



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 9th July 2025 at 8pm at Redhouse Community Centre, Frankel Avenue, Swindon

Councillors Present: Cherie Adams*, Daniel Adams, Jake Chandler (Chairman), Steve Heyes, Paul Morris**, Kate Tomlinson, Vince Williams and Debbie Young

Officer Present: Miss Emma Sylvester – Parish Clerk and RFO
Mrs Louise Rose – Administrative Officer ***
Mr Luke Jones – Grounds Maintenance Manager ***

Public Present: 7

* left at 8:50pm
** left at 9:48pm
*** left at 9:55pm

Prior to the meeting starting the council received two presentations as follows:

The Kelly Foundation a small charity set up to provide a listening and support service for those suffering from anxiety, depression, bereavement or loneliness. The charity is currently putting a bid together to the National Lottery so that the telephone helpline can be 7 days a week and further funding offer individuals more support. The Charity is asking the parish council for support in their bid along with funding.

Legal & General spoke to the parish council regarding two planning applications that will be submitted to Swindon Borough Council shortly. One application is for a leisure and community hub and the other 130 affordable homes.

38. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting especially the Clerk as it was her first meeting back following a period of sick leave.

39. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Paul West, Kola Beyioku and Sue MacDonald.

40. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Steve Heyes declared a personal interest in The Kelly Foundation as his wife works for them.

41. MINUTES

With one amendments to the minutes regarding a new website it was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 18th June 2025 which were signed by the Chairman.

42. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (i) The Chairman reported that along with Cllrs Steve Heyes and Kate Tomlinson he had attended a Swindon Borough Council (SBC) planning meeting regarding the play area at Abbey Farm.
- (ii) Thanks were given to Luke and his team for carrying out repairs to the Roman Villa where illegal excavations had occurred.

43. **RESOLVED** to bring forward agenda item 7 Standing Orders and Terms of Reference

44. STANDING ORDERS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Clerk reminded members on the correct procedure for approving expenditure which should start with setting a detailed budget which has not been completed for 25/26. Throughout the year members should be reviewing expenditure against the budget and monitoring the accounts. The Clerk reported that until reworkings of the 25/26 Budget had been prepared and approved she would not be able to advise the council regarding future expenditure.

The Clerk tabled documents regarding the accounts as attached to the minutes in the Minute Book.

Members discussed the figures.

RESOLVED

To freeze none essential expenditure until reworkings of the 25/26 Budget had been approved.

45. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) COMMUNITY HERO AWARD

- (i) Members received and noted an email from the External Auditor reporting that the 2023/24 and 24/25 AGAR had not been submitted.
- (ii) The Clerk reported that the figures for 2023/24 AGAR had been prepared and approved at a Full Council meeting in November however they were never sent off to the External Auditor. The Clerk reported that unfortunately there were a number of outstanding matters to be addressed before the 2024/25 AGAR would be ready for approval at council as follows:
 - a. Annual Risk Assessment
 - b. Asset Register
 - c. Discrepancies in information for submission to DCK Accounting
 - d. Discrepancies in staff salaries and pension contributions.

- (iii) Members discussed the issues.

RESOLVED to contract DCK Accounting to assist the Clerk in finalising accounts for the 24/25 AGAR and rework the 25/26 Budget due to the tight time constraints and the current work load of the Clerk.

46. BANKING AND ACCOUNTS

- (i) The Clerk reported that the bookkeeper had started to come in to work on the back log of accounts from April 2025 and all was working well. Good accounting systems had been put back in place and it was hoped that the Clerk/RFO would be able to report to council in September on the financial situation of the council's finances.
- (ii) Members discussed the banking mandate.

RESOLVED

For the Barclays' Current account:

To remove the Locum Clerk

To remove Vera Tomlinson and Mary Friend

To add Cllr Vince Williams

To keep Cllrs Jake Chandler, Steve Heyes and Sue MacDonald but ensure that all have online permissions as currently only Cllr Steve Heyes has access with the Clerk.

