

Present: Cllrs Mr S Massey (Chairman), Mr G Fanthom (Vice Chairman), Mrs L Page, Dr R Painter, Mr S Hewitt, Mrs S Woods, Mrs D Chandler, Mr A Osbourne also present Mrs J Cree – Clerk, 7 members of the public.

The Chairman welcomed those present to the Annual Parish Meeting, this is not a Parish Council meeting but an opportunity for residents to raise concerns / make comments.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies of absence were received from Cllr Mrs P Halford and County Councillor Mrs V Wilson sent their apologies.

2. Minutes of the previous meetings held on the 14th March 2024

The minutes of the previous year's meeting were approved as an accurate record of that meeting Cllr S Massey proposed that they be accepted.

3. To discuss any matters arising from the previous Annual Parish Meeting of the 14th March 2024

The Chairman reported that there are not any matters arising from the previous 2024 meeting which have not been addressed during the past 12 months.

4. Report of the Chairman

The Parish Council has had a busy and successful 12 months and thanks goes to all the Cllr's who and it should be remember are volunteers that have contributed.

The Parish Council continue to receive financial assistance from the Community Centre management committee for improvements to the community centre and are grateful and on behalf of the Parish Council and Swindon residents thank the Community Centre management committee for their work, it helps lessen the financial burden on the Parish Council.

The Parish continues to make improvements around the village in line with improvements agreed during the previous 12mths – in no particular order

1. New planters have been installed by Parish Councillors and are replanted seasonally and plants gifted from local nurseries
2. Old bus terminus area has been improved with new slabbing, bench and planting
3. Swindon Parish Council has purchased its own SID and benefited from a deal negotiated with South staff's council which saw the purchase price reduced by 50%
Additional locations have been agreed, and installation costs are awaited
4. CCTV remains high on the agenda and options continue to be explored, an update is expected Spring 2025 following a meeting held last year with Maggie Quinn from SSDC
5. Dog waste bin installed at Hinksford playing fields
6. Bleed kits installed in the 2 Defib cabinets with a further kit available in the community centre
7. Explored EV charging points
8. Lease for Hinksford playing fields and sub leases for tenants (cricket club, bowls club and allotments) secured for a further 65yrs
9. Agreed we would not increase the precept
10. New bench outside the Community centre funded following successful grant application

11. Digital kiosk funded following successful grant application providing 70% of the overall purchase cost

12. New bins at the shops that arrived to day and were funded from Grants

The Parish Council will seek further opportunities to cut costs where possible the Parish Council remains in a strong financial position and spends money wisely.

5. Parish Reports

No reports received from the Bowling Club, Allotments, or the Churches

Community Centre – The Community centre reports that it remains in a strong financial position, there is a good mixture of regular groups / hirers providing an income so that the Community Centre is self-sufficient.

Kitchen water heater has now been replaced with a modern filtered hot water heater, centre has been decorated throughout, bar was removed and rebuilt, council chamber chairs reupholstered along with new carpets.

Road sweeper is now arranged annually to keep carpark clean and tidy.

Improvements are at no cost to Swindon Parish residents.

Mr David Darlaston Chairman of the cricket club he thanked the council from the 3 organisations for completing the leases, which has been ongoing for many years. The idea they wished to put forward is to provide a perimeter path around the playing fields. It would encourage people to stay off the main playing area. The area below the car park, they would like to purchase some picnic tables and get Staffordshire Wildlife to improve the area. As the cricket club would be happy to be involved in the project and are in a good financial position and supported with the 3 teams that play there.

It was agreed that an agenda item be added for the April 2025 meeting.

6. Matters raised by the public present

The following questions were raised:-

- Thanked the council for the work they have undertaken doing the planters and the bus terminal.
- By the woods there is a sign that Caden Gas are trying to find the owners of the land at the top of the hill. There will be a planning application coming forward for the site, to improve fencing, removal of some trees 3m from the fence and security cameras. The walk access should remain.

The ramp at the top of the woods drops down into a hole and there are tree roots, there is also erosion from the jump. The land is privately owned but the owner is unknown. The track has been excavated further than it ever has been before. There could be an asset of Community assigned to it (if woods are allowed) which would mean that when or if it was sold the Council could purchase the land if funds were available. Fencing has been erected to try to stop motorbikes.

- The funds that the Parish Council hold is in the public domain and can it be shared.

- The West Midlands combined Authority bus consultation has not been responded to as yet by the Parish Council. Wombourne Parish Council are going to respond. Swindon will look to make a response.
- Does the Parish Council have any plans to spend the funds held in the bank, as they are holding large reserves. The Parish Council will continue to look at improving the village. It was suggested purchasing another SID sign this will be added to a future agenda.
- Can the Parish use funds for giving grants to the church, this is now allowed.

7. Date of next APM meeting – 12th March 2026

Meeting was closed at 7.02pm