**SPEEN PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING**

**HELD AT SPEEN PAVILION SPEEN RECREATION GROUND ON WEDNESDAY 14TH OCTOBER 2026 AT 7PM**

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| **Parish Councillors present** | Charlotte Winton (Chair), Jaymie Pocock (Vice-Chair), Alex Taylor, Will Russell, Alison Joules, & Fiona Worby. |
| **In Attendance** | 3 Members of the Public |
| **Clerk/RFO** | Becki Hannington |

| Resolution | Item | Action |
|---|---|---|
| | 1. **Apologies for Absence –** Cllr Gardiner, Cllr Booth, Cllr Amirtharaj, Cllr Miles, Cllr Gourley & Ward Cllr Vickers.<br>2. **Declarations of Interests –** None Declared.<br>3. **Open Session –** 3 members of public in attendance.<br><br>Two members of the public were in attendance to discuss item 7.2 on the agenda – Planning Application at The Rising Sun, Stockcross.<br><br>Item no 7.2 moved forwards at Chair's discretion.<br><br>Residents 1 & 2 addressed the Council to discuss the planning application at The Rising Sun, Stockcross of which they are the applicants. They advised that the property has been purchased with view of turning it into family home for them to occupy, along with one additional unit in the old public house carpark, and discussed their plans to rebuild the property in keeping with the village and ensuring that the front of the property still looks like the existing public house, whilst the new additional property at the rear of the existing building will be built in a more modern finish.<br><br>The residents advised that there are no objections raised to this planning application on the WBC planning portal, but there are many in support of the application. The residents advised that there has been a neutral planning comment returned from the occupant of the neighbouring property raising their concerned regarding the proposed planters along the wall and stating that they would prefer a French drain for rain run off as the neighbouring wall is a single brick wall. The residents confirmed that they were happy to incorporate anything needed in this regard.<br><br>Cllrs were all in agreement that the Rising Sun public property in its current state is an eyesore in the village due to its rundown appearance, and all feel reassured that the property is being redeveloped sensitively and in keeping with the visual element of the village. Cllrs wished the residents well with their application and resolved to submit comments of 'No Objections to WBC.'<br><br>**19:07 Cllr Joules arrived at the meeting.**<br><br>One member of the public was in attendance from WBC Libraries to discuss item no 14 on the agenda – Pop-Up Library Update.<br><br>Item no 14 moved forwards at the Chair's discretion. | |

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The representative from WBC Libraries advised that in the last twelve months there have been 894 new registered library users, with 104 of those coming from the parish, making 998 loans during that period.

They also advised that during the two pop-up library sessions that have run at Speen Welcome Space at the Starting Gate public house that 18 people have attended the service and borrowed a total of 12 items. It was confirmed that these figures do not include Library at Home users.

It was advised that as well as a borrowing service, Digital support officers have attended a session to offer digital support to users of the pop-up library, which was very well received. Cllrs agreed that this needs to be more well-advertised so that residents know that this service is available at the pop-up library.

Cllrs agreed that they felt that raising awareness for the pop-up library service was needed to increase users.

It was confirmed by the WBC Libraries representative that the pop-up library service is currently advertised via their customer newsletter and shared with the Starting Gate public house & Speen Welcome Space to advertise as well as SPC, however the number of attendees at Speen Welcome Space seems to have declined since changing from Speen Community Café.

WBC Libraries requested a list of possible venues in the parish where they could advertise the pop-up library. Cllrs suggested Churches, Village Halls, Co-op, Brummel Road Stores, schools & nurseries, external wall of the Starting Gate public House and at Speen Pavilion.

The Council advised that they feel at this time, due to the lack of history and data that they are unable to decide if the pop-up library will continue for the next financial year and have requested an update on this from WBC Libraries for the next full council meeting in November, so that this can be properly assessed. The Chair advised that the preparation for the 2027/2028 budget has been deferred until November, so that this can be completed by the incoming Clerk who will be in post from 16th November 2026.

Clerk to request publicity for digital literacy for SPC to advertise.
Clerk to send list of possible venues for advertising to WBC Libraries.
Clerk to request further update from WBC Libraries for the November Full Council meeting.

**3 members of public left the meeting.**

**4. Minutes**

**Proposal:** To approve the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 09-09-2026 (draft).

The Council resolved to approve the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 09-09-2026.

Clerk to upload copy of approved minutes to website.

**5. Financial Report (Clerk as RFO)**

5.1 **Bank Balance -** To note the bank balance as at 30-09-2026.

The Clerk reported bank balance at 30-09-2026 as £190,666.49.

