Sparkford Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the parish council meeting held on Monday 05 October 2026 at 2000 at Sparkford Parish Hall

Present: Councillors Jane Cattermull (Chair), Paul Harcourt, Andrew Quick, Larry Piper and Richard Sealey

Also in attendance: One member of the public and Kaye Elston (clerk)

Item 1 **26/27/SPC124**	**Apologies for absence and Opening Remarks** • Councillors Tuck and Westwood. Somerset Councillors Kevin Messenger and Henry Hobhouse. These were accepted.
Item 2 **26/27/SPC125**	**Public Session** • No items were raised by the public.
Item 3 **26/27/SPC126**	**Declarations of interest** • There were none. • Confidential item at the end of the meeting – this was agreed and the public will need to leave at that point.
Item 4 **26/27/SPC127**	**Minutes of the parish council meeting on 07.09.2026 and Matters Arising** • Councillors in agreement to accept minutes: **Proposed: Councillor Sealey** ***Seconded: Councillor Cattermull*** ***All councillors present in agreement*** • Councillors Register of Interest Forms – clerk advised that there is just one outstanding now that needs to be submitted. • Somerset Council Devolution Programme update – information has been circulated but currently do not believe it effects Sparkford at they do not have any assets to take back from Somerset Council. • Bonfire Party and Guy competition for the village – the parish council insurance company have confirmed that this event will be covered under public liability clause already in the schedule. Date set for 7 November. The first entry of a guy has already been submitted. • Police contact for antisocial behaviour and crime statistics – Councillors Cattermull, Quick and Sealey met with two officers this week. Items discussed were as follows: Haynes Motor Museum event on Sunday 04.10.2026 – need to contact Haynes to ask them to have a traffic management system in place so that there is not cars queued back to the High Street and also to ensure they drive sensibly on the High Street as they created a lot of noise. Councillor Cattermull advised she will draft an email, circulate to councillors and then it can be sent to Haynes. **ACTION**: **Councillor Cattermull** Joyriding on the roundabouts – police advised that 999 are called and this needs to be added to the website and social media. Crime statistics in Sparkford – police reported they are generally low and without any trends. Need to contact the Road Traffic Team for the volume and speed of traffic on the High Street to consider traffic calming. Road Safety Team could also attend Haynes with a speed camera. Member of the public who was abusive to the speedwatch team – the police are now dealing with this. **ACTION**: **Councillor Quick** • Review Action Tracker **26/27/SPC103** Communication with META to try and get the social media page transferred back to the parish council ownership. No update. **26/27/SPC114** Cricket ground fencing – Councillor Piper to chase this one to ensure the work is completed. **ACTION: Councillor Piper** Wifi in parish hall – no update currently. Councillor Harcourt agreed to speak to Victoria on the parish hall committee. **ACTION: Councillor Harcourt** Current parish hall committee to agree to dissolve the trust so that the parish council can sell the parish hall once the new village hall is ready – no update. Clerk to contact trustees. **ACTION: Clerk** Repairs to the picnic bench in Daisy Wood – Councillor Westwood to feedback at the next meeting.

	ACTION: Councillor Westwood **26/27/SPC115** Quotes for weed killing and clearance of weeks on the roadside and pavements. No update. **ACTION: Councillor Westwood** **26/27/SPC117** Request to ask the scouts to clear remaining collars around trees in the Millenium Wood. **ACTION: Councillor Tuck** Footpath near to Bridge Cottage and contact with Greenslade Taylor Hunt contact to request footpath being made official. Awaiting update. **ACTION: Clerk**
Item 5 **26/27/SPC128**	**Report from Somerset Unitary Councillors Hobson and Messenger** • Councillors Hobhouse and Messenger not present and therefore no report.
Item 6 **26/27/SPC129**	**Planning applications** • None received.
Item 7 **26/27/SPC130**	**Determination of Planning.** Receive the following notices: • There were none.
Item **26/27/SP131**	**Other planning matters.** • Haynes printing building/The Old Creamery update – Councillor Harcourt advised there are no further updates at this time. He has spoken to Setsquare and they advised the will soon be submitting planning application. • Application 25/00522/OUT (land behind Cherry Blossom Way) Section 106 agreement concerns – clerk has raised concerns with the new planning officer for this application as the previous one has now left Somerset Council. The query was raised as there were more than one copy of the Section 106 agreement and councillors wanted to confirm that had been agreed. The current planning officer advised that the applicant has not agreed to put funding towards the new village hall. The Planning Officer is in agreement with this statement as Sparkford already has a parish hall. Councillors were in agreement that this needs to be challenged as the current hall has many limitations which would means it could not provide a range of community activities for the expanding community of Sparkford. Councillor Cattermull agreed to draft a response and circulate to councillors. • SCRAPP Meeting 30.09.2026 – Councillors Cattermull and Harcourt attend this meeting and advised there were some speakers there who provided good information. SCRAPP is not there to challenge individual planning applications but to support raising objections and looking at issues across the county faced by parish councils with Somerset Council planning. There is a website currently being constructed and a toolkit will be available to enable parish councils in how they communicate objections to applications. There is a presumption to approve applications unless there are reasons that can be found to object. Councillors are advised to take a look at the National Planning Policy Framework that comes into effect on 31.10.2026. • Planning applications 22/00259/OUT and 22/00243/OUT – there is no update on these one of which was for a 60 bed carehome and the other for 45 houses.

