

Covingham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 10th June 2013
in Covingham Park Junior School, The Harriers, Covingham

Present:

Cllr Benfield, Cllr Curtis, Cllr Davis, Cllr Foss, Cllr Godbold, Cllr Haigh, Cllr Hayward, Cllr Osbourn, Cllr Parry, Cllr Sandle, Cllr Short.

In attendance:

Gemma Cheal (parish clerk), Ward Cllr Julian Price and members of the public.

149. Apologies

Received from Cllr Curtis, Cllr Wichall, Cllr Fitchett and the Groundsman.

150. Declaration of Interests

None.

151. Police matters

Ward Cllr Price reported a slight increase of thefts from non-residential buildings such as sheds and out buildings in the east of Swindon, including Covingham. Better vigilance is needed and robust locks are required to ensure security. Chairman agreed to send email to PC Frank Key for an update.

152. Minutes of the previous meeting

Minutes of the 13th May meeting were approved and signed, subject to amendments to items 134 and 139.

153. Matters arising from the minutes

Cllr Short reported that he is still waiting for quotes to come in for the drainage works. Cllr Foss reported that the school have been contacted and are happy in principal for the drainage to be installed. The grounds are the responsibility of Swindon Borough Council. An agreement would be needed in writing from the Borough.

Cllr Osbourn gave an update on remaining Section 106 money (£5,000). Ward Cllr Heenan feels it would be acceptable to share the money between library to extend opening hours and drainage works. Cllr Osbourn agreed to get clarification from Ward Cllr Heenan and will press for the £5000 in writing for Covingham parish.

154. Public forum

Member of the public, Mr Goodenough asked about accessing a grant for flood groups from the government for the eastern development area. Mr Goodenough also asked a question about land ownership and was directed to contact the Environment Agency and to write to the local MP.

Local resident asked about crime figures and would like police statistics and an indication of detection rates on crime. Cllr Osbourn agreed to contact the local police manager. Members suggested for the local resident to contact the Police Commissioner or to ask his question at the next Eastern Locality meeting scheduled for 3rd July at Covingham Park School.

155. Committees and Structures

Cllr Benfield distributed a paper to councillors with his thoughts on the way the parish council currently operate with suggested ideas to improve.

Reports from Committees to be a standard agenda item for each full council meeting. Chairmans report will be given to the Parish Council for information and ratification at each full council meeting.

Each committee will appoint a chair who will respond to items that represent that committee on the agenda. The Chair of each committee will liaise with the Clerk and Chairman of the Parish Council where applicable. Cllr Sandle was appointed as Chair of the Environment Committee.

Councillors resolved for planning applications to go to the Parish Plan Committee.

Members noted the need for preparation to be done regarding the parish boundary extension in 2014.

The Clerk agreed to add Cllr Foss to the Highways and Recreation Committee and Cllr Parry to the Finance Committee.

156. Update from Highways & Recreation Committee

None.

157. Update from Environment Committee (including allotments)

Update on allotments at Pickards Field from Cllr Sandle: Cllr Sandle and Cllr Benfield have been in touch with the Stratton Clerk for an update on progress. New allotment plots at Pickards Field are being marked out on 17th June. There will be 50 full size plots and 100 half size plots.

Clerk has updated the current allotment waiting list. 2 people on the list are interested in a plot at Pickards Field. The Chairman of Wanborough Parish Council confirmed that 11 residents have been offered plots in Wanborough. Cllr Sandle and Cllr Benfield have been invited to attend the annual meeting of Wanborough allotment holders on 16th September. Priority for allotment plots in Wanborough goes to Wanborough residents.

Councillors discussed the need to let local residents know there is an opportunity to have an allotment plot at Pickards Field. Wording to go in the Handy Mag. Ward Cllr Price will feed back any requests received for an allotment back to the parish.

Cllr Osbourn will talk to the groundsman about epicormic growth of trees in Covingham.

158. Community Payback Scheme

Clerk reported that the Community Payback Scheme have 5 dates available for cutting back grass along the paths around Covingham Park and Smitan Brook. The cost is £25 per day. More days may be available if required.

Members agreed to pay the Community Payback scheme for 5 days work at the cost of £25 per day. Members agreed to pay for a further 5 days work if required.

159. Lorry Watch Update

Cllr Osbourn updated members on the progress of obtaining a traffic regulation order on Merlin Way.

Swindon Borough Council Highways Department have accepted that there is evidence of the need to implement the weight restriction order, however Ward Cllr Heenan informed Cllr Osbourn that the Borough have a short fall of £3,000.

Councillors resolved to underwrite to the maximum of £3,000, subject to a breakdown of the full costs from Swindon Borough Council. Cllr Osbourn agreed to get further information from the Borough to pass on to the Highways Committee for consideration.

160. Financial matters

The financial summary and cheque list were approved by councillors.

The Annual Return was approved and signed. The Clerk informed councillors that an internal audit had taken place for the financial year ended 31st March 2013. The internal auditor had noted that a risk assessment had not been carried out for that financial year.

Cllr Benfield pointed out that parish councillors as non-elected members do not have an allowance but can claim expenses.

Members discussed key documents that parish councillors should have, including a copy of the Parish Council Standing Orders. Clerk will put a list together containing key documents for councillors which can then be distributed.

161. Planning Matters

None.

162. Correspondence

Members noted the following received correspondence:

- Parish Councillor resignations from Corinna Allen and Leslie Thompson. 2 vacancies will be advertised in the Handy Mag and on the Covingham Parish Council website.
- Grant application from Wilts & Berks Canal Trust. Members resolved to refuse the request due to lack of benefit to parishioners, but will keep the letter on file.
- Members noted correspondence received in opposition to the development at Redlands Airfield.
- Members noted an email received from a local resident regarding seeding grass verges in Covingham. To be discussed by the Environment Committee.

163. Matters for Consideration

Clerk agreed to update the notice boards in Covingham to reflect the current list of councillors.

Cllr Osbourn reported that a meeting is scheduled on Friday 14th June with a representative of Lightmain on site at the skateboard park, to discuss possible purchase of new equipment. Cllr Osbourn pointed out that local young people have looked after and policed the skate park well. Cllr Davis agreed to attend the meeting. Cllr Osbourn will come back to the Parish Council with further information.

Close of meeting: 21:21

Signed:

Date: