

# Marston Sicca Parish Council

*Serving Long Marston, Meon Vale & Shackleton*

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## **Draft Minutes of Ordinary Parish Council meeting held at Long Marston Village Hall 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2026 7.30pm**

Members Present: Cllr. Ian Johnsey (Chair), Cllr. Noel Davis (Vice Chair), Cllr. Bill Tempest, Cllr. Steve Barker, Tom Jackson

Clerk: Debbie Woodliffe

Also present: 4 members of the public

### **1. Apologies**

Apology received from County Councillor Cliff Brown, District Councillor Stuart Keighley and Cllr. Colin Parrott.

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

Cllr. Barker and Cllr. Johnsey noted a non-pecuniary interest in Marston Meadow, and Tom Jackson noted a non-pecuniary interest in Tudor Grange.

### **3 Public Open Session**

3.1 A member of the public residing in Meon Vale had previously expressed an interest in becoming a parish councillor and had met with the clerk to discuss the role more fully. Having considered all the relevant information provided, he confirmed his willingness to join the parish council.

3.2 Council members were advised that SDC had confirmed the costs and maintenance of the Meon Vale wetlands would come under the control of the management company. Council members asked the clerk to investigate.

3.3 A member of the public mentioned the Long Marston fete is being discussed – it's organisation and location. More information will be provided in due course.

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

Resolved: the minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026, were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

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

5.1 County Councillor Cliff Brown sent his apologies for absence; the Chair read out a brief report he had provided.

5.2 District Councillor Stuart Keighley sent his apologies for absence but also provided a concise report which included comments on the SWLP.

### **6. Chairmans Comments.**

The Chair outlined several challenges currently facing the parish council, in particular the growing scope of responsibilities placed on both councillors and staff. A wide range of projects across the parish—together with ongoing work on traffic, planning, climate change, and community events—continues to be delivered through collective governance and the support of the Asset Management Committee.

During the current financial year, the Parish Council has awarded various grants to help progress key community initiatives. However, securing the council's own application to the Community Grant Scheme will be essential in enabling further or enhanced community projects through 2026.

### **7. Clerks verbal report on ongoing matters**

7.1 The clerk confirmed the delays in getting the agreement finalised with Preim was due to their procedure for setting up a bank account specifically relating to Marston Sicca as a customer. The account now appears to be open, and confirmation of insurance cover has been included in the documentation.

7.2 The utilities issue with Bryt and Meon Vale VH is ongoing. They have apologised for the issues relating to invoices and the difficulties we are facing when trying to switch to Octopus. A Team's discussion has been organised with the area manager for Bryt to fix the meter and enable access to Electrolink.

7.3 The Village Hall Committee were advised that SDC had queried the charitable status for the hall. A member of the committee confirmed they have been working with Chris Freeman and were close to submitting the application.

7.4 The Clerk confirmed two funding applications had been submitted to SDC (Community Grant Scheme) with all supporting documentation. A follow up email has also been sent to Porterbrook. The results of funding applications should be available in April.

7.5 Payroll have been informed of the clerk's assistants' role and all formalities are being actioned.

7.6 Upgrade Microsoft 365. Resolved: Defer decision

7.7 Following the inspection of Meon Vale village hall after a recent AMC meeting, a detailed cleaning schedule has been sent to the cleaner. The situation will be monitored.

7.8 Members were informed all activities relating to the Green Day event – starting at Meon Vale VH on June 6<sup>th</sup> are being finalised. All participants including Net Zero (Stratford on Avon) are participating in the agenda and will produce a flyer as soon as possible.

### **8. Finance**

8.1 Council members received the bank reconciliation and itemised payments for approval in advance of the meeting (detailed on the agenda).

Resolved: Payments were approved.

8.2 Council Members were asked to approve the appointment of the internal auditor.

Resolved: approved.

8.3 Council members reviewed the 2026/27 budget plan:

8.3.1 Ear -marked reserves, general reserves and the consolidation of Marston Meadow within earmarked expenditure for open space.

Resolved: publish the budget plan to include Band D tax comparison 2025/26 vs. 2026/27

8.3.2 Members also considered the 2025/26 budget plan with specific scrutiny on the higher than budgeted expenditure for Grants, this was largely due to the extraordinary financial support for Long Marston village hall's roof repairs.

8.3.3 Members approved in the budget plan the carried forward, reserved expenditure for Meon Vale assets (Preim).

8.3.4 A council member proposed a review of the newsletter and whether it remained good value for money.

Resolved: To place on the next agenda to allow for a more detailed discussion.

8.4 Clerk provided further updated trading figures pertaining to Meon Vale village hall bookings with anticipated EOY results to surpass budgeted income.

## 9. Planning Matters

9.1 26/00163/FUL – Parcel A, Land West of Bailey Avenue, Meon Vale. Full planning application for the erection of 37 dwellings on land overlooking Tudor Grange Academy

<https://apps.stratford.gov.uk/eplanningv2/AppDetail/Index/15530777-a37f-c51d-b101-08de63061e77?route=/Home>

Resolved: Object.

9.2 26/00164/FUL – Parcel B, Land West of Bailey Avenue, Meon Vale. Full planning application for the erection of 20 dwellings (use class C3) and supporting infrastructure on existing car park used for multi-purpose all-weather pitches.

<https://apps.stratford.gov.uk/eplanningv2/AppDetail/Index/cc40966b-873d-c50f-34d1-08de5ff02510?route=/Home>

Resolved: Object

9.3 Cllr. Tempest also informed council members on the outcome of a recent meeting held with Cala, (Cllr. Jackson also in attendance). The meeting was arranged to discuss all outstanding matters and residents' concerns regarding the Shackleton site. Agreed points were discussed including the opening of the play area. Minutes of the meeting will be circulated in due course.

## 10. Insurance

10.1 The Clerk informed members that because of the increasing insurance premiums due to the acquisition of assets, a dedicated account manager had been allocated to Marston Sicca PC. To discuss the pre renewal questionnaire and look to secure a reduction in price by consolidating the cover, a meeting has been arranged with the insurance account manager. Details to be sent ASAP

## 11. Parish Council Administration

Members felt the use of the management office within Meon Vale Hall would be a useful space for the parish council enabling the Clerk and Assistant Clerk to have access to documents and share information. Members did not feel the space was appropriate to be used as a formal office but would reconsider the proposal later in the year.

## 12. Councillor Reports

12.1 Cllr Jackson advised members the first Shackleton Residents Association meeting held in Meon Vale Village Hall was a success with 60 residents in attendance. To get the process underway, a steering committee has been created. Council members agreed this was an impressive first step in getting the association organised.

12.2 Members were also advised a request to post Neighbourhood Watch signs in the area has been submitted to Cala.

## 13. Correspondence

13.1 Cllr Barker discussed the extensive Barley Field play area maintenance report, and the range of comments included. Resolved: To extract all comments from the report to produce a work schedule, categorising items requiring simple monitoring, identifying potential short-term actions, and highlighting any immediate priority remedial work. Clerk to action.

13.2 Residents reported ongoing issues with dog mess on the Meon Vale playing field, which could affect the community's willingness or ability to use the site for sport.

Resolved: Organise another dog bin for the site and a potential information sign.

-4-/March 2026

**14. Next Meeting**

7.30pm Meon Vale Village Hall

Meeting closed 9.17pm

Debbie Woodliffe

Parish Clerk