This was duly noted by all Cllr's.

5.2 **September Payments -** To retrospectively note payments for September 2026.

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All payments made were duly noted by all Cllr's.

5.3 **Finance Reports to 30-09-2026.**
**Proposal:** To accept the Finance Reports to 30-09-2026.

The Council resolved to approve the Finance Reports to 30-09-2026.

5.4 **Budget v Actual Report Q2**
**Proposal:** To accept the Budget v Actual Report (Q2).

The council resolved to accept the Budget v Actual Report (Q2).

**6. Internal Audit Appointment 2027/2028**
**Proposal: -** To appoint Parish and Town Auditing Services as the internal auditor for 2027/2028.

The Council resolved to appoint Parish and Town Auditing Services as the internal auditor for 2027/2028.

Clerk to sign and return letter of engagement on behalf of SPC.

**7. Planning Applications -** To consider the following applications and agree comments to be submitted to West Berkshire Council:

7.1 **26/01328/FUL – Post Office, 57 Stockcross, Newbury, RG20 8LJ**
Creation of new carpark for the village shop with minor alterations to the shop.

The Council resolved to submit comments of Support to WBC, but requesting the case officer to ensure adequate provision of cycle parking, waste and recycling bins, dog hook and dog waste bin.

Clerk to compose and submit comments to WBC via the planning portal on behalf of SPC.

7.2 **26/01949/FUL – The Rising Sun, Ermin Street, Stockcross, RG20 8LG**
Demolition of former public house and residential flat, erection of replacement detached dwelling, with one additional detached dwelling in the former public house carpark.

The Council resolved to return comments of no objections to WBC:

Clerk to submit comments to WBC via the planning portal on behalf of SPC.

**8. Planning Decisions -** for information only

8.1 **26/00032/FUL –** The Vineyard, Stockcross, Newbury, RG20 8JU **– GRANTED**

8.2 **26/01123/FUL –** The Vineyard, Stockcross, Newbury, RG20 8JU – **GRANTED**

8.3 **26/01344/HOUSE –** Woodbine Cottage, Cromwell Terrace, Bath Road, Speen – **GRANTED**

8.4 **26/01544/COND –** Manor Farmhouse, Benham Park, Marsh Benham, Newbury- **APPROVED**

8.5 **26/01717/HOUSE –** Rookwood Cottage, 30 Stockcross, Newbury, RG20 8JX - **GRANTED**

All Planning Decisions were duly noted by all councillors.

**9. SID/VAS Applications**

9.1 **Proposal:** To review and approve the associated terms for the part-funding of the replacement SID/VAS devices in Stockcross.

The Council resolved to approve the associated terms, and to provide full funding for the 2x replacement SID/VAS devices in Stockcross, one at each end of the village.

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Clerk to add funds to earmarked reserve and notify resident submitting the application of this decision and support with the application where appropriate.

9.2 **Proposal**: To review and approve the associated terms for the part-funding of the SID/VAS devices in Grove Road.

The Council resolved to defer the application for the replacement SID/VAS devices in Grove Road until further information can be obtained from WBC advising exactly where Grove Road sits in the list of sites awaiting replacements in order to identify exactly what funded will be needed for these.

Clerk to email Traffic and Road Safety Team at WBC to obtain this information and cascade to all Cllrs once received.

**10. ROSPA Medium Risk Repairs**
**Proposal:** To review and approve the quotation for medium-risk repairs to play equipment in Speen and Stockcross identified on the quarterly ROSPA inspection, to be funded from CIL monies.

The Council resolved to approve the quotation for the medium-risk repairs at Speen and Stockcross to be funded from CIL monies.

Clerk to instruct contractor to commence works as per quotation.

**11. Emergency Play Equipment Repairs -** To note emergency expenditure authorised by the Clerk for emergency repairs carried out to play equipment at Speen Recreation Ground, to be funded from CIL monies.

The Clerk advised that they authorised emergency repairs to construct a new slide surround at Speen Recreation Ground play area to make secure and safe at a cost of £540 + VAT.

The Council resolved to fund this cost from CIL monies.

**12. Register of Councillors Interests -** To receive updated Register of Councillors Interests from Cllr Pocock and for this to be signed in the presence of the council.

Cllr Pocock advised of change to her Councillors Register of Interests. A new ROI form was completed and signed in the presence of the council.

Clerk to send amened ROI to WBC and upload to SPC website.

