



Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 11th March 2026 at 7pm

Present: Councillor J. Shepherd (Chair), Councillor P. Gwinnett (Vice Chair), Councillor E. Brindley, Councillor A. Dronzek, Councillor R. Wood, Councillor P. Ballard, Councillor J. Wakefield, Councillor C. Nicholls,

Mrs A Barker (Clerk).

Mr S.J. Burton (Retiring clerk).

No members of the public.

Apologies: Councillors S Beardmore (SCC), N. Moulton (SMDC).

Cllr J. Shepherd (Chair) declared the meeting open at 7pm.

34/26. Declarations of Interest.

- i. Councillor Nicholls declared an interest in item 17(iv) on the agenda - SPCA invoice for £42 for a planning course he attended.

35/26. Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 11th February 2026.

- i. The minutes of the above meeting were declared a true record proposed by Cllr Shepherd and seconded by Cllr Gwinnett and agreed by all and were signed by the Chair and the Clerk.

36/26. Action Updates.

- i. Cllr Shepherd reported that he had met with a stonemason, Julian Jeffries (he had previously completed repair work at the Church), in order to look at repairing/replacing the damaged stonework on the Roundhouse (minute 197/25 i). A cost of £300, for this work, was proposed by Councillor Shepherd and seconded by Councillor Gwinnett and unanimously carried. **Action: Cllr Shepherd.**
- ii. Cllr Ballard reported that there had not been a meeting of the village hall – therefore the action regarding ownership of the perimeter fence around the playing field is carried forward (minute 189/25). **Action: Cllr Ballard.**
- iii. Cllr Dronzek reported that he had received two quotes for the tree work in St Peter's Churchyard (minute 25/26). A third quote was expected later in the coming week. Further consideration of this matter was therefore carried over until all quotes had been received. **Action: Cllr Dronzek**
- iv. Cllr Wood reported that following the discussion which took place at the previous meeting, relating to the difficult road junction where Uttoxeter Road, Saltersford Lane and the B5032 meet (minute 26/26) he had emailed and spoken to Su Beardmore (SCC). This matter had been explored previously. There was some uncertainty regarding a Stop sign, but this is considered preferable to a Give Way sign. Su Beardmore will be requested to refer the matter to SCC Highways. Rumble strips may be an option. No timescale given for this.
- v. Cllr Shepherd reported that he had drafted a letter to the owner of land at Town Head, relating to parking and mud on the road, which had been discussed at the last meeting, which had been issued by the Clerk. No reply has been received to date. This letter was read out later in the meeting.

37/26. Alton Towers.



Cllrs Shepherd, Moulton (SMDC) and Beardmore (SCC) have attended a meeting with Simon Burge, the Head of Community Liaison at Alton Towers. A number of issues were discussed including, restricted access for vehicles on country lanes, having a 'no left turn' sign at the junction of Malthouse Road and New Road, Alton, (although a SCC Highways matter, Alton Towers may be able to support this issue). Other issues included temporary traffic lights in the centre of the village at certain busy times and staff completing litter picks. It may also be possible for Alton Towers staff to help at a community event as they are allowed two days per year for voluntary activity. Cllr Shepherd will contact Alton Towers if any opportunities arise.

38/26. Footpaths.

- i. Cllr Shepherd referred to the letter which had been sent to the landowner at Town Head asking that the footpath be kept clear at Town Head Farm and mud and debris be removed from the road. Cllr Wood expressed his disappointment that the letter had not been issued in stronger terms. There had been a detailed complaint from a resident, and in his view, only some of these points had been covered in the correspondence. Cllr Moulton will be asked if he can report instances of alleged illegal tipping in the area. Any further complaints from residents will be recorded and the individuals encouraged to report directly to SMDC via the website. **Action: The clerk to liaise with Cllr Moulton prior to the next meeting.**

39/26. Village Hall.

- i. Cllr Ballard reported there has not been a meeting since the last council meeting. There had been an email received from Alan Heath (Village Hall Committee and Section 106 Group) regarding mowing of the play area. This is part of the regular work of the lengthsman, and will commence once the new lengthsman is appointed w.e.f April 2026. The email also referred to reducing the brambles at the back of the play area. This could be accommodated by the Section 106 group, and Cllr Shepherd suggested that he and Simon Heaton might be able to deal with this. **Action: Cllr Shepherd.**

40/26. Lengthsman.

- i. The lengthsman has completed a tidy up. Cllr Gwinnett had walked the paths that day and had no observations to report.

41/26. Highways and Road Safety.

- i. Cllr Wood advised that he had reported 11 potholes around the village. There are others which are still wide open e.g. Uttoxeter Road/Limekiln Lane, and Cllr Wood reported that he would chase these up, along with potholes in the High Street, noting that Alton Towers season is due to commence. There is also a pothole outside the village hall – all previously reported. **Action: Cllr Wood**
- ii. Cllr Wood reported that a resident had enabled potholes at Town Head to be temporarily filled.

