

South Swindon Parish Council
Full Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2025 at 7.15pm
In the Parish Council Office, Gladstone Street, SN1 2AU

Present:	Cllr Neil Hopkins (Chair)	Cllr Rebecca Banwell-Moore (Vice-Chair)
	Cllr Saleh Ahmed	Cllr Sam James
	Cllr Junab Ali	Cllr Linda Kasmaty
	Cllr Steve Allsopp	Cllr Marianne Le Coyte-Grinney
	Cllr Meural Cardoso	Cllr Jamal Miah
	Cllr Mike Davies	Cllr Trish Philpot
	Cllr John Firmin	Cllr Graham Philpot
	Cllr Patrick Herring	Cllr Tom Silberberg

Apologies:	Cllr Dave Griffiths	Cllr Janine Howarth
	Cllr Domingos Dias	Nadine Watts

Absent:	Cllr Abdul Hamid	Cllr Danial Vales
	Cllr Joseph Pereira	

Officers:	Jake Mee	CEO
	Max Tanner	Governance & Support Lead

Public: 1

Public Questions: A resident attended the meeting asked the following questions:

Question: What will happen to the area behind the hoardings in the hot house when work is complete? Will the Council consider working with volunteers to provide a café facility within the park?

Answer: The key aim is to level the area and replace damaged paving slabs. We are exploring the possible ways in which we can use that space, which will be discussed at the appropriate committee. Once the work is complete, and the area made safe, we will open the area to the public but have not yet decided what will occupy the space. One of the options is a containerised café, the Council is exploring the possibility of working with volunteers at a café.

Question: Has there been changes in the water quality following the recent water quality analysis?

Answer: The quality of the water at the Miller and Carter site is a cause for concern but the water within Queen's Park is of bathing water quality. There has been an improvement to the quality of the water following the completion of drainage works.

Question: How is the Council managing the duckweed within Queen's Park Lake?

Answer: We've been exploring a number of approaches to deal with the Duckweed in Queen's Park Lake. We are looking at de-silting, starting with the top pond, as a trial. This will reduce the levels of nutrients which the duckweed feeds upon. Following this we hope to increase the amount of aquatic vegetation in and around the lake to help combat the invasive

duckweed. We are also exploring the possibility of funding for Biodiversity Net Gain funds to help tackle the issue.

Question: Will the toilets in the Town Gardens be revamped as part of the work to the bowl?

Answer: Toilet improvements form a part of the Bowl redevelopment, full designs will be available in the Bowl Update item, later in the meeting.

2526 – 211

Apologies

The council accepted apologies from Cllr D Griffiths, Cllr D Dias, Cllr J Howarth & Cllr N Watts.

2526 – 212

Declaration of interest & Applications for dispensation

None

2526 – 213

Chair's Report

The first two Christmas Events at the Town Gardens have gone well and we've seen over a thousand visitors a day. I am looking forward to the final two events next weekend and a big thank you to all staff and volunteers who have made this possible.

There has been a significant amount of planting in Badbury Park Community centre, it has been great to see so many volunteers and councillors getting stuck in with community planting in this area.

We have had our Christmas Light Switch-Ons at Broadgreen, Cavendish Square and Badbury Park as well as in Old Town. They have gone as well if not better than previous years and I am thrilled with the turnout at each of these events.

2526 – 214

Minutes – Full Council

The Council were presented with the draft minutes for the Full Council Meeting held on 18 November 2025 for approval. A copy of which appears in the Minute Book as Appendix A.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 18 November 2025 are approved as a true record.

2526 – 215

Minutes – Planning

The Council were presented with the draft minutes for the Planning Committee Meeting held on 25 November for adoption and approval. A copy of which appears in the Minute Book as Appendix B.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 25 November 2025 are adopted and approved as a true record.

2526 – 216

Minutes – Leisure, Environment & Amenities

The Council were presented with the draft minutes for the Leisure, Environment & Amenities Committee Meeting held on 2 December 2025 for adoption and approval. A copy of which appears in the Minute Book as Appendix C.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Leisure, Environment & Amenities Committee Meeting held on 2 December 2025 are adopted and approved as a true record.

2526 – 217

Draft Budget 2026-27

Councillors received and were asked to consider the draft budget for 2026-27. A copy of which appears in the Minute Book as Appendix D.

Recommendations

3.1 That the budget for 2026/27 as detailed in the attached report is recommended for

approval at Full Council in January 2026.

