

SPARSHOLT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Memorial Hall on Thursday 18 May 2023 7.30pm

Cllr Sue Wood (Chairman)	P
Cllr John Little (Vice-Chairman)	P
Cllr John Cooper	P
Cllr Andrew Osmond	
Cllr Nigel Reid	P
Cllr Lynne Gibson	P
Cllr David Brown	P
Cllr M Himbury	P
Cllr J Walthoe	P

P = present at the meeting

In attendance Cllr Horrill, Nicky Breen (Clerk), 3 members of the public for 23/34-05

- 23/24 – 01 Election of Chair and Vice Chair**
Sue Wood was elected as Chair as proposed by Cllr Brown and unanimously seconded, and completed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.
John Little was elected as Vice Chair as proposed by Cllr Cooper and unanimously seconded.
- 23/24 – 02 Apologies:** To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence
Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Osmond, Cllr Warwick
- 23/24 – 03 All councillors to sign new Declarations of Pecuniary Interest (DPI's) and other significant interests (OSI's)** and to receive interests from members concerning specific items on the agenda
Councillors present completed Register of Interest Forms.
No interests were declared relating to the meeting. **Action: Clerk**
- 23/24 – 04 Minutes of Meeting of 20 April 2023**
- **To approve and sign the minutes**
The minutes had previously been circulated and were approved and signed by the Chair.
 - **To deal with any matters arising not on the agenda**
There were no matters arising.
- 23/24 – 05 Public Participation**
At the chair's request this item was moved to the last item on the agenda.
Tim Jackson is a trustee of WinACC and a Littleton and Harestock Parish councillor. He gave a brief outline as to why WinACC are in support of the proposed South Lynch Solar Farm, planning application 23/01025/FUL.
Councillors noted that the overall size of the site has been reduced however the proposed location is at the top of undulating landscape and clearly visible from many viewpoints. Councillors questioned the land categorisation and whether there might be more suitable sites further along the pylons. The parish council is in favour of solar farms providing that they are in a suitable location, an example being the solar farm at Three Maids Hill which is adjacent to a main road. The proposed South Lynch solar farm is located very close to a SSSI site at Crab Wood and along a beautiful country lane. After consideration the parish council agreed to object to the Solar Farm and that Cllr Wood would draft and submit the response based on the reasons raised by councillors during the discussion.
- 23/24 – 06 County and City Councillor's Report**
Apologies had been received from Councillors Warwick whose report was circulated prior to the meeting with no questions arising.
Cllr Horrill outlined her report.
- 23/24 – 07 Portfolio Reports**
The Portfolio reports had been circulated prior to the meeting and are attached.
- Highways
 - Footpaths and Open Spaces and Climate Change
Since the report the footpath foliage has been cut back.
 - Playground
See attached report. The WCC annual inspection report has been received (inspection date 6 March) as well as the quarterly Vita play inspection (inspection date 3 May). Vitaplay identified a high risk item – the basketball post is loose in the ground. The clerk is to get quotes for a new post. A loose bolt on the agility trail was identified as medium risk.
Cllr Brown has noticed that the basketball post is rotting at the base – this is not helped by strimmer damage. The basketball hoop and the goal posts are rusting. He has also noticed graffiti on the board. **Action: Clerk**
 - Sparsholt Memorial Hall
 - See attached report.
 - Sparsholt School

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- No update.
- Sparsholt Shop
- See attached report.
- Communication
See attached report.
- Security
No update.
- Transport
No update.

23/24 – 08 Agree Councillor Portfolio Responsibilities

Portfolio	Councillor
Highways	Cllr Wood
Footpaths & Open Spaces and Climate Change	Cllr Cooper
Memorial Hall	Cllr Himbury
Playground	Cllr Brown
Police/Neighbourhood Watch Liaison	Cllr Osmond
Sparsholt School	City Cllr Horrill
Sparsholt Shop	Cllr Reid
Transport	Cllr Wood
Communication	Cllr Little

Cllr Osmond was unable to attend the meeting but had indicated to the Chair that he was willing to carry on with his existing portfolio as above. **Action: Clerk**

23/24 – 09 Agree Sub-committee membership

- Planning
Cllrs Wood, Little and Reid remain on this sub-committee.
- Finance and Governance
Cllrs Wood, Little and Cooper remain on this sub-committee.
- Climate Change
Cllrs Cooper, Brown and Gibson remain on this sub-committee.

23/24 – 10 Affordable Housing Update/Parking Consultation

There is to be an onsite meeting to review the car parking plans for Woodman Close. The date is not yet known.

23/24 - 11 Local Plan

No update.

23/24 – 12 Planning

- To review and comment on planning applications

New Applications

28/03/2023	23/00811/HOU	Westbury Westview Road Sparsholt	New bifold doors, window, flat roof and rooflights to existing rear extension	Current
<i>Sparsholt Parish Council supports this application</i>				
12/04/2023	23/00908/DIC	Church Farm Woodman Lane	20/01274/FUL - Discharge of condition 3 (materials) and 4 (landscaping)	Current

Current Applications

11/04/2023	23/00903/TPC	Locks Lane House Sparsholt	T1 - Reduce 1 side of Horse Chestnut to match height of damaged side. T2 & T3 - Reduce height by approx 4 - 6m and balance shape.	Current
06/03/2023	23/00613/HOU	Garston Westley Sparsholt Winchester House Lane	Extension to ground floor kitchen to rationalise kitchen and dining space. Bay window extension and conversion of existing carport into usable games room. Replacement of Drawing Room window set with windows and double doors to garden.	Current
Since publication of the agenda this application has been permitted				
29/1/2021	21/02640/FUL	13 & 14 Woodman Close Sparsholt	Erection of additional residential accommodation on land to the rear of no.13 & 14 Woodman Close consisting of 2no. detached 2 Bedroom Bungalows & 3no. 1 bedroom terraced houses	Current

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12/11/2020	20/02491/LDC	Greenacre Caravan Park Stockbridge Road	Caravan Site	Current
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Recent decisions

31/03/2023	23/00855/DIC	Watley Granary Locks Lane Sparsholt	(19/02366/FUL) Discharge of conditions: 4a: Water efficiency calculation 4b: Vesting certificate relating to required nitrate offset payment	Permitted
17/03/2023	23/00708/TPC	Taylor's Mead Woodman Lane Sparsholt	T1 Beech - Reduction on the SE and SW aspect of the lower limbs by approximately 3m to a suitable growth point; to lessen weight and exposure Reduction of larger limb travelling over Home Lane by approximately 3m to a suitable growth point; to lessen weight and exposure	Permitted
27/01/2023	23/00195/FUL	Church Farm Woodman Lane	Elevation detail of Office accommodation (as previously approved via Class R)	Permitted

- To note any enforcement matters

23/24 – 13

Finance Recommendations as set out in the Finance Subcommittee report

a. 2022/23 Year End Audit

- Report of the Internal Auditor
The Internal Audit was completed by John Murray on 27 April with no matters arising.
- Appointment of Internal Auditor for 2023/24
It was unanimously agreed to appoint John Murray as Internal Auditor for the current financial year.
- Approval of annual governance statement 2022/23
Statements 1-8 (statement 9 n/a) in Section 1 were considered and the answers unanimously approved for signature by the Chair and the Clerk.
- Approval of accounting statements 2022/23
Section 2 boxes 1-10 (box 11 n/a) were presented to the Parish Council by the RFO and unanimously approved and signed by the Chair.

b. Reserves recommendation

At the end of 22/23 General reserves stood at about £23,000. The finance committee proposed that £12000 of this is reallocated to other reserves as follows: £1000 to Legal and Planning costs, £1000 to Election costs and £10000 to the Playground, as set out below.

SUMMARY OF RESERVES AND HELD FUNDS		
RESERVES		
General Reserve		£ 11,026.48
Legal and Planning Costs		£ 6,000.00
Election Costs		£ 6,000.00
Street Furniture and Play Equipment		£ 11,055.00
Community Projects		£ 2,244.00
Total RESERVES		£ 36,325.48
HELD FUNDS		
Ham Green		£ 4,427.06
Defibrillator		£ 258.86
Total HELD FUNDS		£ 4,685.92
TOTAL RESERVES AND HELD FUNDS		£ 41,011.40

Areas for possible expenditure:

- The playground report identified areas in need of repair and replacement.