42/26. Parish Cemetery and St. Peter's Church Yard.

- i. Cllr Dronzek reported, as above (Minute 36/26 iii) that he was waiting for a third quote before work could progress. **Action: Cllr Dronzek to obtain third quote.**



43/26. Planning and Licensing Applications.

- i. There was nothing for this item of business.

44/26. Planning decisions.

- i. There was nothing for this item of business.

45/26. Section 106 funds for playing field and play area update.

- i. There had been no meeting since the last council meeting. Cllr Shepherd to contact Alan Heath to arrange the commencement of the agreed work on the playground, so that funds are being spent as authorised. A meeting needs to be fixed, probably for next month, with a request for Angela Dale (SMDC) to attend. New ideas as to how to spend the funds need to be discussed. **Action: the Clerk to arrange a meeting of the Section 106 Group. Cllr Shepherd to contact Alan Heath**

46/26. Parish Council Updates.

- i. **Round House Work** - Cllr Wood had identified an opportunity to secure a grant from the Moorlands Partnership Board, for work to the Roundhouse. A cost of £2,500 had previously been approved for remedial works. A quote for the damaged stonework had been obtained at £300 (Minute 36/26 i). Re-pointing of the roof was also required, which would necessitate scaffolding. Cllr Wood could consider the requisitioned report and make a bid – it was possible that 75% of the work might be covered by a grant. This was agreed. **Action: Cllr Wood to make a bid for grant approval.**
- ii. **Clerk Expenses** - Cllr Gwinnett reported that a laptop and printer had been purchased for the new clerk at a cost of £469.16 net; £562.99 gross which was £230 less than the maximum price, agreed at the last meeting. A Microsoft Business package had also been secured at an annual cost of £115.20 (£9.60 per month) which was £7.35 less than had been approved at the previous meeting. In order that the council has a dedicated telephone contact number, it was proposed that a SIM only mobile phone contract be secured, at a cost of £13 per month. This was proposed by Cllr Gwinnett and seconded by Cllr Shepherd and carried. **Action: Clerk to arrange SIM only contract and provide new contact number for council.**
- iii. **Groundsman** - Cllr Gwinnett gave an update on the tender process for Grounds Maintenance Services. There were 8 respondents to the application, but one later withdrew, leaving 7 detailed tenders submitted. The tenders were considered for value for money, and there was a wide range of prices quoted. There followed a discussion regarding the tendering process. Cllr Gwinnett then proposed accepting the tender for Key Maintenance Group at an annual cost of £5,720 per annum excluding VAT. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Shepherd and carried on a vote. There was a further discussion regarding the accumulated level of moss on the pathways in the parish cemetery, which requires additional moss brushing to take back to stone, before the monthly maintenance can commence. Cllr Gwinnett therefore proposed a one- off piece of work, to clear the moss, supplemental to the tendering contract, at a cost of £425 excluding VAT. Cllr Wakefield seconded the proposal and the vote was carried. Cllr Gwinnett also suggested as part of the tendering process, that the three smaller businesses who had tendered for the groundsman contract, be referred to the lengthsman vacancy which will shortly be filled. **Action: Clerk to write to successful and unsuccessful bidders, notifying outcome of tender campaign and to notify smaller businesses of lengthsman opportunity.**



47/26. Correspondence: Requiring response:

- i. Enquiry about having an allotment and reply advising how to apply.

For information only:

- ii. Letter sent to owner of land at Town Head re footpath and mud/debris on the road.
- iii. Email re: various on-line courses from the SPCA (circulated)
- iv. SPCA Health and wellbeing sessions (circulated)
- v. Business planning course (circulated).
- vi. Local Council award scheme (circulated).
- vii. SMDC Chairman’s charity ball (circulated).

The Clerk read out the correspondence.

48/26. Finance:

- i. Clerk salary £467.48
- ii. Buxus Green invoice February £724.27 (paid).
- iii. Interest income February £41.53
- iv. SPCA invoice £42.00 Planning course-Cllr Nicholls (paid). Proposer Cllr Shepherd, Seconder Cllr Wood – vote carried.
- v. Asus laptop computer and HP printer bought on behalf of the council by the clerk. Invoice to the council. Computer Net £416.66 VAT £83.33 Gross £499.99. Printer Net £52.50 VAT £10.50 Gross £63.00. (paid authorised minute 30/26 iii).
- vi. Authorised payments were signed off by the Council
- vii. Current bank balances were signed off by the Council

The finances were read out by the Clerk.

Cllr Shepherd concluded by thanking Selwyn Burton, the outgoing and retiring Clerk for his many years of sterling work and support for the Council. Mr Burton suitably responded. A gift presentation from councillors was made.

There being no other business the meeting was closed by Councillor Shepherd at 7.50 pm

Signed..... Chairman Wednesday 8 April 2026

Signed..... Clerk