved	<p><b>8.2 Proposal:</b> To agree to a review of the Finance Committee's Terms of Reference to be carried out by the Committee and presented to Full Council for approval at the next meeting (subject to Item 8.1 decision)</p> <p>The Clerk recommended the Committee's Terms of Reference be reviewed and amended accordingly to include potential improvements to financial processes and procedures.</p> <p>All members of the Council agreed.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Gourley          Seconder: Cllr Amirtharaj          All In Favour:</p>	
Resolved	<p><b>9. Planning &amp; Highways Committee</b></p> <p><b>9.1 Minutes – to note Minutes of the Planning &amp; Highways Committee held on 29-03-23 (draft)</b></p> <p>The Minutes were duly noted by all members of the Council.</p> <p>Cllr Gourley thanked ex Cllr Dudman for all his work relating to comments submitted to WBC regarding the development at the Covered Reservoir and Land off Lambourn Road.</p> <p>Cllr Amirtharaj advised one of the current planning applications had already been called-in to the Western Area Planning Committee and he and Cllr Vickers had requested the other two applications also be called-in.</p> <p><b>9.2 Proposal:</b> To consider and resolve upon membership of the Planning &amp; Highways Committee for 2023-24</p> <p>Council unanimously resolved that the Planning &amp; Highways Committee should continue to be formally constituted for 2023-24 with membership comprising Cllr Wilson, Cllr Gourley, Cllr Hunt, Cllr Amirtharaj, Cllr Sadagopan and Cllr Philip (Cllr Philip previously advised the Clerk as she was unable to attend the meeting she was interested in joining the Committee).</p> <p>Cllr Gourley advised he would stand down from the Committee should any other Councillor wish to join.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Hunt          Seconder: Cllr Phillips          All in Favour</p> <p><b>9.3 Proposal:</b> To agree to a review of the Planning &amp; Highways Committee's Terms of</p>	

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Resolved	<p>Reference to be carried out by the Committee and presented to Full Council for approval at the next meeting (subject to Item 9.2 decision)</p> <p>The Clerk recommended the Planning &amp; Highways Committee Terms of Reference be reviewed to ensure it was up to date.</p> <p>All members of the Council agreed.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Phillips Secunder: Cllr Gourley All in Favour</p>	
Resolved	<p><b>10. Standing Orders &amp; Financial Regulations</b></p> <p><b>10.1 Proposal:</b> To adopt the Council's Standing Orders for the 2023-24 term (revisions to Section 18)</p> <p>Cllr Wilson requested clarification of "light touch" arrangements.</p> <p>The Clerk advised these arrangements allowed Parish Councils a more flexible approach to procurement for contracts in excess of £25,000 but less than the thresholds specified by the Office of Government Commerce rather than previously being required to advertise such contract opportunities on the Contracts Finder website.</p> <p>Cllr Hunt confirmed this approach speeded up the procurement process.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Hunt Secunder: Cllr Gourley All in Favour</p>	
Resolved	<p><b>10.2 Proposal:</b> To adopt the Council's Financial Regulations for the 2023-24 term (no revisions)</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Amirtharaj Secunder: Cllr Hunt All in Favour</p> <p><b>11. Review of members representation on or work with external bodies and any arrangements for reporting to Council</b></p> <p>None to review</p> <p><b>12. Register of Councillors' Interests</b> – to confirm that Councillors ROI forms are current and to advise Clerk if any updates are required</p> <p>All Councillors' ROI forms completed and up to date.</p> <p><b>13. Year End Accounts 2022/2023 (Clerk as RFO)</b></p> <p><b>13.1</b> To retrospectively note payments for March 2023</p> <p>All Councillors noted payments made.</p> <p><b>13.2 Proposal:</b> To approve Year End Accounts for 2022/23</p>	
Resolved	<p>Proposer: Cllr Hunt Secunder: Cllr Clifford All in Favour</p>	
Resolved	<p><b>14. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/2023</b></p> <p><b>14.1 Proposal:</b> To approve Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23 (detailed auditor's report and page 3)</p> <p>Cllr Clifford advised Control Objective I (Bank Reconciliations) had not been ticked by the Internal Auditor.</p> <p>Approval was unanimously agreed subject to the Internal Auditor correcting AGAR Page 3.</p>	



Resolved	<p>Proposer: Cllr Amirtharaj Seconder: Cllr Sadagopan All in Favour</p> <p>Clerk to request amended Annual Internal Audit Report (Page 3) from Internal Auditor.</p> <p><b>14.2 Proposal:</b> To approve Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 (page 4)</p>	Clerk
Resolved	<p>Proposer: Cllr Amirtharaj Seconder: Cllr Gourley All in Favour</p> <p>The Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 was duly signed by the Chair and Clerk/RFO.</p> <p><b>14.3 Proposal:</b> To approve Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 (page 5)</p>	
Resolved	<p>Proposer: Cllr Hunt Seconder: Cllr Sadagopan All in Favour</p> <p>The Accounting Statements 2022/23 was duly signed by the Chair.</p> <p><b>15. Financial Report</b></p> <p><b>15.1</b> The bank balance as at 30-04-23 was reported as £47,820.82</p> <p><b>15.2</b> To retrospectively note payments for April 2023 All Councillors duly noted payments made</p> <p><b>15.3 Proposal:</b> To accept Financial Reports to 30-04-23</p>	
Resolved	<p>Proposer: Cllr Clifford Seconder: Cllr Gourley All in Favour</p> <p><b>16. S137 Grants</b></p> <p>The Clerk advised the budget allocation for this round of grant applications was £1100 in accordance with the Council's Grant Aid Awarding Policy and any grant awarded would not be paid until July.</p>	
Resolved	<p><b>16.1 Proposal:</b> To consider approval of grant application from Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre for £608</p>	
Resolved	<p><b>16.2 Proposal:</b> To consider approval of grant application from Stockcross School PTFA for £500</p>	
Resolved	<p><b>16.3 Proposal:</b> To consider approval of grant application from Speen Community Café for 847.50 £300</p> <p>There was much discussion on the merits of each application and in particular the benefits to Speen Parish residents.</p> <p>It was agreed the budget allocation should be split across all applications and it was suggested Stockcross School PTFA be awarded the full amount of grant requested of £500 and the remaining £600 be split between the MS Therapy Centre and Speen Community Café.</p> <p>Cllr Slater felt a higher amount should be awarded to the MS Therapy Centre.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Clifford Seconder: Cllr Hunt Against: 1 In Favour: 7</p> <p>Clerk to advise applicants of grants awarded as follows:</p>	