**13. Website MOT Report –** To note the findings of the website MOT report and agree any further actions.

The website MOT report was duly reviewed by all Cllrs, and it was discussed that Cllr Worby would amend the website pages as per the website MOT report. It was also resolved that further functionality should be added to the website including a promotional items page, advertising for the Speen pop-up library, a blog which all Cllr's can contribute to and for the newsletter to be sent from the website however, it was discussed that it may be sensible to switch to another hosting provider to ensure the functionality that is required.

The Council resolved to defer any updates on the new website so that Cllr Worby and the incoming Clerk can work on the website together.

Clerk to obtain current charges for website hosting and share these with all Cllr's at a future meeting.

**14. Pop-Up Library Update**
**Proposal:** To review the Pop-Up Library update from WBC and review and approve the service costs for 2027/2028.

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The pop-up library update from WBC was reviewed by all Cllr's.

The Council resolved to defer the decision on continuing the Speen pop-up library for 2027/28 until the next full council meeting so that this can be reviewed once more data on the users is available from WBC.

**15. Policies & Procedures**

15.1 **Freedom of Information Policy**
**Proposal:** To review and approve the latest Freedom of Information Policy (no revisions), subject to any amendments agreed by the council.

The Council resolved to approve the latest Freedom of Information Policy with no revisions.

Clerk to amend review dates & upload latest version to the website, and update governance review tracker.

15.2 **IT & Email Policy**
**Proposal:** To review and approve the latest IT & Email Policy (no revisions), subject to any amendments agreed by the council.

The Council resolved to approve the latest IT & Email Policy with revisions agreed by the Council.

Clerk to make agreed changes to the policy & upload latest version to the website, and update governance review tracker.

**16. Future Planning**

16.1 **Event Branding**
**Proposal:** To review and approve the revised proof for the branded feather flag and review and approve the revised quotation for the branded feather flag, banner and tablecloth.

The Council resolved to request revised proofs to be sent with the colours on the branded items to be inverted, with the main colour for the tablecloth, feather flag and banner to be green with the council logo in white and the font in black.

Clerk to request amended proofs for all items and revised quotation to be put to the council for their approval at a future meeting.

16.2 **Speen Pavilion Redevelopment –** Update from Clerk.

The Clerk advised that the next steps are to arrange a Saturday meeting for a site visit for all Cllrs to view all areas of the pavilion building in the daylight and then agree ideas for next steps with the view to engage an architect to create existing and proposed plans for the building. As this is looking likely to be November, Clerk will put proposed dates to the incoming Clerk so that they can be involved in the meeting and lead the project from the beginning.

Proposed dates: 21st November, 28th November & 5th December 2026.

16.3 **Other Projects –** To discuss other ideas for potential future projects.

Cllr Worby discussed being approached by a parent whose child attend the Castle School but lives within the parish to discuss the possibility of a school crossing to make accessing the school safer for parents and children. The Council discussed that this was previously discussed when speeding concerns on Grove Road were being addressed as it was raised that many parents use the route to take children

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in large pushchairs to the Castle School however, it was recorded in the minutes from that previous discussion that WBC took the stance that as this was not an official route that this suggestions was unlikely to be supported due to costs. The Council discussed that input would be needed from other parents and the school in order to try and get backing for this as a project.

It was resolved that Cllr Worby would email the local MP to raise the issue with them directly.

Clerk to speak to Ward Cllr Amirtharaj to discuss the issue and to Cllr Gourley from WBC to try and obtain the evidence from the latest speed data in Grove Road. Clerk also to contact the Castle School to see if it is possible to obtain data of how many pupils attending the school come from the parish.

17. **Clerk & Councillor Updates -** Updates for information only on current projects/enquiries.

    The Clerk advised that the new Remembrance Day silhouettes will need displaying in Speen and Stockcross no later than Sunday 25th October.

    Cllr Winton will be responsible for displaying these in Stockcross and Cllr Amirtharaj will be responsible for displaying these in Speen.

    Clerk to send out reminder text w/c 19th October 2026.

    The Clerk advised that many Cllr's still need to register for their GDPR training and reminder all Cllr's that this need to be completed by 31st December 2026. The Clerk also reminded all Cllr's that this is an audit requirement.

    Those Cllr's who have not yet registered for the course will need to do so as a matter of urgency and send invoices to the Clerk to make payment.

18. **Date of Next Meeting -** Wednesday 11th November 2026.
19. **Exclusion of Press and Public to Resolve:** That in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted and in the public interest the Press and Public be excluded for Agenda items 19 & 20 under section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

**PART II**

20. **Staff Matters**

**Cllr Winton closed the meeting at 21:07.**

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| ***Signed:*** | ***Name (print):*** | ***Date:*** |
|---|---|---|
| | ***Position:*** | |

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