

Covingham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 10th March 2014
In Covingham Park Primary School, The Harriers, Covingham

Present:

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

In attendance:

Gemma Cheal (parish clerk), Swindon Advertiser Reporter, Ward Cllr Heenan, Members of the public

1. Apologies

Received from Cllr Stanbury and Cllr Hayward

2. Declaration of Interests

None declared.

3. Approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 10th February 2014

Minutes were approved and signed subject to an amendment to item 4.

4. Matters arising from the previous minutes

None.

5. Public forum:

Mr Hawkes informed the Parish Council that the Environment Agency have the wrong figures for the number of properties that were flooded by the river in 2007. The information held by the Environment Agency is currently being used by Swindon Borough Council for their flood management planning. Mr Hawkes asked if the Parish Council could assist by finding out the correct information.

Mr Goodenough commented on culvert issues in relation to the planning application being discussed on Item 10 (employment development at land at and to the south of the A420 (adjacent to Lock Cottage), Swindon.

6. Clerk's Report

Members noted the following report from the Parish Clerk:

Register of Members Interests

Thank you to members who have completed and returned your forms. A number of forms are still outstanding. Councillors have been contacted with a reminder. Can all outstanding forms be completed and returned to the Clerk by Monday 10th March.

Meeting with Chair of Finance Committee

Meeting with Cllr Benfield took place on 3rd March 2014 to discuss a number of items, including the review of Standing Orders, Finance Regulations and Code of Conduct. Please see report from Cllr Benfield for details of the meeting that took place.

Parish Council Vacancy

Currently one vacancy on the parish council.

Community Payback

There is an outstanding 'strip' of grass to cut along the pathway at Smitan Brook.

Dog Bin Update

Groundsman has reported that one dog bin and post has been completely removed (presumably by the Borough), without the permission of Covingham Parish Council. The Chairman has followed this up. A new dog bin and post has been ordered. This should be installed before 10th March 2014.

Update on Actions from February meeting:

Letters have been sent to the following people this month:

- Swindon Borough Council (re. flooding issues in the draft 'CIL' document).
- Swindon Borough Council (Bernie Brennan) re. update on drainage and programme of works. Awaiting response.
- English Heritage (deteriorating fence at entrance in to Covingham from A419). Awaiting response.
- Swindon Borough Council re. leisure facilities consultation. Response received: Our comments have been noted and will form a part of the consultation.

7. Chairman's Report

The Chairman reminded all members to complete and return any outstanding Register of Interest forms to the Clerk by the April Parish Council meeting.

Members noted that a dog bin and post has been removed from Covingham Park without the consent of the Parish Council. The Chairman is following this up with Swindon Borough Council.

8. Reports from Parish Council Committee Chairs:

- Environment Committee (Chair Cllr Sandle):

Members received the following report from Cllr Sandle:

Best Garden Competition

Unfortunately there has been no response to this, even though it was advertised in The Handy Mag, on our 3 notice boards & also on the parish web site. The committee would like to record their thanks to Melanie for the paper she presented. It could form the basis for a future event.

Nythe Allotments

Members received and noted minutes of the Nythe allotment meeting held on 12th February 2014 and accompanying site plan. Members noted that no financial commitment was given by the Parish Council representatives that attended the meeting. Members noted that Swindon Borough Council have requested money towards fencing at the Nythe allotments. Members agreed unanimously that money would not be given towards the fencing.

Wanborough Allotments

We still have some residents interested in renting a plot at Wanborough and we will check if there are any further plots available.

Trees

The dead trees along Dorcan Way have been replaced.

"Spring has Sprung"

The estate is once again looking very colourful with the crocuses and daffodils but certain areas need refreshing so we need to think about an autumn planting this year. If you have any areas you believe would benefit from an autumn plant, please let me or one of my committee members know.

Litter

It was good to see Swindon Borough Council workers litter picking along Dorcan Way and Covingham Drive. This was in response to complaints from this committee

- Finance Committee (Chair Cllr Benfield):

Members received a financial report from Cllr Benfield. The following key points were noted:

- Money from the insurance claim regarding slide damage had been approved.
- The Parish Council does not currently have a Risk Assessment document. This is being developed and will be circulated to all councillors in due course.

