



SPEEN PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT SPEEN PAVILION, SPEEN RECREATION GROUND ON MONDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 7PM

Parish Councillors present	Charlotte Winton (Chair), Antony Amirtharaj, Shalini Philip, Sasikumar Sadagopan, Alex Taylor, Will Russell, Alison Joules, Amy Miles & Jaymie Pocock.
In Attendance	0 members of the public.
Clerk/RFO	Becki Hannington

Resolution	Item
	<p>1. Apologies for Absence: Cllr Gourley (Vice-Chair).</p> <p>2. Co-option of new councillors</p> <p>2.1 Proposal: To co-opt new councillors and for new councillors to sign Acceptance of Office and Register of Councillor's Interests.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Winton Seconder: Cllr Amirtharaj All in favour.</p> <p>Cllr Taylor, Cllr Russell, Cllr Joules, Cllr Miles and Cllr Pocock were duly co-opted and signed the Acceptance of Office and Register of Councillor's Interests.</p> <p>3. Declarations of Interests – None declared.</p> <p>4. Open Session - No members of the public in attendance.</p> <p>5. Minutes</p> <p>Proposal: to approve the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 22-05-234 (draft).</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Philip Seconder: Cllr Winton In Favour. 3 Abstention: 6</p> <p>6. Finance and HR Committee</p> <p>6.1 Minutes – To note the minutes of the Finance and HR Committee meeting held on 07/08/2024</p> <p>The minutes were duly noted by all members of the council.</p> <p>7. Planning and Highways Committee</p> <p>7.1 Minutes – To note the minutes of the Planning & Highways Committee meeting held on 09/09/2024.</p> <p>The minutes were duly noted by all members of the council.</p> <p>Cllr Amirtharaj advised he has called in planning applications for Land Rear of Shepherds Farm (24/01677/FULMAJ) and The Old Laundry, Stockcross (24/01524/FULMAJ) to go before the committee.</p> <p>7.2 Proposal: To approve the draft ToR's for the Planning and Highways Committee as per their recommendation.</p>



Proposer: Cllr Winton
Seconder: Cllr Sadagopan
All in favour.

8. Financial Report Clerk as RFO

8.1 **Bank Balance** - The clerk reported the bank balance as of 31/08/2024 as £44, 488.50.

The bank balance was duly noted by all members of the council.

8.2 **Payments** – To retrospectively note payments for May, June and July 2024.

All payments were duly noted by all members of the council.

8.3 **Proposal:** To accept the finance reports to 31/05/2024

Proposer: Cllr Winton
Seconder: Cllr Philip
All in favour

8.4 **Proposal:** To accept the finance reports to 30/06/2024

Proposer: Cllr Winton
Seconder: Cllr Amirtharaj
All in favour.

8.5 **Proposal:** To accept the finance reports to 31/07/2024

Proposer: Cllr Winton
Seconder: Cllr Amirtharaj
All in favour

8.6 **Proposal:** To accept the Budget v Actual Report (Q1)

Proposer: Cllr Amirtharaj
Seconder: Cllr Philip
All in favour

9. External Audit Conclusion

The Clerk reported that the external audit has been concluded with no issues raised or recommendations made. This was duly noted by all Cllrs.

10. Proposal: Not to join the Rural Village Services Group at a subscription cost of £50 + VAT per annum.

Proposer: Cllr Winton
Seconder: Cllr Miles
In favour.

Cllrs felt that there was no benefit to SPC of joining the Rural Village Services Group as we already have many subscriptions in place (NALC, BALC, SLCC) where support is offered in these areas and best practises shared.

11. Speen Pavilion – Key Safe/Additional Keys for Councillors.

The issue of access to Speen Pavilion was discussed and whether or not it would be a good idea to install a key safe with all councillors having access to this so should a situation arise where a key holder is not present the building can still be accessed. There were some concerns around the security of this.

The Clerk also suggested that another option was to have additional keys cut for the main door and then issued to some or all of the other councillors. This would be managed with a key register held by the clerk and would ensure that all keys are returned to the clerk should councillors resign.

