

St Martins Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting of the St Martins Parish Council held on Thursday 8th May 2025 at 7.00 pm in St Martins Village Hall.

PRESENT: Cllr's Nigel Court, Sophie Hughes-Saunier, Craig Jones, Duncan Laing, Steve Morris, Sue Schofield and Helen Williams.

Also in attendance, Shropshire Cllr's Brian Evans and Carl Rowley, seven members of the public. PC Mike Hogg and the parish clerk.

Councillor Sue Schofield opened the meeting by welcoming over twenty members of the public plus the two new elected Unitary Members of Shropshire Council, Brian Evans and Carl Rowley, following the elections on 1st of May who now represent the parish councils of Ellesmere Rural, St Martins and Weston Rhyn.

Before the meeting opened Councillor Sue Schofield announced that this year's Local Hero Award goes to Joyce Sands. Shropshire Councillors Brian Evans and Carl Rowley made the presentation. Joyce then gave a speech on all the work she has done in the parish over the last 50 years and thanked everyone for the award.

089/05/25.C Election of Chairman

After a ballot, Councillor Nigel Court was elected as Chairman of the Parish Council.

090/05/25.C Appointment of Vice-Chairman

Councillor Sue Schofield was re-appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council.

091/05/25.C Election of Chairman of the Finance Committee

Councillor Helen Williams was re-elected as Chairman of the Finance Committee.

092/05/25.C Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence had been received from Cllr Natalie Rowley.

Proposed, seconded and carried that this apology is accepted.

Parish
Clerk

093/05/25.C Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Cllr Sophie Hughes-Saunier declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in item 106/05/25.C Allotments.

Parish
Clerk

The Parish Clerk reported on Shropshire Council's changes to the way we report and record Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) and Other Registrable Interests (ORI).

094/05/25.C Parish Council Casual Vacancies

The Parish Clerk explained the process now for filling the seven vacancies on the parish council.

095/05/25.C Appointment of Committees 2025/2026

It was agreed to defer any appointments to committees until the parish council has filled some of the seven vacancies. In the meantime, all matters would be referred to council except for the following.

095/05/05/25.C Grievance Panel Committee (4)
(Vice Chairman + Cllrs Craig Jones & Duncan Laing plus one vacancy)

095/05/06/25.C Disciplinary Committee (4)
(Chairman + Cllrs Steve Morris & Helen Williams plus one vacancy)

096/05/25.C Appointment of Representatives to Outside Bodies and Organisations 2025/2026

096/05/01/25.C Area Committee SALC (2)
(Cllrs Nigel Court & Helen Williams)

096/05/02/25.C Local Joint Committee LJC (1 + reserve)
(Agreed to defer any appointments to this committee until the parish council has filled some of the seven vacancies).

097/05/25.C Council Minutes

Resolved: that the minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 10th of April 2025 having been previously circulated be approved and adopted as a true record.

Chairman

098/05/25.C Public Session

No members of the public present wished to raise any issues with the parish council.

099/05/25.C Urgent Items

There were no urgent items that related to financial, health and safety issues or issues that require immediate attention.

100/05/25.C Parish Clerks Progress Report

The Parish Clerk reported that there had been little to report since the last meeting due to the run up to the elections.

101/05/25.C

Police Report

The Chairman welcomed PC Mike Hogg from Oswestry Police Station who covers the Oswestry Rural North area. The three remaining priorities for the parish still include traffic speeding, drug-related instances and other traffic issues with attention continuing to be focused on the mini roundabouts by Stans Superstore and around the school.

However, in recent weeks a four priority has been added to the list with an increase in Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) instances being recorded in the village, especially around the school. PC Mike Hogg added that his team will continue to patrol and monitor locations being highlighted for ASB issues and deal with any offenders appropriately. Whilst there is no precise definition of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), broadly, it is acting in a way that causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress. It is acknowledged that what one person perceives as ASB, might not be perceived in the same way as another person and there is a fine line between Anti-Social behaviour and disputes between neighbours/residents. We ask that members of the community consider the consequences of their actions, and we would ask everyone to consider how their actions may affect others who also live nearby. Please consider how your behaviour, a family member's or a friend's behaviour may cause annoyance or disturbance to others and adjust it as appropriate.

In answer to a question raised by one of the Councillors on how to dispose of redundant household knives, PC Mike Hogg said that if anyone you know have any knives or bladed articles in which you wish to safely dispose of please get in touch with your Rural North team at oswestryrn.snt@westmercia.police.uk and we can make arrangements for them to be collected and disposed of. This can include any blades, even of a decorative purpose to ensure they are safely disposed of and not ending up in the wrong hands or on our streets.

At this point Cllr Duncan Laing left the meeting.

102/05/25.C

Highway Issues

All issues on highways are now being reported and listed on Shropshire Council's FixMyStreet. An update from Shropshire Council on this system had shown that they had replaced the damaged lid on the dog bin, repaired the pothole on Ellesmere Road and that work has been completed on the flooding issue in Clarkes Lane.

Parish
Clerk

Resolved to again apply for the Environmental Maintenance Grant from Shropshire Council to go towards the grass cutting contract

Parish
Clerk

103/05/25.C

Street Lighting

The only outstanding issue was the Shropshire Council streetlight that is still not working on Overton Road at its junction with Garden Village.

Parish
Clerk

104/05/25.C Financial Matters**Accounts approved since last meeting**

BACS	A G Royce	Grass Cutting Contract	£1875.00
BACS	Highline Electrical	Street Lighting Inst/New Lights	£35,319.76

Accounts for Payment

BACS	Staff	Salary & Expenses	£1210.48
BACS	HMRC	PAYE & NI	£445.74
BACS	Nigel Thomas	Play Area Inspections	£26.00
BACS	Huw Manford	Litter Picking, etc.	£343.20
BACS	St Martins Village H	Room Hire	£24.00
BACS	Audit Solutions	Internal Audit	£450.00
BACS	Vision ICT	Website Hosting	£161.26
BACS	RoSPA	Arthan's Pond Inspections	£1354.80
BACS	SALC	Affiliation Fees	£1572.17
DR	HSBC	Bank Charges	£10.00
DD	Veolia	Bin Emptying	£55.66

Resolved that the above payments be agreed in accordance with the Parish Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

105/05/25.C Audit of Accounts

These accounts, Audit Report and Statements had been circulated to all Cllr's prior to the meeting.

105/05/1/25.C Internal Audit

Cllrs noted the report and comments from the Internal Auditor.
No actions were required.

105/05/2/25.C Annual Governance Statement

Resolved: To approve and sign off the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 of the Annual Return) for the financial year ending 31st March 2025.

105/05/3/25.C Accounting Statements

Resolved: To approve and sign off the Accounting Statements (Section 2 of the Annual Return) for the financial year ending 31st March 2025.

106/05/25.C Allotments

The Parish Clerk reported that there were still several outstanding issues that had not been resolved from the now defunct St Martins Allotments Association. Appendix A, which had been circulated to all Cllrs prior to the meeting, itemized these issues.

Resolved that further legal advice was required from either the SALC or NALC and a paper trial on how the legal advice was sought on the documentation on the allotment handover before a decision could be taken.

Parish
Clerk

107/05/25.C Planning

There were no planning applications to consider or decisions from Shropshire Council to report on.

108/05/25.C Shropshire Council.

Shropshire Councillors Brian Evans and Carl Rowley said they had little to report yet as they had been busy getting to know how Shropshire Council operates. They would be looking at the issues around the school, extra car parking by the Take-a-Ways and the land by the school donated by the Brynkinalt Estate.

Shropshire
Cllrs

109/05/25.C Member of Parliament

There had been no urgent issues since the last meeting that required the attention of our MP Helen Morgan.

110/05/25.C Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC)

All correspondence received from the County Secretary had previously been circulated to all Cllr's.

111/05/25.C Correspondence

There were no additional items of correspondence to report on

112/05/25.C Members Reports

Cllr Steve Morris reported on the missing seat on Moors Bank and suggested this is replaced with an additional one on the grass verge on the corner of Mount Bradford Lane. He suggested that we consider recycled plastic outdoor seating. He also reported the grass verge opposite the junction to Firs Close not being cut and a hedge from properties on Irvine Gardens overhanging the footpath.

Parish
Clerk
Parish
Clerk

Cllr Craig Jones suggested we contact the school over the increasing anti-social behavior of some of their students in the Moors Bank area. The police are aware of this.

Parish
Clerk

Cllr Sophie Hughes-Saunier expressed concern over an increase of children riding dangerously without helmets on electric scooters on the roads by Stans Superstore. Again, the police are aware of this.

Parish
Clerk

Cllr Sue Schofield expressed concern over the speed of traffic on Overton Road and suggested the 30-mph limit is extended further out from the village. She also questioned who maintains the grass area behind the old School House at Ifton and who owns the peacock which is roaming around School Lane.

Parish
Clerk

113/05/25.C

Next Meeting

Next meeting of the Parish Council Thursday 12th June 2025 @ 19.00 in St Martins Village Hall. There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 21.00 pm.

Signed
Chairman

Date

Chairman