

# Covingham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2014  
In Covingham Park Primary School, The Harriers, Covingham

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## **Present:**

Cllr Hayward, Cllr Short, Cllr Foss, Cllr Wichall, Cllr Godbold, Cllr Benfield, Cllr Osbourn, Cllr Haigh, Cllr Fitchett

## **In attendance:**

Gemma Cheal (parish clerk), Members of the public

### **1. Apologies**

Received from Cllr Curtis, Cllr Sandle, Cllr Davis and Cllr Parry.

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

None.

The Chairman announced that a written letter of resignation had been received from Cllr Godbold. The Chairman reported that Cllr Godbold has served on the Parish Council for approximately 12 years and has only missed 2 meetings during that time. The Chairman expressed his thanks to Cllr Godbold for her hard work and dedication on the Parish Council. Cllr Godbold left the meeting. Cllr Foss reported that former Parish Councillor Pauline Davis had sadly passed away. The Chairman agreed to send a card to the family on behalf of the Parish Council.

### **3. Approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2014**

Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2014 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

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

Members noted that the Parish Council asset register and job description for the Parish Council Groundsman had been reviewed.

### **5. Public forum:**

One member of the public in attendance asked whether an inspection of the play areas had taken place this year. The gentleman attended a Parish Council meeting last year to express concerns about the safety and condition of the toddler play park and wanted to know the outcome of the inspection. The Clerk reported that the annual inspection of the play areas is due to take place, although we have not been given a date. A report of findings will be presented to the Parish Council after the inspection.

### **6. Clerk's Report**

Councillors received the following report from the Clerk:

<b>VAT Refund</b>
Currently waiting for our requested refund of £3,215.92.
<b>Dog Bin Update</b>
As agreed at the September meeting, a new dog bin has been ordered. We are currently awaiting delivery.
<b>Play park equipment update</b>
The triangular piece of play equipment and rubber seals for the supernova carousal has now been

delivered. Terry has replaced the seals in the carousel. Unfortunately, the triangular piece had some fittings missing. These have been ordered.

Terry will replace the equipment when he has all of the correct parts.

**Parish Council Groundsman Update**

Terry has informed me that he will be leaving after Christmas. He has not yet handed in his notice.

Terry's job description has now been updated, in line with recommendations from our internal audit and in preparation for the new Groundsman.

**Meeting at Wanborough on 6<sup>th</sup> October regarding updates to the Draft Local Plan**

I attended a meeting at Wanborough with Cllr Osbourn, Cllr Benfield and Cllr Curtis to hear a presentation from the Chair of Wanborough Parish Council and Cllr Heenan on changes made to the Draft Local Plan. We have an opportunity to submit comments to SBC by 5pm on 30<sup>th</sup> October. A copy of the Draft Local Plan has been received and passed on to Cllr Curtis, Chair of Planning Committee. A meeting of the Planning Committee will be scheduled to discuss this in more detail before the deadline for comments to SBC.

Cllr Benfield informed councillors that the location of the new dog bin has been checked and agreed. Terry (Groundsman) will install as suggested by the dog waste contractor, and agreed by councillors.

Councillors noted that Terry (Groundsman) verbally indicated that he would be resigning at the end of December. Members expressed their disappointment and discussed the importance of advertising and recruiting as soon as the resignation is received in writing.

**ACTION:** The Chairman agreed to contact Terry to discuss the resignation.

**7. Verbal Update from the Chairman:**

The Chairman reported that a meeting was held by Wanborough Parish Council in the Village Hall on 6<sup>th</sup> October regarding the draft Local Plan. Sadly, only three councillors and the Clerk were in attendance. The Chairman expressed his disappointment at the lack of attendance at this meeting, and at the recent meeting with developers and encouraged councillors to at least send through apologies if unable to attend meetings.

**8. Police Matters (Update from the local neighbourhood Policing Team):**

No report received from the Police this month. Members expressed disappointment at the lack of communication received from the Police. It was noted that regular reports were received from the Police in the past, with a representative from the Police at monthly Parish Council meetings.

**ACTION:** Chairman agreed to write a letter to the Police.

**9. Update on Covingham Square Improvements**

The Clerk reported that a set of plans had been received from the Borough for consideration and comment. The Borough would like to know if the Parish Council are in support of the improvements. A set of plans were distributed to Councillors. The Chairman quoted from minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2013: 'Viewing of Covingham Square has taken place. Works to start in March 2014. Members noted that the wall between the car park and Larksfield is to remain after pressure from the Parish Council.'

