



St Andrews Parish Council

Redhouse Community Centre, Frankel Avenue, Swindon SN25 2NJ

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Draft Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday 18th June 2025 at 19:00 at Redhouse Community Centre, Frankel Avenue, Swindon

Councillors Present: Cherie Adams, Daniel Adams, Kola Beyioku, Jake Chandler (Chairman), Steve Heyes, Sue MacDonald, Kate Tomlinson, Paul West, Vince Williams and Debbie Young

Officer Present: Mrs Rose – Administrative Officer

Public Present: 6

*Cllr Beyioku Arrived 19:04

24. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Paul Morris.

25. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Jake Chandler declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 13 as he volunteers as a tree warden for Wiltshire Wildlife Trust.

26. MINUTES

- (i) Members noted a report from the Clerk regarding minutes, agenda and confidential matter. (Report attached to the minutes in the Minute Book)
- (ii) Following amendments to the numbering of minutes and pages it was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the last meeting held on Monday, 12th May 2025 and the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 20th May 2025. Cllr Jake Chandler kept the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting and these were not filed in the Minute Book.

27. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (i) The Chairman congratulated the Administrative Officer on successfully completing and passing her Introduction to Local Council Administration (ILCA) course.
- (ii) Councillor Chandler and Councillor Heyes reported they were are exploring the option of jointly looking after the library service provided at the orbital.
- (iii) Councillor Chandler has asked to have a meeting with the Crown Estate regarding the maintenance of the Jovial Monk car park.
- (iv) Councillor Chandler reported he will be taking part in a charity walk from Swindon to Portland in support of Wiltshire Treehouse. He will update members at the next meeting.

28. COMMUNITY HERO AWARD

The Chairman announced that Mr Roger Cole had been selected as the recipient of the St Andrews Parish Community Hero Award for 2025. The award is presented annually by the Parish Council to recognise individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the local community.

Mr Cole was nominated by residents in recognition of his ongoing voluntary work. For over three years, he has run a free weekly bicycle repair stand in Tadpole Garden Village, offering support and assistance to residents.

The Chairman formally presented the award to Mr Cole and expressed the Council's sincere thanks for his continued dedication and service to the community.

29. The Chairman requested to move forward Agenda Item 6 - **NATURE RESERVE/GREAT CRESTED NEWTS**. It was **RESOLVED** to move forward this item.

30. **NATURE RESERVE/GREAT CRESTED NEWTS**

Neil Pullen from Wiltshire Wildlife Trust provided an update on the ongoing pond conservation work in the area. He explained that Great Crested Newts are protected under both UK and European legislation due to population declines and habitat loss. Wiltshire Wildlife Trust staff and volunteers conducted surveys during morning and evening visits, confirming the presence of Great Crested Newts in four ponds along Eastbury Way. In addition, the grounds maintenance team has surveyed the ponds, and fencing has been installed along one of them to protect the habitat. Neil Pullen will produce a written report outlining the findings and will provide recommendations on how to further improve and support the habitat.

31. **CLERK/RFO UPDATE**

The Chairman read aloud an update from the Clerk/RFO, outlining several serious concerns identified upon her return to work following a year-long period of sick leave. The update stated that, as part of resuming her responsibilities, the Clerk had identified a number of issues requiring urgent attention. Most notably, there appears to be a discrepancy of approximately £20,000 in the pension contribution records, which is currently under investigation.

Concerns were also raised regarding the accuracy and completeness of budget and accounting records. In addition, several critical year-end financial documents have not yet been located.

Given that the accounts have not been reviewed for the past year, the Internal Auditor will carry out a series of visits over the next two months.

The Clerk further noted that several core processes required by the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations have not been followed. She will begin reintroducing these procedures, with some matters likely to be brought before Full Council for resolution.

A priority task will be the completion of the Council's annual risk assessment—a statutory requirement—which will involve a thorough review of internal controls to ensure they are current, compliant, and properly documented.

32. **COMMITTEES**

- (i) **RESOLVED** to approve new calendar of meetings as attached in the Minute Book.
- (ii) Members noted the minutes of the following committees:
 - Staffing 25th March 2025
 - Grounds Maintenance 7th April 2025
 - Planning 14th April 2025
 - Youth 22nd May 2025

- (i) Councillors expressed their thanks to Councillor C. Adams, Councillor D. Young, and the Administrative Officer for their efforts in ensuring the success of the Youth Bowling Event.

33. ACCOUNTS

Members discussed the accounts for 2025/2026.

RESOLVED To renew the contract with DCK Accounting to input accounts into software and complete the year end for 2025/26 and to ensure this is done efficiently DCK Accounting with come to the office 2 days a month at a cost of £437.94 per visit.

34. DEPOT LEASE

Members noted that the Waterside Agreement with Swindon Borough Council for the Grounds Maintenance use had not been signed. It was reported that at the meeting on 13th January 2025 the following minutes was recorded:

FC25-06 Licence to Occupy SBC Depot at Waterside Park St Andrews Parish Council occupy part of the Swindon Borough Council depot under licence. It has been noted that no licence has yet been signed for occupancy to continue in 2024/25. The grounds staff have been continually using this facility, despite the lack of signed permissions. **RESOLVED** to sign the Swindon Borough Council documents allowing St Andrews Parish Council to occupy part of Waterside Park depot, and for payment to be released on production of an invoice for the rental of the site; this amount being £10,490 pa.

RESOLVED to sign the lease and return to Swindon Borough Council,

35. HR AND PAYROLL

Members discussed the possibility of outsourcing HR and Payroll.

RESOLVED to set up a working group to explore this matter in further detail, comprising Cllrs Young, Heyes, and Chandler, along with the Clerk, Administrative Officer, and Grounds Maintenance Manager.

36. WEBSITE

Members discussed a new parish council website.

RESOLVED for the Clerk to explore the option of a new website. The brief emphasised making the site easier for staff to navigate and use. It should include a tool for residents to report maintenance issues, a page dedicated to the local history of the parish, and a gallery section. Additionally, the homepage should have a modern design featuring a collage of photos and provide up-to-date information.

37. VEHICLE INSURANCE

RESOLVED to approve expenditure for Vehicle Insurance at an annual cost of £4972.32

The meeting closed at 20:09

Chairman _____ Date _____