

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF SPARKFORD PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 5th January 2026 AT 8.00PM**

Present: Mrs J Cattermull – Chair, Mr R Sealey, Mr P Harcourt, Mr T Tuck, Mr D Westwood, Mr A Quick

In attendance Mrs A Tuck, locum Clerk, Unity Councillor Cllr Messenger, 2 members of the public

2026 At the start of the meeting the public were reminded that they had 3 minutes each in which to speak at the start of the meeting, that they were not able to talk once the meeting started, but if they had questions to ask they could do so at the end of the meeting.

Mr Reeves from the Cricket Club advised us that the work on the fence was to start 19th January. That they had concerns due to recent break-ins about access to the Cricket field and would like to be able to padlock the main gate. They proposed replacing the picket gate with a stile next to the gate. Councillors stated that one disabled person walks around the cricket field with their dog and they would still need to be able to access the field, may be use a gate rather than a stile. this will be given some thought.

SPC01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Mr L Piper, Unity Councillor Cllr Hobhouse.

SPC02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST Members to declare any interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Council's Code of Conduct. Cllr Cattermull declared an interest in item SPC08 a late planning application which had come in and needed replying to by 19th January, 26.

SPC03 MINUTES of the Parish Council meeting on 1st December 2025 were signed as a true record – Proposed by Cllr Westwood, seconded by Cllr Quick – all in favour.

SPC04 CRIME/NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

No report was received prior to the meeting,

SPC05 SOMERSET COUNCILLOR – Cllr Messenger advised of several problems in the Castle Cary area, with highways and planning. There is a section 114 notice which still could mean bankruptcy for Somerset in the current year, the Council have to prove how they will survive this year.

SPC06 HIGHWAYS Sparkford Hill Lane – some pot holes have been marked for repair, whilst others, some worse, have not. Need to report it again online once marked potholes have been repaired.

SPC07 PLANNING DECISIONS None Advised.

SPC08 PLANNING APPLICATIONS An invitation to speak, for up to 3 minutes, on applications will be offered

25/02753/REM Land behind Long Acres, Brains Lane, Sparkford. Reserved matters in relation to **22/03294/OUT** appearance, landscaping layout and scale. The Council have no concerns with this application..

SPC09 MATTERS ARISING NOT INCLUDED IN OTHER SECTIONS

- a) Daisy Woods Land registry and change of address – Cllr Sealey has contacted Stone King. They can complete the changes needed for

£250 plus VAT plus £20 for Land Registry. All Councillors were in favour of this and asked Councillor Sealey to go ahead.

b) Appoint Solicitor to draw up deeds for existing Parish Hall – Somerset Archives have SPC minutes for 1952. Cllr Westwood agreed to go to Taunton to take a look at the records and report back then maybe we could ask Stone King to deal with this as well.

c) Discussion about social value community fund, need to report back to Karen Duffett National Highways, so far the seat in Sparkford Copse, the owl boxes which Cllr Tuck has purchased and a new Defibrillator, are coming out of the grant. Clerk will respond with photographs once the owl boxes are installed, Cllr Westwood volunteered to do this with Cllr Tuck this coming weekend.

d) Councillor Training Courses 26th January Cllr Cattermull already booked in (check) Cllr Sealey would also like to do this, clerk to book,

e) Asset Register Cllr Sealey has made some amendments to the asset register which were handed to Councillors and discussed.

f) Defibs. Quotes for new Defibrillator to replace the one that was at Sparkford services to be at Goodwood Drive and Defib bought by Neighbourhood watch in 2018, they also bought the defib at Weston Bampfylde. The clerk had spoken to Mr Crawford at Weston Bampfylde, they still have the original defib bought by Neighbourhood watch which is checked and maintained by Weston Bampfylde village and is still in working order. The defib to go at Goodwood drive will be financed by the A303 resilience grant, Cllr Tuck has quotes for this, the best one being from Living Life at £1540 plus Vat for defib and case. Cllr Cattermull suggested we purchase this seconded by Cllr Sealey, all in agreement.

g) Documents and laptop from previous clerk. Mrs Davis had handed over a box of paperwork, and had received her cheque in final payment, the laptop is still outstanding. Clerk to contact again requesting laptop before new clerk interviews on 12th January.

h) Quarterly Review – see separate sheet.

i) Dog waste bin (cost of bin £159.37 + emptying cost) it was agreed to go ahead with the purchase of a new dog waste bin to be sited on the grass area on the left inside Manor Close, we would need to purchase a post for this as the fence belongs to the owner of the field. Specification for purchase of bin needs agreeing at next meeting.

j) New Village Hall – Committee, the clerk has names of 2 people prepared to go on the new village hall committee. It was agreed to advertise this in the next Spark magazine and on the website and the facebook page. We've had correspondence from the Solicitors and Cllr Cattermull has been in touch with Tony Brown from Lovells ref Transfer of land to PC we are keen to get this matter signed off so we can register the land to the Parish Council. A discussion took place about a soil test on the bund once we own the land.

k) Footpaths (improvements) Cllr Sealey and Cllr Harcourt had done some emergency repairs to the footpath by the playing field with bark to absorb wet mud. The Council agreed to pay the £70 expenses for the purchase of the bark.

RS

DW

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I) Response to LVA, Cllr Harcourt circulated a draft response, which says about securing funding for the new village hall, or repairs to the existing hall if not completed within 10 years. Cllr Cattermull agreed to forward the draft to LVA for consideration.

m) Community Speedwatch update we have 5 people prepared to serve on this and Mrs Sealey will administer it, positions to stand with the speed gun have been identified, the next job is to order the PPE through the police then training can be arranged. Also another person has registered though cannot be found on the Sparkford area.

JC

SPC10 Financial Matters

- a) Accounts update. £30,500 has been transferred to HTB account for Daisy Wood today so it has its own bank account, with interest being paid into the Barclays account for maintenance. £65,000 has now been transferred to a savings account with interest rather than keeping all money in a current account.
- b) The accounts were presented and a budget v spend for this year.
- c) 26-27 Precept, Cllr Sealey had prepared a budget for 26./27 which was discussed and it was agreed on a 7% increase for the next financial year due to additional costs with clearing channels of weeds, footpath repairs, solicitors costs and land registry costs ref Parish Hall,
- d) Update on Agar / accounts 24/25 the clerk now has all invoices bar one so we are close to being able to complete this.
- e) Payments (Mrs A Tuck Locum Clerk, HMRC, Somerset county litter bin at playing field, Owl boxes and fixings and bedding, New defib). Clerk will prepare cheques.

SPC11 CORRESPONDENCE Applications have currently been received by 2 applicants for the Parish Clerks position, Interviews will take place on 12th January at Sparkford Parish Hall at 3pm and 4pm.

Cllr Tuck has a copy of the original deed for the transfer of land for the cricket pitch and gave Councillors a copy.

SPC12 PUBLIC QUESTIONS None.

SPC13 There being no further business the meeting closed at 10:20pm

SPC14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING Monday 2nd February 2026 at 8pm

PUBLIC NOTICES

Speedwatch – 5 people have stepped forward to volunteer to get involved with Speedwatch in the Parish, training will take place next year. If you are interested then please contact the Parish Clerk.

Community events – are you holding an event in Sparkford? Please send the details to the Parish Clerk so that it can be promoted on the parish website and Community Facebook page