Councillors accepted the plans, but concern was expressed that they did not include the refurbishment of the wall that runs between the car park and Larksfield. Cllr Benfield reported that he had made contact with the Borough Officer to clarify this. The Officer concerned agreed to look into the matter and come back to the Parish Council.

**10. Reports from Parish Council Committee Chairs:**

- Environment Committee (Chair Cllr Sandle):

Members received a report from the Chair of the Environment Committee and noted the following key points:

- Phase 1 of the bulb planting at Kingfisher Drive has now been completed. Councillors agreed that Phase 2 of the bulb planting at Covingham Drive can now be actioned.

- Councillors noted that Cllr Sandle and Cllr Benfield attended an AGM of the Wanborough allotments committee on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2014. Cllr Sandle and Cllr Benfield also attended a disciplinary hearing of an allotment tenant.
  - Nythe allotments: Fence is now in place at the Nythe allotment site.
  - Street floral boxes: A poster has been designed and displayed on our notice boards, as well as being placed in the October edition of the Handy Mag, giving people information and contact details for who to contact if they wish to install a street box.
  - Dead trees: Councillors agreed unanimously to replace the dead trees on Covingham Park and accepted the quote of £233.90 plus VAT from Swindon Borough Council to replace the trees.
  - Rover Cole: The Environment Agency has completed the annual autumn weed clearance of the River Cole.
- Finance Committee (Chair Cllr Benfield):  
Councillors received and accepted the second quarter finance statement.
  - Highways and Recreation (Chair Cllr Short):  
Cllr Short reported that that he has made contact with Swindon Borough Council to confirm that they are paying for the completed drainage systems at Covingham Park. Engineers believe they have done enough to alleviate the flooding problem.

Cllr Short reported that the Borough have yet to confirm a schedule of works for Covingham and will continue to chase this up.

Councillors noted that the skate park equipment has still not been repositioned to date.

- Parish Plan Committee (Chair Cllr Curtis):  
Councillors noted the planning report received from Cllr Curtis concerning the meeting held at Wanborough on 6<sup>th</sup> October to discuss proposed modifications to the Swindon Borough Council Draft Local Plan 2026. Members of the Planning Committee present agreed to meet on 20<sup>th</sup> October to discuss a response from Covingham Parish Council to Swindon Borough Council on the draft modifications, to meet the deadline for responses of the 30<sup>th</sup> October.
- Covingham Flood Group Report (Cllr Curtis)  
Councillors noted the flood group report received from Cllr Curtis containing information about the next multi-agency meeting scheduled for 6<sup>th</sup> November 2014. A report will be given to councillors at the November Parish Council meeting.

## 11. Planning Matters

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Application Number:</b> S/14/1484<br/><b>Proposal:</b> Erection of a two storey side extension.<br/><b>Location:</b> 4 Totterdown Close, Covingham, SN3 5DJ</li> </ul>                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Application Number:</b> S/14/1510<br/><b>Proposal:</b> Erection of a two storey side extension.<br/><b>Location:</b> 15 Swanbrook, Covingham, SN3 5AJ</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Application Number:</b> S/14/1690<br/><b>Proposal:</b> Erection of a single storey side extension.<br/><b>Location:</b> 38 The Buntings, Covingham, SN3 5AS<br/>Comments: No objections to the planning applications.</li> </ul> |                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

## 12. Financial Matters

- The financial summary and cheque list was agreed.

- No grant requests were received this month.

**13. Correspondence**

Members noted the following correspondence received this month from:

- Swindon Borough Council re. Lease of Covingham Park and Smitan Brook.
- Swindon Borough Council re. Animal Boarding Establishment Act 1963

**14. Matters for consideration**

Councillors expressed concerns about the cracks on the footpaths at Covingham Park. It was noted that some of the cracks had been temporarily rectified by Swindon Borough Council; however some are dangerous. Cllr Short agreed to contact the Borough regarding the neglect of maintenance in the area.

Cllr Haigh raised concerns about overhanging branches on the footpath from Covingham Park to Dorcan Way. Councillors noted that this is the responsibility of the school. Cllr Foss agreed to discuss the issue with the school.

Cllr Wichall raised concerns about the state of some of the exterior brickwork in the Parish and asked if a note should be put in the Handymag to remind residents that it is the responsibility of the land owners to make sure that their brickwork is safe, as they may not be aware of this.

Meeting closed at 20:48.