Item 9 **26/27/SPC132**	**Finance and Payments (RFO – Clerk)** **Payments already made** • Kaye Elston (clerk salary30.09.26) • HMRC (PAYE September) • SCRAPP annual membership fee **Payments to be authorised** • PKF (external audit fee) • Kaye Elston (October salary to be paid 01.11.2026) • HMRC (PAYE) These payments were agreed by councillors. ***Proposed: Councillor Sealey*** ***Seconded: Councillor Harcourt*** **Transfers** • Current to instant access on 09.09.2026 • Transfer to bring balance back to £5000	 £377.59 £94.40 £150 £378 £377.59 plus pay increase backdated to 01.04.2026 £94.40 subject to any amendments in relation to pay increase. £9620 £1000
Item 10 **26/27/SPC133**	**Receipts:** • Precept second instalment	 £13 375
Item 11 **26/27/SPC134**	**Other finance matters** • Account balances as at 02.10.2026 Barclays Community Account - £43 378.76 Barclays Business Savings Account - £74 797.75 HTB (Daisy Wood) - £30 500 • Summary of income and expenditure – this has been circulated to councillors. Councillor Quick confirmed the bank reconciliation and will sign the bank statement and spreadsheet. • Budget monitoring – it is now six months through the financial year and £12 563 has been spent of the total budget in the sum of £28 384. Budget lines where there has been overspend are external audit due to the 2024/25 audit return, Membership as had not budgeted for SCRAPP membership which will be put into 2027/28 budget and Greenspace maintenance as the garage roof repair has now been completed. This money had already been received by parish council as it was an insurance claim and therefore will need to be transferred out of reserves. • Internal auditor report and actions – actions that have been completed Internal transfers between Barclays current account and savings account are noted on minutes of each meeting. Bank reconciliation – this is now being completed each month Budget monitoring – this is now discussed at each meeting and recorded in the minutes Financial Regulations – these have now been revised using the most recent NALC recommended format • External audit update – clerk advised that the auditors initially have requested a more detailed breakdown of the expenditure of the parish council as the difference from last year was in excess of 15% which the clerk subsequently submitted prior to sign off and certification of the external audit. Two items were raised: Section 2 Box 11 – clerk ticked no and should have been yes regarding if the figures involved trust funds . Section 1 Boxes 1,4,5. 6 and 7 stated non compliance which was correct due to the historical problems with the recording of financial records of the parish council which were identified in the internal audit. Internal audit form sent to PKF. There should not be non compliance for 2026/7 as the financial records are now inline with the recommended procedures. Fee for audit in the sum of £378 which has not incurred additional fees.	