It was decided that a Keysafe would be the best option if the code is kept secure and the access code changed each time a Cllr resigns. It was decided to seek a Keysafe which scrambles the code automatically after being used.

Clerk to source new Keysafe (as recommended by Cllr Miles) and Cllr Russell would install this to the Pavilion building once purchased.

Proposal: To purchase and install new keysafe with keys for the main door to The Pavilion building.

Proposer: Cllr Miles
Secunder: Cllr Sadagopan
In favour.

12. Proposal: To support the WBC motion of banning pets as prizes across the district

Proposer: Cllr Pocock
Secunder: Cllr Joules
All in favour

All Cllr's were in support of this motion from WBC.

Clerk to send letter to WBC confirming SPC supports this motion.

Clerk to include line in Terms of Hire Agreement stating this to anyone hiring SPC land.

13. Proposal: To approve the changes to the cost of hire of Speen Pavilion to £10 per hour for parishioners and £15 per hour for non-residents and change the payment terms to payment being due upon receipt of invoice when booking to secure the hire. Also to revise cancellations terms to any bookings able to be cancelled without charge as long as 14 days' notice or more is given. Any bookings cancelled with less than 14 days' notice will be liable for the total hire cost and not refund will be given. To be effective for all future bookings going forwards as per the Finance and HR Committee's recommendation, to include an additional rate for commercial hire of £30 per hour (subject to minimum 2 hour booking).

Proposer: Cllr Philip
Secunder: Cllr Sadagopan
In favour.

Cllrs held a discussion around the advertising of the hire of the Pavilion Building. Clerk advised this is now advertised on SPC website but not elsewhere.

Cllr Taylor advised that WBC send out a directory of local services regularly and it would be a good opportunity to see if venue hire is included within this and if so, SPC can advertise the space for hire there. Clerk to review WBC Directory to see if Venue Hire is included and get Speen Pavilion advertised in the directory if so.

Cllr Taylor also stated that it would be a good idea to advertise that The Pavilion is available for hire on the pavilion building itself. Clerk to design and publish poster on the pavilion building advertising that it is available for hire.

Cllr's also discussed the possibilities of advertising across social media platforms. The Clerk advised that once the Social Media Policy has been reviewed and approved by the council that she would begin reactivating the SPC Facebook page and getting this back into use.

14. Proposal: To approve the setup of a monthly direct debit of £58.80 (£49 + VAT) for the ongoing monthly fees of the Scribe Accounting system.

Proposer: Cllr Winton
Secunder: Cllr Amirtharaj
All in favour.

The Direct Debit mandate was duly signed by bank signatories Cllr Winton, Cllr Amirtharaj and the Clerk. Clerk to proceed with setup of Direct Debit for these payments.

- 15. Proposal:** To house a clothes recycling system at Speen Pavilion on behalf of the Air Ambulance Service on the 6-week trial and assuming no issues it will continue after this period.

Proposer: Cllr Russell
Seconder: Cllr Joules
All in favour

Cllr's felt this proposal is a great way to reduce the carbon footprint in the local area as this service can be accessed on foot by local residents without the need to drive there. There were some concerns over the access arrangements of emptying the bins due to the height restriction barrier on the carpark. Clerk to check access arrangements with TVAA to see if emptying can be done with height restriction bar of the council will need to arrange access each time the bin is emptied.

There were some concerns over the emptying of the recycling bin and if this was to overflow in between visits for emptying. Cllr Pocock advised that she is a regular visitor to Speen Recreation Ground and will notify Clerk if the bins are overflowing and Clerk can report to TVAA to be emptied.

Clerk to provide all Cllr's with access code to height restriction barrier at Speen Recreation Ground so all Cllr's can allow access should the bin when it needs to be emptied.

Cllr's felt this was a good scheme to share with the local community. Clerk to look into advertising in the NWN and with Speen Community Café.

- 16. Proposal:** To support the Safety of Lithium-ion Batteries and e-bikes and scooters campaign from UK Parliament

Proposer: Cllr Winton
Seconder: Cllr Taylor
All in favour

Cllr's voted unanimously to support this campaign.

Clerk to email and advise of SPC's support.

