

# Covingham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2013  
In Covingham Park Primary School, The Harriers, Covingham

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## **Present:**

Cllr Osbourn, Cllr Benfield, Cllr Sandle, Cllr Godbold, Cllr Hayward, Cllr Short, Cllr Parry, Cllr Curtis, Cllr Foss,

## **In attendance:**

Gemma Cheal (parish clerk), Parish Council Groundsman, Ward Cllr Heenan, Ward Cllr Price, Elizabeth Mackley (Swindon Advertiser Reporter), Members of the public

### **1. Apologies**

Cllr Davis, Cllr Haigh, Police

### **2. Declaration of Interests**

None declared.

### **3. Approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2013 and 9<sup>th</sup> August 2013**

Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2013 and 9<sup>th</sup> August 2013 were signed as a true and accurate record.

### **4. Matters arising from the previous minutes**

Update on the health of trees at Smitan Brook: Cllr Benfield agreed to check trees at Smitan Brook. Cllr Davis to have a look at health of trees in his own time.

Community Payback: Clerk reported that grass cutting work on the paths at Covingham Park has stopped as Community Payback reported that cracks have been revealed on the path. Members noted that the path is the responsibility of the Borough Council. Members agreed to postpone works for the time being.

- 5. Public forum:** Member of the public raised concerns about the safety of the childrens play park at Covingham Park and asked if the Parish Council have any plans to improve the site. Cllr Osbourn reported that there are no plans at the present time to improve the site. The Parish Council Groundsman will inspect the site and will carry out any emergency repairs. A full inspection of the play parks is due to take place and any urgent repairs will be reported and picked up as part of this process.

### **6. Chairman's Report**

Members noted that the chairman wished to report under items 9, 10 and 11.

### **7. Reports from Parish Council Committee Chairs:**

- Environment Committee (Chair Cllr Sandle):

Letter has been sent to the Department of the Environment reference the River Cole. The Department of the Environment plan to carry out river maintenance with weed clearance in September. Environment Committee will monitor.

Allotments update: Cllr Sandle and Cllr Benfield have looked at new allotments at South Marston as some local residents are interested in taking up a plot there.

Ward Cllr Heenan reported that an allotment working group is in the process of being formed with a first meeting taking place in October. Ward Cllr Heenan will inform Cllr Sandle of the date. There will be allotments in the next 12 months for Covingham and Nythe residents.

Plans to improve Covingham Square update: Cllr Osbourn commented on an email sent from Ward Cllr Heenan on the proposed plans for Covingham Square. Ward Cllr Heenan reported that a first draft has been put together so that the Parish can view plans. Comments need to be received by October. Public events will take place in October. Deadline for comments was 12<sup>th</sup> September, although late comments will be accepted.

**ACTION:** Cllr Osbourn to circulate email of plans for Covingham Square to all councillors. To be discussed again at the October Parish Council meeting.

- Finance Committee (Chair Cllr Benfield):  
Cllr Benfield asked queried an invoiced received from the grass cutting contractor. Clerk to check grass cutting contract.

The Parish Council resolved to pay £50 to the grass cutting contractor to mark out the football pitch.

- Highways and Recreation:  
The Clerk asked members to confirm a preferred street name for the 5 new properties on the site of the old Vicarage. Members to discuss and report preferred name to the Clerk.

Members noted the Traffic Regulation Order outside Covingham School this week. Cllr Sandle reported that bollards by the school have been knocked down by a delivery driver. This was reported on 5<sup>th</sup> August. 2 bollards will be replaced in approximately six weeks.

Signage on Merlin Way: Discussions have taken place about signage not being in the correct place. Consultation is currently taking place on weight restrictions. Cllr Heenan asked Borough Officers to put the diversion route as Oxford road and Dorcan way and for the sign to be located on the corner of the slip road. Comments can be sent in to the Borough as part of the consultation. This scheme is an experimental trial order.

Cllr Benfield commented that the scheme as it stands is not fit for purpose. Cllr Benfield proposed for the parish council to suspend all activity regarding the 7.5 tonne weight limit. Motion failed. The council reiterated their commitment to get a weight restriction that not only covered Merlin Way, but would also ensure protection for both Covingham Drive and Kingfisher Way.

Drainage update from Cllr Short: 3 quotes have come in to carry out drainage works on Covingham Park. Moving forward the Parish Council need agreement from the Borough Council and the school to carry out this work. The school have no objection to the scheme being carried out, providing there is no adverse effect. Agreement from the Borough and the School is needed in writing.

