

# Marston Sicca Parish Council

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## **Draft Minutes of Ordinary Parish Council meeting held Long Marston Village Hall 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025, 7.30pm**

Members Present: Cllr. Ian Johnsey (Chair), Cllr. Bill Tempest, Cllr. Noel Davis, Cllr. Steve Barker, Cllr. Cliff Brown, Cllr. Colin Parrott

Clerk: Debbie Woodliffe

District Councillor: Stuart Keighley (advised he would be arriving late)

Also present: three members of the public

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies received from Cllr. Whittaker

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

2.1 Cllr Barker and Cllr. Parrott declared a non-pecuniary interest in Marston Meadow

2.2 Cllr. Brown advised as he is a trustee he declared a non-pecuniary interest in Meon Vale Pavilion

### **3 Public Open Session**

3.1 Member of the public mentioned the trees planted in Marston Meadow and that some needed replacing.

3.2 the bollard to private drive in Barley Fields is hard to see and due to its position, can easily be hit. The PC were asked if they would consider using a fluorescent paint on the bollard.

3.3. Resident of Meon Vale advised members that some trees to the playing field (adjacent to the allotments) have been vandalized.

3.4 Resident of MV and members of the Residents Assoc. reminded councillors of RA Annual Meeting to be held on March 31<sup>st</sup>. The Parish Council have been invited to attend and will take the opportunity to inform residents of MV asset transfer.

Council members were informed about the communication gaps between St Modwen and the residents concerning updates on new building phases, progress, and general information.

### **4. Minutes of the previous meeting**

Council members considered Minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025 to be an accurate account of the meeting. Minutes were subsequently approved and signed.

### **5. District & County Councillor Report**

5.1 Cllr. Keighley updated council members on proposals for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), and the decision to scrap the two-tier system of County and District Councils replacing them with a single Unitary Authority. There are already numerous Unitary Authorities in England and there are 21 County Councils and 164 District Councils in scope for reorganisation.

The pressure is on to meet the initial interim plan deadline by the **21st of March** and this plan will come before both Cabinet and Council on 17th March.

The interim plan sets out some of the background to the Warwickshire County and the context of the 5 Boroughs and Districts as well as Local Authorities surrounding it. This is important to frame the options for the participation in a Strategic Authority with a population of c. 1.5M.

There are two options emerging for the Unitary Authorities.

**A single Unitary Council** for the whole of Warwickshire with a population of c. 617000.

**Two Unitary Councils**, one comprising North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth and Rugby (population 324000) and another comprising Stratford on Avon and Warwick (population 295000).

Whilst all Councils now recognise that these are the only two options, they also recognise that views differ on whether both options meet the full range of the Government's criteria.

A formal submission is required by 28th November 2025. The cost of this is estimated at £150K to £250K which will be shared between the 5 Boroughs and Districts.

It seems most likely that the earliest the LGR will be implemented in Warwickshire is **April 2028** and with shadow elections for the new Authority being held in May 2027. The current number of elected Members is 257 which would significantly reduce in a Unitary system to 114 Members, initially based on County Divisions. This would be a transitional situation as boundary reviews would be required to even out the emerging discrepancies due to new building and population growth.

## **6. Chairmans Comments**

6.1 The Chairman discussed the transfer of assets to the parish council with the aim of providing further support for our diverse community. Our budget process and long-term strategy will be systematically monitored to ensure we remain proactive and aligned with our goals.

## **7. Clerks report on outstanding matters**

7.1. Members were informed the transfer of assets within Meon Vale are imminent and should be concluded end March. The asset register will then be updated. This will also detail the resolution passed by parish council members, to transfer to the Pavilion Charity, the assets procured for the community centre.,

7.2 With the bus shelter now completed, the clerk reminded members that a letter had been sent to both Pebworth and Quinton PC's to ask for a contribution towards the costs. Pebworth confirmed the matter has been placed on their April agenda. Clerk also confirmed two bins have been requested for Meon Vale, the first to be on the playing field for dog waste and the other to be by the bus shelter.

7.3 WCC confirmed they will grant permission for PC to place information on the notice board structure along the greenway/Station Road. Clerk to organise the content for PC perusal

7.4 Hall Reynolds will send draft lease for Charity (use of the Pavilion) based on 6-year term.

7.5 The Clerk will identify dates for the PC bi-weekly pop session (Meon Vale VH), on the website and social media.

## **8. Asset Management Committee**

8.1 Members agreed to meet bi-monthly on the preceding week to the ordinary parish council meeting.

8.2 The council resolved to hire a window cleaner for Meon Vale village hall at £35 per month for external doors and windows.