- Repeal of S.150 (5) of the local government act 1972: Members noted that this act, if adopted would remove the necessity of two councillors counter signing cheques. Members resolved not to implement the change.
- Cllr Benfield designed a leaflet for the Annual Assembly to be held on 14th April, featuring properties flooded in 2007. Members resolved to pay for the printing of 500 leaflets for the Annual Assembly in order to distribute to areas of known risk in Covingham. Guest speaker Grace Martin of the National Flood Forum will be in attendance as a guest speaker.

- Highways and Recreation (Chair Cllr Short):

Cllr Short reported that a meeting is scheduled with a representative of Swindon Borough Council to discuss the schedule of works required for Covingham and outstanding drainage issues at Covingham Park.

Members noted particular concerns with the wide cracks along the paths at Covingham Park and asked for this issue to be raised with the Borough as a matter of urgency. Other issues, including pot holes were discussed. Ward Cllr Heenan encouraged everyone to report issues with pot holes directly to the Borough.

The relocation of the new skate park equipment is still outstanding and will be moved when the weather improves.

- Parish Plan Committee (Chair Cllr Curtis):

Members noted the following key points from a report received from Cllr Curtis:

Parish Council representatives attended a meeting at Wanborough Parish Council on 24th February. The Chair of Wanborough Parish Council and councillors agreed to work together on the proposed eastern villages developments.

Members noted that Covingham Parish Council Planning Committee have been invited to be included in an A420 working group which has been set up by Bourton Parish Council. A meeting is scheduled for 21st March. Cllr Curtis will attend the meeting and will feed back to members in due course.

9. Planning Matters

Application Number: S/OUT/14/0253

Re: Outline planning for employment development including B1 (office/light industrial) B2 (general industrial) and B8 (warehouse and distribution), new landscaping and junction to A420 (means of access not reserved)

At: Eastern Villages South, Land at and to the south of the A420 (adjacent to Lock Cottage), Swindon, Wiltshire

Outcome: Members resolved to hold a further meeting to discuss this application in more detail. The Clerk has requested a time extension for comments to 28th March.

ACTION: Clerk to book meeting room.

10. Police matters

No members of the Police were present at the meeting. A report will be provided at the April Parish Council meeting.

11. Financial Matters

- Approve financial summary and cheque list:
The financial summary was approved and signed.
- Review of Code of Conduct, Financial Regulations and Standing Orders.
Members noted that the Clerk and the Chair of the Finance Committee had reviewed these documents.

Members approved the Code of Conduct, Financial Regulations and Standing Orders subject to an amendment relating to the use of mobile phones in meetings in order to conform to the 'public recording of meetings' regulations.

- Discuss appointment of internal auditor:
Members agreed unanimously to appoint an internal auditor for the amount of £217 plus VAT.

12. Correspondence

Members noted the following received correspondence

Received from	Subject
Gareth Hawkes	Flood Action Report – March 2014
Darkin-Miller, Chartered Accountants	Internal Audit Quote 2013/14
Swindon Borough Council	Swindon Borough Council Local Plan 2026 Examination (pre-hearing meeting agenda – 11 th March 2014).

13. Matters for consideration

Cllr Foss reported that a litter pick will be arranged with the school.

Members noted that Swindon Borough Council is offering bespoke planning training to Covingham Parish Councillors. Cllr Curtis, Cllr Wichall, Cllr Godbold, Cllr Haigh and Cllr Osbourn expressed an interest in attending training.

ACTION: Clerk to discuss training possibilities with Swindon Borough Council Officers.

Ward Cllr Heenan agreed to check on a tree that is currently down on Covingham Drive.

Members noted that the Annual Parish Assembly will be held on Monday 14th April 2014 at 7pm. The April Parish Council meeting will follow with Annual Parish Assembly.

Cllr Haigh commented that he had used the Borough Streetsmart website recently to report a complaint and would encourage residents to use the website to log pot hole complaints.

Meeting closed at 20:58.