For Savings Accounts:

Ensure bank mandates match the same as Barclays Current Account.

- (iii) **RESOLVED** to authorise the Clerk to make BACS and Direct Debit Payments on behalf of the council as detailed on the document attached to these minutes in the Minute Book.
- (iv) **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Paul West as non-signatory councillor to complete monthly finance checks.

47. NEW OFFICE

Councillors discussed the current office space for 3 members of staff following no progress being made on building a new office space in the grounds of Redhouse Community Centre. Cllr Jake Chandler reported that there was a possibility of having office space at the Orbital Library and informed the council that he had visited the space with Cllr Heyes and on a separate occasion 3 members of staff had visited.

RESOLVED for all staff and councillors to visit the space at the same time due to different facts being given on the two separate occasions.

RESOLVED that wooden shed was not a suitable working environment for office staff and agreed that when temperatures were unbearable to work in staff would need to work from home. This would be done on a self-assessment basis rather than stating a specific temperature

RESOLVED to carry out 2 DSE assessments of two staff members homeworking spaces as the council was saying the office was unfit to work in.

48. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

- (i) **RESOLVED** to approve expenditure of outsourcing weedkilling at an annual cost of £12,000
- (ii) The Grounds Maintenance Manager that no quotes had been received.
- (iii) **RESOLVED** To continue the contract on the current 4x4 for 6 months at a cost of £292.00 per month to include maintenance costs.
- (iv) **RESOLVED** To recruit an additional Grounds Maintenance Team member as per the Description attached to the minutes in the Minute Book.
Members considered a proposal from Tadpole Garden Village management company to empty two extra bins twice a week.
RESOLVED to wait until clarification had been sought on VAT implications before carrying out this extra work.

49. YOUTH COMMITTEE

- (i) The Clerk reported that the Youth Committee currently had £1650 in Earmarked Reserves as nothing had been put into the budget for 25/26 when approved in January 2025.
- (ii) Members discussed hire charges of Redhouse Community Centre (RCC) for youth activities provided by St Andrews Parish Council.

RESOLVED to let the Youth Committee use RCC for free for the youth activities throughout the year.

50. APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

RESOLVED to appoint Bridget Bowman of BCB as the Council's internal audit for 2025/26 at a cost of £840.00

51. COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES 2025/26

(i) Members received and consider the recommendations from Swindon Borough Council's Remuneration Panel for Councillor Allowances.

(ii) **RESOLVED**

To set the Chairman's Allowance at £2832 and it was noted that the current Chair had been coopted so would not be allowed to take this allowance.

To keep basic councillors allowances the same as last year which will be £1098

52. COMMITTEES

(i) Members were informed that the Youth Committee minutes had not been completed yet as office staff had heavy workloads at present.

(ii) Cllr Adams reported that there were some exciting youth projects organised for the summer and Cllr Chandler reported that a litter pick was going ahead on Sunday.

53. IT

(i) The Clerk reported that the issues with office electronic folders had now been sorted however there were still issues using Teams and folders would not be shared with Councillors until the office set up was complete.

(ii) The Clerk reported that she had been unable to obtain quotes for ongoing IT support as the current IT supplier had not provided access to see the current set up.

(iii) Members discussed the current laptop used by the Administrative Officer following reports that equipment was freezing.

RESOLVED To purchase a new laptop for Administrative Officer and associated expenditure to set up a new machine with appropriate software and access.

54. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED to exclude members of the public due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

55. STAFF

(i) **RESOLVED** to make payment to two members of staff for holiday who have been off on long term sick leave. Details are attached to the minutes in the Minute Book.

(ii) Members considered pay increases for two members of staff

RESOLVED

To increase Administrative Officers salary by 1 SCP for successful completion of ILCA

To increase the Acting Supervisor's Salary by 1SCP when covering for the Grounds Maintenance Manager.

The meeting closed at 22:05

Chairman _____ Date _____