Quotes received for drainage works were as follows:

- A) 4800 + VAT.
- B) £5125 + VAT.
- C) £5930 + VAT.

The Parish Council resolved to select A due to the reliability of the contractor. All work will be guaranteed.

Ward Councillor Heenan confirmed that Swindon Borough Council will pay for 50% of the drainage works with the parish council paying the remainder.

- Parish Plan Committee:

The Clerk reported that the planning applications detailed on item 8 had been reviewed by Cllr Wichall with no objections. Comments have been submitted to Swindon Borough Council in order to meet the deadline for comment.

## 8. Planning Matters

<b>Application Number:</b> S/13/1036 <b>Proposal:</b> Erection of single storey rear extension and rear dormer to the loft <b>Location:</b> 32 Ravenscroft, Covingham, SN3 5AG <b>DECISION: No objection.</b>	<b>Planning Application Number:</b> S/ADV/13/1018 <b>Proposal:</b> Display of 1 no. illuminated fascia sign and 1 no. illuminated projecting sign <b>Location:</b> 3 Covingham Square, Covingham, SN3 5AA <b>DECISION: No objection.</b>
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## 9. Police matters:

Cllr Osbourn reported that PC Frank Key has now left and has been replaced by PC Stefan Watts. Cllr Osbourn has written to PC Key to thank him for the support he has given to the parish.

## 10. Eastern Villages SPD: Discussion and Action Plan

A public consultation event has been taking place this evening on the Eastern Villages SPD.

Members agreed to write to Swindon Borough Council outlining the following points:

1. The infrastructure must be completed before any building commences.
2. Possible funding gap for the infrastructure. Developer may not totally fund this and Swindon Borough Council would need to cover any shortfall. Ref. Government proposed change to 106 monies.
3. If Covingham Drive is to be a bus route for the proposed Park and Ride then "Bus Gates" should be installed.
4. Concerned about the Flood Plain. Possible "backing up" on the River Cole and a repeat of the 2007 flooding could happen.

## 11. Skate Board Area: Consider Tender Bids Received for Extra Equipment

Cllr Osbourn updated all members that an extraordinary meeting of the parish council had been called in August as the Chairman of Finance Committee had brought to his attention that the Parish Council should have invited tenders from at least three companies for additional skate park equipment, as the value of the work exceeded £2000, as stated in the Parish Council Financial Regulations.

The Clerk re-invited tenders from three skate park companies asking for quotes for the following:

- 1 no 2 Bay Inline Ramp c/w driveway, steps and grind rail (0.6m high)
- 1 no 2 Bay High Wave Ramp (2.5m wide x 0.6m high)
- Half pipe

Members received quotes from three companies.

Cllr Osbourn proposed for the Parish Council to accept the offer from Lightmain for the purchase of 2 pieces of equipment (excluding the half pipe) at the negotiated cost of £12,350 including installation and supply of new equipment. Plus VAT to be reclaimed. This was seconded by Cllr Foss. All members voted in favour, with one objection from Cllr Benfield.

**12. Financial Matters**

- The parish council resolved to renew membership for NALC (National Association of Local Councils) - £849.12.
- The financial summary and cheque list were approved.

**13. Correspondence**

Members noted the following received correspondence

Received from	Subject
PC Stefan Watts	Introduction letter – new community beat manager (sends apologies)
SBC, Public Notice	‘School Keep Clear’ restriction from 8am – 5pm at school entrance
Trisha Davies, SBC	Road name for development of new 5 dwellings, off St Paul’s Drive
C Jardine, SBC	Installation and reinforcement of underground electricity lines. Stratton to Park North to Dorcan South, and Moredon to Stratton
Tender responses from Lightmain, Park Leisure & UK Skate Parks	Quotes for additional equipment at Covingham Skate Park

**14. Matters for consideration**

Cllr Godbold asked for an update on parish councillor vacancies. The Clerk confirmed that there are currently two vacancies. A vacancy notice will be advertised in due course. Anyone interested in becoming a parish councillor will be invited to write to the Clerk.

Cllr Sandle mentioned bulb planting. Members agreed to come back to this again next year.

Cllr Benfield informed members that the Government had cascaded millions of pounds to pass on to Parish Councils. £167,000 was sent to Borough. £2516 should have come to Covingham Parish Council, but the Borough Council have kept it.

Cllr Benfield reported that he had been called out to cut back brambles on a pathway on Covingham Drive on Sunday morning. Cllr Benfield has upgraded the notice boards by Covingham Shops.

Meeting closed at 21:33.