	• CIL funding allocation to new village hall – it was agreed at the last meeting for all the CIL funding being held be allocated to the new village hall. • Transfer to current account to maintain a balance of £5000 in the sum of £1000 was agreed. ***Proposed: Councillor Sealey*** ***Seconded: Councillor Piper*** ***All councillors in agreement***
Item 12 **26/27/SPC135**	**New Parish Hall** • Plan of action agreed – the working group are working towards some drawings for the new village hall. Councillors would like a simple plan at this stage, more like a floor plan. Councillor Sealey will communicate this to the working group when he attends their next meeting. • Parish Hall Committee – need to ask a member of the committee if they have discussed the dissolving of the trust in the future so that the parish hall can sell the building. Clerk to follow up. **ACTION: Clerk** • Email for Village Hall Working Group – this has been set up and the group have the details. The email domain has been provided by the parish council email service. This enables the parish council to manage the email should there need to be any changes. • Webpage for working group – councillors agreed that it would be a good addition to the website so that the parish can access information on the new village hall. New village hall working group will need to consider what that page needs to look like and once this has been agreed the clerk will ask the parish council provider to set up an additional page on the parish council website. Going forward Councillor Quick will continue to add items to that page on the website. **ACTION: Clerk** • Clearance of new Village Hall ground – an amended quote from AH Canvin has now been presented to councillors. Councillors agreed to proceed with the quote after the Bonfire event has taken place. Clerk to instruct. **ACTION: Clerk** • New Village Hall Working Group link to parish council – it was agreed to ask the group to submit a progress report to the parish council every quarter. Clerk will request and the first report to be in December. **ACTION: Clerk**
Item 13 **26/27/SPC136**	**Grant requests.** Receive the following grant requests: • Applications received from Sparkford Parish Hall, Sparkford Playing Field, St Mary Magdalene Church,and Weston Bampfylde Church. Clerk will summarise the applications so that councillors can consider at the next meeting. **ACTION: Clerk** • Grant application form and Grant Policy – there needs to be some amendments to the policy which the clerk will complete and bring back to the next parish council meeting. **ACTION: Clerk**
Item 14 **26/27/SPC137**	**Policy Reviews** • Standing Orders – councillors were in agreement to accept this document. • Financial Regulations – councillors in agreement to accept this document. Clerk to prepare documents for the website. This is an action on the Internal Audit report completed. **Proposed: Councillor Cattermull** **Seconded: Councillor Piper** **All councillors present in agreement**
Item 15 **26/27/SPC138**	**Sparkford Parish Council – Land owned or responsible for** • Daisy Wood picnic benches and general maintenance update – see Minute 26/27/SPC127 above. • Cricket Ground fence work update – see Minute 26/27/SPC127 above. • Playing Field and Diocese agreement update – Councillor Cattermull has chased this with the solicitor and still awaiting a response. • Wifi for parish hall update – see Minute 26/27/SPC127 above. • Parish Hall trust document – document has been sent by Parish Hall Committee to the clerk and chair which will support registry of the building with the Land Registry.
Item 16 **26/27/SPC139**	**Highways.** Consider the following and agree any actions arising Update / Items to report • Reports of issues in the village Macdonalds parking area by the garage – since Macdonalds closed they fenced off the restaurant but not the parking area which has now become an area of antisocial behaviour

	and rubbish dumping. Clerk will contact Macdonalds and ask them to fence the carpark as well to prevent the current problems. **ACTION: Clerk** • Suggested use of enhanced maintenance pilot for road maintenance (road clearance) – Councillor Cattermull has chased Tracy Harris at Highways but still not had a response. If not response then she will raise it at the LCN Highways meeting in October. **ACTION: Councillor Cattermull** • Quote for weed killing/clearance and silt clearance along roads and pavements – awaiting a quote from Councillor Westwood to review alongside the one from Councillor Tuck. **ACTION: Councillor Westwood** Councillor Piper advised he could also get a quote from a local contractor. **ACTION: Councillor Piper** Councillors want to get this job completed and agreed a figure to spend up to of £2500 if the quote could deliver the job in hand. ***Proposed: Councillor Cattermull*** ***Seconded: Councillor Quick*** ***All councillors present in agreement*** • Wolfester Terrace traffic review and update – request made to Somerset Highways who have advised of another department to contact but not yet established who is the right department to come out and look at what the parish council could consider putting in place to calm the speed of traffic in Wolfester Terrace and the High Street. Highways do not believe there is an issue as they are looking at data that is not correct and they need to look at the SID data. It was agreed to ask Somerset Councillor Hobhouse who would be the best person to contact. Clerk will contact Councillor Hobhouse. Councillor Cattermull will draft an email to Highways contact to seek advice on options. **ACTION: Clerk and Councillor Cattermul** • National Highways closing summary of upgrades to the A303 – email has been received from National Highways stating why they believe the upgrading of the A303 has been a successful project. This has been circulated to councillors. **Community Speedwatch Report (CC) – update** • Volume of traffic still high going through the village. • No more volunteers have come forward.
Item 17 **26/27/SPC140**	**Flooding** • Flood Resilience Fund awarded to Somerset Council update – Somerset was awarded £50 million to reduce the risk of flooding in the county. Parish councils have submitted requests for funding that they believe will reduced the risk of flooding in their parish. Sparkford has received notification that their submission will be dealt with in Phase 3 which will be in Autumn 2027. • Somerset Rivers Authority Community Flood Action Fund – Councillor Cattermull believes the parish council should consider looking at the grants available to possibly to dig out the surface ditches behind Church Road and the automation of the sluice gate. Councillor Cattermull to investigate options and apply for grant. **ACTION: Councillor Cattermull** • Flooding Symposium 15.10.2026 – Sarah Dyke (local MP) is holding the third in her series of symposiums on 15 October. Councillors can register an interest on the email that has been circulated.
Item 18 **26/27/SPC141**	**Parish Paths.** Update / items to report. • Millenium Copse collars around the trees update – see Minute 26/27/SPC127 above. • Footpath at land near Bridge Cottage – see Minute 26/27/SPC127 above
Item 19 **26/27/SPC142**	**Play Areas.** • No updates.
Item 20 **26/27/SPC143**	**Maintenance.** • None to be recorded.
Item 21 **26/27/144**	**South East Local Community Network** • Youth Workers – the LCN has circulated information as a recommendation that parish councils contribute towards youth workers. The estimate is that a town would need to contribute £10 000 but for small parishes this would be less. Councillor Cattermull will ask for some more details. **ACTION: Councillor Cattermull**
Item 22 **26/27/SPC145**	**Councillor Training and correspondence** • SALC training opportunities have been circulated. • Record of councillor training to be collated by the clerk.

	ACTION: Clerk
Item 23 **26/27/SPC146**	**Future agenda Items including recent correspondence** • A resident would like to put a cake box on the side of the Village Hall – councillors agreed to this. • Sparkford Storage – they have put up a structure attached to their building and the parish council will need to check if they require planning permission for this addition. **ACTION: Clerk**
Item 23 **26/27/SPC147**	**Date of next meeting** • Monday 02 November 2026 at 2000
Item 24 **26/27/SPC148**	**Confidential Item re Clerk Pay** • NALC recommendation increase pay – see confidential minute.

Meeting closed at 2145

ACTION TRACKER

	OCTOBER MEETING		
26/27/SPC127	Email to be drafted to Haynes Motor Museum regarding the last event	JC	
	Police advice to call 999 when there are joy riders on the roundabout to be promoted on website and social medai	AQ	
	Support to be offered to parish hall to explore setting up Wifi	PH	
	Information from parish hall committee about dissolving the trust	Clerk	**COMPLETED**
26/27/SPC135	Webpage to be set up for New Village Hall – ask working group to think about what they would like on the page	Clerk/AQ	**COMPLETED**
	Revised quote for clearance of village hall ground – instruct contractor but delay work commencing until after bonfire night.	Clerk	
26/27/SPC136	Summarise the grant requests made for the November meeting	Clerk	
	Amendments to Grant Policy and then circulate alongside the grant application form	Clerk	
26/27/SPC137	Review Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and post onto website	CLerk	
26/27/SPC139	Enhanced maintenance grant application – chase Tracey Harris again	JC	
	Quote for weed killing/silt clearance along roads and pavements	LP	
	Wolfester Terrace – ask Councillor Hobhouse for the best contact and draft and email to them to ask for advice on options	Clerk/Councillor Cattermull	**COMPLETED**
	Contact Macdonalds regarding site problems	Clerk	**COMPLETED**
26/27/SPC140	Investigate Somerset Rivers Authority Community Flood Action Flood to determine what can be applied for and if relevant complete the grant application.	Councillor Cattermull	
26/27/SPC144	Circulate information from LCN regarding youth workers	JC	
26/27/SPC145	Record of councillors training	Clerk	
26/27/SPC146	Check Sparkford Storage planning position regarding additional building	Clerk	
	SEPTEMBER MEETING		
26/27/SPC104	Engagement with the police regarding antisocial behaviour	JC	**COMPLETED**
26/27/SPC117	Request for signage at old Haynes building chaser	Clerk	**COMPLETED**
26/27/SPC117	Planning application 25/00522/OUT chase Somerset Planning regarding a response to document placed on the planning portal	Clerk	**COMPLETED**
26/27/SPC114	Playing Field and Diocese agreement to sell land back to three houses in Twines Close. Contact estate agent for a progress update	JC	**COMPLETED**
26/27/SPC114	Contact contractor regarding completing the fencing at the Cricket Ground	LP	
26/27/SPC114	Explore wifi in the parish hall	TT	
26/27/SPC114	Place onto agenda for parish hall agreement from trustees to sell the parish hall once the village hall is completed	TT	
26/27/SPC103	Letter to Meta re Facebook administration rights to be submitted alongside ID	AQ/KE	**COMPLETED**
26/27/SPC103	Councillors Register of Interests – chase two remaining outstanding	Clerk	**COMPLETED**
26/27/SPC114	Repairs to picnic bench in Daisy Wood	DW	

26/27/SPC115	Obtain quote for weed killing/clearance and silt clearance along roads and pavements	DW	
26/27/SPC115	Contact Somerset Highways to review what traffic calming measures can be put in place at Wolfester Terrace and potentially the High Street	Clerk	**COMPLETED**
26/27/SPC117	Ask scouts if they can remove more tree collars from Millenium Copse	TT	
26/27/SPC117	Contact Greenslade Taylor Hunt to enquire about footpath becoming official near Bridge Cottage	Clerk	**COMPLETED**
	OCTOBER MEETING		
	JANUARY 2025 MEETING		
	MAY 2025 MEETING		
25/26/022	Checking what are requirements for Land Evaluation Report with Somerset Counci		**ONGOING**
	JUNE 2025		