	<p>Stockcross School PTFA - £500 Multiple Sclerosis Centre - £300 Speen Community Café - £300</p>	Clerk
Resolved	<p>The Chair agreed to take Item 3.1 previously deferred as the prospective new Councillor had joined the meeting.</p> <p><b>3.1 Proposal:</b> To co-opt new Councillor and new Councillors to sign Acceptance of Office and Register of Councillors' Interests</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Amirtharaj Seconder: Cllr Hunt All in Favour</p> <p>Cllr Booth was duly co-opted to the Council and signed the Acceptance of Office and Register of Councillors' Interests.</p> <p>Cllr Booth advised he would like to join the Planning &amp; Highways Committee.</p> <p>Cllr Gourley confirmed he was happy to stand down from the Committee.</p> <p>All members of the Council agreed Cllr Booth would replace Cllr Gourley on the Planning &amp; Highways Committee.</p>	
	<p><b>17. Development</b></p> <p><b>17.1 Parish Improvement Plan – update from 2022/23 WP</b></p> <p>Cllr Gourley advised the location for the community defibrillator still required further research with potential sites being the Starting Gate, Co-Op or Hare and Hounds.</p> <p>The Clerk advised an extension request for the Members' Bid awarded for the defibrillator had been submitted to WBC.</p> <p>Cllr Gourley added the WP would start looking at both short and longer term projects to include goal posts at Speen and Speen Pavilion upgrade.</p> <p>Cllr Vickers advised the next round of Members' Bids was open with a revised deadline of September and suggested the Council should look at submitting any applications as soon as possible.</p>	Improv WP
Resolved	<p><b>17.2 Proposal:</b> To consider and resolve membership of the Improvements Plan Working Party for 2023/24</p> <p>Council unanimously resolved that the Improvements Plan WP should continue for 2023-24 with membership comprising Cllr Gourley, Cllr Clifford, Cllr Hunt, Cllr Slater and Cllr Sadagopan.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Amirtharaj Seconder: Cllr Hunt All in Favour</p> <p><b>18. B4000 Pavement</b></p> <p>Cllr Phillips advised communication had been received from WBC (previously circulated to all Councillors) advising they were currently receiving input on the detailed design from Active Travel England and their own safety auditor and once this stage was completed updated plans would be sent to the Council. WBC had further advised this section of path would form the first stage of an intended improved link into the Newbury area network and a bid for further funding to enable detailed design of the next stage had been submitted.</p> <p><b>19. The Rising Sun Stockcross</b></p> <p>Cllr Phillips confirmed The Rising Sun had been sold to Chubb Grand Designs and the Asset of Community Value listing expired in August 2023. Cllr Phillips added Chubb Grand Designs were in the process of converting the Red House in The City</p>	



	<p>in Newbury into flats but he had been advised by the previous owner that the new owner intended to keep The Rising Sun as a pub.</p> <p>Cllr Amirtharaj asked if the current ACV listing could be extended.</p> <p>The Clerk advised an ACV listing could not be extended and a fresh nomination would need to be made for a new five year period.</p> <p><b>20. Stockcross Post Office Closure</b></p> <p>Cllr Vickers gave an update regarding the closure and advised the postmaster had resigned as the post office was not financially viable and Post Office Limited had withdrawn the premises for post office use.</p> <p>Cllr Amirtharaj advised the CEO of WBC had written to Post Office Limited expressing concern about the loss of these facilities for a rural community.</p> <p><b>21. Ordinary Full Council Meeting Dates 2023/24 and Annual Council Meeting Date 2024/25</b></p> <p>To agree Ordinary Full Council meeting dates for 2023/24</p> <p>All Councillors agreed to the proposed dates bi-monthly</p> <p>All Councillors agreed the date of the Annual Council Meeting for 2024/25 be set as Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024</p> <p><b>22. Matters for information only considered as urgent arising after the preparation of this Agenda which the Chair agrees to take</b></p> <p>The Clerk advised one of the bollards at the War Memorial in Speen had been damaged and the driver concerned had been in contact and accepted responsibility. The Clerk suggested CJM Services be asked for a quote and payment for the repairs be made by said party direct to the contractor.</p> <p>All Councillors agreed.</p> <p><b>23. Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2023</b></p>	
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<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Name (print):</b>  <b>Position:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
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