3.2 That the Precept demand for 2026/27 of £3,752,904 is recommended for approval at Full Council in January 2026.

RESOLVED: To approve recommendation 3.1 & 3.2.

2526 – 218

Swindon BID

The Council received a report regarding the creation of a new BID area and were asked to consider the position of the Parish Council. A copy of which appears in the Minute Book as Appendix E.

Recommendations

3.1 Endorse the creation of the Swindon BID area.

3.2 Nominate Cllr John Firmin to sit as the Parish Council's representative on the Swindon BID Shadow Board.

RESOLVED: That South Swindon Parish Council notes the ongoing work to explore the potential creation of a new Business Improvement District (BID) in Swindon and supports the continuation of this process, including:

- Engagement with local businesses to assess demand and viability
- Development of feasibility studies and consultation activities
- Information gathering regarding potential scope, governance, and funding models

The Council recognises the importance of business-led regeneration initiatives and will continue to monitor developments with interest.

2526 – 219

Transfer of assets to Parish Council

The Deputy CEO submitted a report providing an update on the transfer of certain assets across to the Parish Council. A copy of which appears in the Minute Book as Appendix F.

Recommendations

3.1 Note the contents of this report.

3.2 Request the Assets Working Party consider recent correspondence on the Badbury Park Play Areas and make proposals on the Parish Council's next steps.

RESOLVED: To note the contents of the report.

RESOLVED: To arrange a meeting of Services Working Party to consider recent correspondence on the Badbury Park Play Areas and propose recommendations on the Parish Council's next steps.

2526 – 220

Fostering Friendly Employer Pledge

The Council were asked to consider a request from Swindon Borough Council to sign the Fostering Friendly Employer pledge. A copy of which appears in the Minute Book as Appendix G.

RESOLVED: To sign the Fostering Friendly Employer pledge.

2526 – 221

Queen's Park Hot House

The Council received a verbal update from the Governance & Support Lead regarding the Queen's Park Hot House.

RESOLVED: To note the update.

2526 – 222

Bowl Update

The Council received an update from the Project Manager regarding the Bowl redevelopment. A copy of which appears in the Minute Book as Appendix H.

RESOLVED: To note the contents of the report.

2526 – 223

Project Progress Report

The Council received a report detailing the progress of projects undertaken by the Parish Council. A copy of which appears in the Minute Book as Appendix I.

RESOLVED: To note the contents of the report.

2526 – 224

Queen's Park Pond

The CEO presented a report detailing dredging works at Queen's Park Pond. A copy of which appears in the Minute Book as Appendix J.

Recommendations

3.1 That the scope of works is approved and the contractor be instructed to carry out this work for £9,985 + VAT

3.2 That parish officers hire the required track mats for £350+VAT

RESOLVED: To approve recommendations 3.1 & 3.2

2526 – 225

First Interim Internal Audit 2025-26

The Council received a report from the internal auditor. A copy of which appears in the Minute Book as Appendix K.

RESOLVED: To note the contents of the report.

2526 – 226

Admission of Public and Press

RESOLVED: that in accordance with standing order 3(d) that 'in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded, and they be instructed to withdraw'.

Reason: Commercial Sensitivity.

2526 – 227

Parish Catering Facilities

The Council were asked to consider a report from the CEO regarding catering in South Swindon. A copy of which appears in the Confidential Minute Book as Appendix A.

Recommendations

3.1 Commission professional advice and engage specialist hospitality consultants to undertake market testing, financial modelling, and valuation work to inform the council's decision.

3.2 Explore all options and conduct thorough due diligence on each operating model, including detailed financial projections, risk assessment, and alignment with strategic objectives.

3.3 Consider dual-site potential and assess the feasibility and market appetite for a combined Town Gardens and Queens Park café operation as part of the options appraisal.

3.4 Provide examples of similar catering provisions in parks and similar locations that may inform the most suitable path to take.

3.5 Align with Heritage Fund Bid to ensure café operating model decision-making timeline allows for integration with the Heritage Fund application development and maintains flexibility for bid requirements.

3.6 Early engagement and open dialogue with Greenspace Eateries regarding lease expiry and transition planning to ensure continuity of service as well as deciding on the terms of any extension granted.

3.7 Convene the Assets Working Party to explore preferences, risk appetite, and strategic priorities before finalising the recommended approach.

RESOLVED: To convene the Assets Working Party to discuss this item further.

Meeting Closes at 20:19

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Parish Council