Councillors approved the reallocation of £12000 from General reserves to other reserves as set out above.

c. Budget/Actual report for 2023/2024

The summary in the finance report was noted.

d. Accounts update for May 2023

Payments to approve

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Date	Ref	Payee	Description	Type	Amount
25/04/2023	PV01	Village Shop Committee	Coronation Grant	Grant	£500.00
25/04/2023	PV02	HALC	Affiliation Fee and NALC Levy 23/24	HALC	£321.67
02/05/2023	PV03	WCC	Card Printing	General Admin	£59.00
02/05/2023	PV04	HMRC	PAYE - April	Clerk's Salary	£118.40
02/05/2023	PV05	N Breen	Salary - April	Clerk's Salary	£528.07

Receipts

Date	Ref	Who From	Description	Amount
11-Apr-23	RV01	WCC	Precept	£ 10,704.00
19-Apr-23	RV02	F Zarb-Adami	Music Group donation to playground	£ 50.00
20-Apr-23	RV03	HCC	Coronation Grant	£ 500.00

Councillors approved PV01-PV05 and noted the receipts.

a. Review of asset register

Since last May no changes have been made.

Cllr Little is to look at the layout of the Asset Register with the view to simplifying the format in order to make it clearer to view. **Action: Cllr Little to review layout, Clerk to post updated Asset Register on the website**

b. Agree and approve Insurance renewal

Renewal due 30 June 2023. Year 3 of 3 year policy with Hiscox

Year 1 £683.80

Year 2 £792.07

Year 3 £830.74

There is an increase of £38.67. As this is the final year of the 3 year policy Councillors agreed to the premium of £830.74. When the long term policy expires next year other quotes will be sourced. **Action: Clerk**

c. Storage space one.com

The Chair has run out of computer storage space for emails. Cllr Little noted that for an additional fee of £41.52 per annum there would be unlimited storage for all councillors' emails on one.com. Offered free until the end of this year's contract.

Councillors agreed to the purchase the additional storage space through one.com on contract renewal.

Action: Cllr Little

d. Bank account for reserves

The finance committee looked at options for having a deposit account to hold some or all of the reserves.

For instance, assuming reserves are £40,000:

Unity Trust Bank have easy access account paying 2.16% = £864

Shawbrook have an instant access account paying 2.26% = £900 pa

Cambridge & Counties Bank 95 Day Notice account paying 3.25% = £1,300 pa

After discussion the finance committee decided that notice accounts would not be practical as the parish council could not tie up all reserves for the notice period, therefore two savings accounts would be required to maximise interest. Our previous experience with managing bank accounts is that it is frustrating and unnecessarily time consuming especially for the clerk. The conclusion was to apply for a Unity Trust easy access account would be the most suitable account in which to deposit the reserves. This was considered the best option when broadly taking benefits, costs, and risks into account.

Councillors approved applying for a Unity Trust Bank Easy Access Account and transferring £41,000 of the reserves to the new account once opened. **Action: Clerk to open account and transfer funds**

e. Playground report from WCC

This was covered in 23/24-07.

f. Review H&S policy

There has been no advice from WCC for any changes to be made to the existing policy. Should recommendations be made the policy will be reviewed accordingly.

Councillors approved the H&S policy with no changes.

Action: Clerk to minute and post on website

g. Review Code of Conduct

WCC is to shortly review its Code of Conduct. Once the revised version is available Sparsholt Parish Council will review theirs.

h. Terms of reference for sub-committees

Finance and Governance

Planning

Climate Change

There has been no cause to change the terms of reference. The parish council endorses the current terms of reference.

i. Cover for Clerk's printing expenses

Currently the clerk has a £10 monthly printing contract with HPsmart. The majority of the printing is for Sparsholt Parish Council, the remainder for Crawley Parish Council. The Clerk wishes to claim these expenses back. It was proposed that Sparsholt Parish Council pay £7.50 per month for the past year's printing, and this had the approval of the internal auditor.

Councillors agreed to the Clerk being reimbursed for printing costs as above.

Action: Clerk

The meeting closed at 9.30pm. The next meeting is on Thursday 15 June 2023 at 7.30pm.