- 17. Proposal:** To Sign the Civility and Respect Pledge for councils in association with SLCC, NALC, OVW County Associations.

Proposer: Cllr Winton
Seconder: Cllr Miles
All in favour

All Cllr's felt this was a campaign that all councils should be backing to encourage civility and Respect within local councils and coted unanimously to sign the pledge,

- 18. Proposal:** To approve the adding of photographs to the website for all councillors and officers.

Proposer: Cllr Pocock
Seconder: Cllr Amirtharaj
All in favour

Clerk advised that professional photographs do not need to be taken and all Cllr's agreed that existing photographs could be used on the website, so long as these were professional. All Cllr's agreed that including photographs on the website was necessary.

All Cllrs to send photographs through to the Clerk by the end of the month to be uploaded to the website.

19. Members Bids - To discuss and put forwards any projects to be included in the next round of Members Bids on 1st November

Cllr Amirtharaj gave an overview of the next rounds of Members Bids and it was discussed that there were no current projects but it was a good idea to show that we are working on projects and to be bidding for funding.

The project regarding the development of the pavilion building to make it a more inclusive community space was discussed and it is still undecided if it would be best to knock down and rebuild the space, or extend or refurbish the site. It was decided that this project warrants a much deeper discussion and can only work towards finding once detailed plans and costs had been obtained. It was decided that during the next full council meeting SPC would look to set up a Working Party group to begin making progress on this project.

Cllr Russell proposed the possibility of installing a running track, a track or fruit trees in the recreation ground at Speen to make use of the vast open space there.

Cllr Amirtharaj suggested a gazebo type space (covered area out of the rain), for use by teenagers, encouraging them to use the space, or something which is more appealing to this age range. Cllr Taylor stated that there was no equipment at Speen Recreation Ground which is appealing to children over the age of 10 years old and having an option to encourage older children to use that space, such as a sheltered gazebo would be a positive project. All Cllr's agreed that this would be the best project to look into at this point in time.

Clerk to begin looking into options for gazebo type structure at Speen Recreation Ground and obtaining quotes for the works. Cllrs all asked to submit any suggestions of equipment to Clerk via email. Clerk will then cost relevant options and email details out to Cllr's for their decision in order to get the application into WBC by the 1st of November deadline.

20. Street Names, Covered Reservoir Development - To discuss and put forward and suggestions for street names in the new Covered Reservoir development to WBC.

Clerk advised that the Clerk at Shaw-Cum-Donnington PC advised that their Cllrs there enjoy coming up with street names and that one of their Cllrs is a local historian who would be happy to help coming up with some appropriate names from SPC to suggest to WBC. Cllrs decided that this would be a good resource to use and would like the clerk to reach out for support with this. Cllrs all agreed that it would be nice to use some names that included some more recent history from within the parish.

21. Spear Thistle, Stockcross – Update from Clerk

The Clerk advised that the issue with Spear Thistle into the neighbouring properties from the fields owned by The Vineyard was still ongoing and had not been resolved adequately. Clerk has written to the owner and General Manager there to ask them to remind them that they have a legal obligation to resolve the issue and ask them to confirm to us how this will be done. Clerk to update Cllr's of any further developments on this subject.

22. Matters for consideration and information arising after the preparation of this Agenda, which the Chairman agrees to take as urgent.

Clerk advised that Kerry @ Speen Community Café has requested for a Cllr to attend on a Weds from 2-4pm to meet with the local community either on a regular or ad hoc basis.

All Cllr's felt that this would be a good opportunity to engage with the local community and seek new Cllrs for the two remaining vacancies at SPC.

Cllr Amirtharaj and Cllr Winton are both keen to attend and meet with the service users there and



would reach out to Kerry at SPC to make arrangements. Cllr Miles also advised that she would be able to attend every Wednesday. Clerk to email Kerry at Speen Community Café and advise of this and provide contact email addresses for those Cllrs able to attend.

23. Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 13th November 2024.

Cllr Winton (Chair) closed the meeting at 20:56

Signed:	Name (print): Position:	Date:
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Page approved by (initials) & date:
