



**THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING & PARISH ASSEMBLY OF
SOPLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

**held on Thursday, 21st May 2026 at 7.30pm at
Sopley Parish Hall, Priest Lane, Sopley**

APPROVED MINUTES

- ❖ *The Chair Welcomed all members and parishioners to the Annual Council meeting he stated there would be some items of formal business and re-elections of Council members followed by the Parish Assembly.*

In Attendance: Chair, Cllr Vines, Cllr McDonnell, Cllr Dunn, Cllr Allen, Cllr Partridge, Cllr Adaway, Cllr Shutler, District Cllr Linford and County Cllr Eyre and Clerk Katie and 10 members of the public.

1. ELECTION OF COUNCIL CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN: (Local Government Act 1972, SECTION 15 (2).

Election of Chairman

Cllr Vines confirmed his willingness to continue in the role and was re-elected Chairman for the municipal year. The elected Chairman duly **signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.**

Election of Vice-Chairman

Cllr McDonnell **confirmed** his willingness to continue in the role and was re-elected to the role of Vice-Chairman for the municipal year. The elected vice - Chairman duly **signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.**

Outgoing Parish Chairman's Report

The outgoing Chairman presented his report, reflecting the content previously published in the Parish Newsletter.

2. ELECTION OF STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBERS (as per schedule below):

- All current Council members were re-elected from the previous financial year, except for Cllr Maria Adaway, who has stood down. *Proposed: Cllr Shutler and seconded Cllr McDonnell.*

3. ELECTION OF BURIAL BOARD:

- Current members were willing to stand. *Proposed: Cllr Allen and seconded Cllr Shutler.*

4. ELECTION OF COUNCIL LEAD ROLES AND NOMINATION TO THE FOLLOWING EXTERNAL BODIES:

- *Sopley Parish Hall management Committee, New Forest Consultative Panel, New Forest NA, SW quadrant, Police Liaison, Bournemouth Airport Liaison, HALC.*

Sopley Parish Council Composition were re-elected as follows: -

POST	NOMINATED PERSON(s)	Proposed	Seconded
COUNCIL MEMBERS	ALL (not Cllr Adaway)	JA	GV
CHAIRMAN	Gavin Vines	DS	DD
VICE CHAIRMAN	Barry McDonnell	MA	JA
FINANCE SUB COMMITTEE	ALL	BM	DD
PLANNING COMMITTEE	ALL – lead by Cllr Allen from 21 st May 2026	BM	DS
BURIAL BOARD	Clerk/Gavin Vines	DS	BM
STAFFING COMMITTEE	ALL	DD	GV
COMMUNICATIONS	ALL	JP	DS
SOPLEY PARISH HALL C'TTEE	Clerk	BM	DS

NEW FOREST CONSULTATIVE PANEL	Jeremy Allen	JA	DD
NFNPA SW QUADRANT	Jeremy Allen	GV	DS
HIGHWAYS	Barry McDonnell	JP	DS
FOOTPATHS/COMMONS	Jason Partridge	BM	GV
POLICE LIAISON <i>Remove as nothing for past 3 years</i>	Anj Hill		
BOURNEMOUTH AIRPORT LIAISON <i>Remove as nothing for past 3 years</i>	Clerk	past 3 years	
HALC	Clerk	JA	GV
FLOOD WARDEN	Barry McDonnell	DS	JP

5. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** None received.

6. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RECEIVED.** None received.

7. **ADOPTION OF GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE:**

The Council has reviewed its eligibility for the General Power of Competence and confirmed that the statutory criteria continue to be met. It was resolved to reaffirm the Council's eligibility to use the General Power of Competence for the 2026/27 year.

8. **MINUTES OF LAST MEETING held on 16th April 2026:**

- The draft minutes of the meeting held on 16th April 2026 were reviewed. **Resolved: The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.**
- **Matters Arising:** There were no matters arising that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

- The schedule of monthly payments, circulated to Council Members prior to the meeting, was reviewed and authorised. **Resolved: All payments were approved by Council Members and duly signed by the Chair and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).**

21.05.26		Amount
Supplier to be paid	Invoice no:	
HALC	inv 8458	£216.00
HALC (BM Grant training)	Inv 8488	£70.80
		£216.00
Supplier already paid		
Phil Emmel	dead tree removal	£50.00
SPH - Litter pick drinks	-	£24.00
Evan Elp us - monthly cemetery	inv 39	£400.00
Pennon - cemetery water	-	£7.97
Evan Elp Us - lengthsman work (pavements etc)	inv 38	£125.00
PAYE - May 2026	-	£1,065.76
Currys laptop Insurance	-	£9.50
Giff Gaff - clerk mobile		£6.00
Adobe	-	£19.97
Evan Elp us	Inv 40	£75.00
HMRC - tax paye	-	£5.44
		£1,788.64
Credits		
SPH -PWLb (Public Workds Loan Board)		£150.00
Precept 2025-2027		£18,900.00
Miller Bros - Margaret Miles 4ac17		£66.00
Cllr Linford - Grant		£80.00
Lloyds - complaint payment		£75.00
VAT - 31.10.25-31.03.26		£853.41
Int on Cil monies		£20.52
HG allotment		£25.00
		£20,169.93
To pay out:		£0.00
Paid out:		£1,788.64
VAT to claim		£0.00
Funds available:		£86,823.54
Current Account		£35,257.74
Parish Hall Account		£1,026.00
Shirley Allotments account (ALP)		£4,740.11
SPH Deposit account		£46,825.69
	Total:	£87,849.54

- **Adoption of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Policies** The Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and associated Council policies, having been circulated to all Members in advance, were **reviewed and adopted. Resolved: Adoption confirmed and approved by all Members.**

Name of policy	Legal reference if applicable	Date of adoption/ last review	Date of review
Standing orders	<i>LGA 1972, sch 12, paragraph 42</i>	22/02/24	May 2026
Financial regulations	<i>Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015</i>	15/05/25	May 2026
Code of Conduct	<i>Localism Act 2011 s.27</i>	23/05/24	May 2026
Risk Assessment Policy	<i>Accounts and Audit (England) Regs 2015, s.3, Health & Safety Act</i>	19/12/24	Nov 2026
Asset Register	<i>n/a</i>	31/03/24	March 2026
Publication scheme and FOI	<i>Freedom of Information Act 2000</i>	23/05/24	May 2026
Bio-Diversity Policy	<i>Environment Act 2021</i>	23/05/24	May 2026
Transparency Code	<i>Local Government Regulations 2015</i>	23/05/24	May 2026
Communication Policy	<i>Local Government Acts 1986 and 1988</i>	23/05/24	May 2026
Privacy Policy (GDPR)	<i>General Data Protection Act 2018</i>	22/02/24	May 2026
Document Retention Policy	<i>LGA 1972, s.227</i>	23/05/24	May 2026
Grant Awarding Policy	<i>LGA 1972, s.137</i>	23/05/24	May 2026
Vexatious Policy	<i>Freedom of Information Act 2000 & Data Protection Act 1998</i>	23/05/24	May 2026
Training & Development Policy	<i>n/a</i>	23/05/24	May 2026
Code of practice for Handling Complaints	<i>LGA 1974, s.23</i>	23/05/24	May 2026
Equality & Diversity Policy	<i>Equalities Act 2010</i>	27/06/24	May 2026
Cemetery Regulations	<i>LGA 1972, s.214</i>	June 2022	ongoing
Annual Council Insurance	<i>Accounts and Audit (England) Regs 2015</i>	Sept 2024	Sept 2026
Burial Registers	<i>LGA 1972 and LACO 1977</i>		ongoing
Health and Safety Policy	The Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), and The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1998)	June 2025	May 2026
Digital & data policy	-	Oct 2025	November 2026

Highways and Planning Updates

- Members received an update regarding the bridge works at the bottom of Mill Lane and ongoing issues along Derritt Lane caused by heavy vehicles attending Wilberforce Green. It was noted that signage concerns have been addressed, and legal action is being pursued to have the signage removed or reduced.
- A parishioner from Heatherstone Grange raised a query regarding the promotion of local businesses and their signage. The Clerk advised that any local business wishing to display signage should apply directly to Hampshire Highways for permission.
- **Derritt Lane Road Safety (JA):** It was reported that a post is to be installed and the Speed Indicator Device (SID) positioned in Derritt Lane, subject to coordination with Highways.
- **Vernon Dene:** Members were informed of a recent High Court hearing involving the American owners of Vernon Dene. The ruling upheld that the New Forest National Park Authority (NFNPA) had not fulfilled its duties correctly. The approved number of park homes has been reduced from 92 to 62, and works are continuing under the corrected licence. The application was refused on grounds of volume and sewage capacity, with consideration given to a treatment plant or regular septic tank pumping. Funding was provided by Defra, as NFNPA could not support the project directly. The issue primarily related to nutrient discharge.
- **Wilberforce Green Sewage Treatment Plant:** It was noted that Wilberforce Green had previously proposed a sewage treatment plant, but the project was halted prior to implementation. FOVDAG are still monitoring the actions of this development.

9. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS FOR THE COMING YEAR:

Schedule of SPC Meeting's 2026 – 2027		
7.30pm	Thursday, 21 st May 2026	SPC ACM/Parish Assembly
7.30pm	Thursday, 23 rd June 2026	SPC MEETING
7.30pm	Thursday, 23 rd July 2026	SPC MEETING
7.30pm	NO MEETING AUGUST	-
7.30pm	Thursday, 24 th Sept 2026	SPC MEETING
7.30pm	Thursday, 22 nd October 2026	SPC MEETING
7.30pm	Thursday, 19 th November 2026	SPC Meeting/Budget approval
7.30pm	Thursday, 17 th December 2026	SPC MEETING (if required)
7.30pm	Thursday, 21 st January 2027	SPC MEETING
7.30pm	Thursday, 18 th February 2027	SPC MEETING
7.30pm	Thursday, 18 th March 2027	SPC MEETING
7.30pm	Thursday, 15 th April 2027	SPC MEETING
7.30pm	Thursday, 20 th May 2027	SPC ACM/Parish Assembly

THE ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

- The session took the form of an open discussion between parishioners and Members of the Council on matters of relevance to the community.
- The Chair expressed thanks to the Clerk for her continued support and for ensuring effective administration throughout the year.
- Cllr Nigel reported that Cllr Dickie had resigned from the Council.
- **Local Government Reorganisation (LGR):** Cllr Nigel provided an update on the ongoing “Forest Together” initiative, noting concerns raised by residents in the Waterside, Totton and Marchwood areas who felt their votes had been disregarded. A challenge to the LGR decision is being pursued. It was noted that approximately 46% of representation will transfer to the Waterside area, with current Councillors continuing in office until 2028.
- Cllr Nigel introduced Mr Martin Eyre as the new County Councillor. It was further noted that District and County Councillors will be phased out under the new structure, and that Council Tax may increase by approximately 15%.

Refreshments will be available after this presentation.

Next full SPC Meeting will be held TUESDAY, 23rd June 2026, 7.30pm at Sopley Parish Hall.

(Originally 18th June changed due to District elections on that day)