8.3. Full council had previously resolved to appoint a cleaner for MV village hall. The invoice has been reviewed and incorporated into the financial accounts for authorization.

Members were informed of the costs associated with Biffa waste collection for MV VH. The members resolved to cap the expenses at £52 per month, based on Biffa's pricing. However, they decided to defer the final agreement until a cost comparison from Grundons was received. Clerk to check

### **9. Events and Dates**

9.1. members resolved to post 6<sup>th</sup> April as litter picking day for Long Marston Village. Clerk to ensure it is published on the website

9.2 Members were advised of plans for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Green Day event (themed Sustainable Living), was progressing well with all costs within budget.

9.3 Members resolved to consider dates for the Annual Meeting of the Parish once the organisations have been contacted. Clerk to send date options prior to next PC meeting.

### **10. Finance**

10.1 Members received bank reconciliation and budget plan and approved items for payment.

10.2 Members agreed with RFO request to move funds from savings account into current account to improve liquidity pending payments for the bus shelter and footpath.

10.3 Clerk/RFO advised members the updated asset register would include the assets to Meon Vale once transferred and will be circulated prior to next PC meeting

10.4 Members reviewed the budget plan.

10.4.1 Members had resolved to have the AMC administer the budget for ear marked expenditure on transferred assets and future phases to Marston Meadow.

10.4.2 Members received the budget plan in preparation for EOY accounts

10.5 The Clerk/RFO had circulated details of CCLA as part of continual investment review. Clerk/RFO to investigate further and advise members prior to next PC meeting.

10.6 The Clerk requested agreement to renew membership of SLCC @ £190. Members agreed.

### **11.Planning Matters**

11.1 24/02102/FUL, Permission granted with conditions

11.2 25/00234/FUL, Porterbrook, LM Rail Innovation Centre, new underpass under internal rail track and associated works. Decision: No Objection.

### **12. Training**

12.1 Members approved SLCC training session for the Clerk

### **13. Councillor Reports**

13.1 Cllr. Barker confirmed the phase 1 of the footpath in Marston Meadow has been completed.

13.2 Cllr. Barker advised that he had attended the speed training session which included practical use of the PC's Ultralight Speed Gun. For the gun to be used effectively, it must be able to read the number plate clearly to record the speed. Unfortunately, the gun had repeated error messages resulting in approx. 65% success rate. The instructors gun however, worked correctly and as the existing PC gun was old and ineffective, Cllr. Barker proposed the purchase of a new gun (£140 cap), the proposal was seconded by Cllr. Tempest, it was resolved to procure a new speed gun to assist the volunteer speed calming group.

13.2 Members discussed securing funding for second phase of Marston Meadow footpath, Cllr Johnsey mentioned inaccessible area to the site.

13.3 Cllr. Brown mentioned a problem to lights in MV Village Hall. Cllr. Barker to send the Clerk details of lighting strips.

#### **14. Grants**

14.1 Long Marston Village Hall committee had requested a grant contribution towards the repairs for the village hall roof. The projected costs amount to £30k, with a request for a £10k grant. Members understood the importance of the village hall and whilst prepared to offer support, queried whether the usual share in funds secured from the village fete would continue to be shared with the church. Members suggested altering the practice of sharing the funds for one year, permitting all generated monies to be allocated to the roof. Members suggested that VH reserves could help cover the gap between grant funds and the total cost. The Clerk/RFO pointed out there had been no provision of £10k made in the 2024/25 budget, but it may be possible to meet the request provided it were paid after receipt of the second tranche in precept payment. It was resolved that the Clerk would respond to the grant application, confirming agreement but identifying the points made regarding the fete funds and reserves and also, on the proviso that the village hall committee contributes at least £5k.

14.2 The Pavilion Charity had requested a grant to procure kitchen equipment for the community centre. The existing items had originally been donated and were no longer functional. It was resolved to agree to the grant application of £900 (normal receipts to be provided).

#### **15. Correspondence**

The Clerk had sent parish council members details of the Declaration of Interests form and reminded members to update the forms if necessary.

#### **16. Meeting Dates**

April 2025 (date to be confirmed as normal third Monday would be Easter Monday).

Meeting closed 9.37pm

Debbie Woodliffe  
Clerk/RFO