

Covingham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 13th April 2015
In Covingham Park Primary School, The Harriers, Covingham

Present: Cllr Osbourn, Cllr Fitchett, Cllr Foss, Cllr Sandle, Cllr Curtis, Cllr Wichall, Cllr Benfield, Cllr Hayward

In attendance:

Gemma Cheal (Parish Clerk), members of the public

1. Apologies

Received from Cllr Haigh, Cllr Short and Cllr Davis

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

3. Approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 9th March 2015

Minutes of the meeting held on 9th March 2015 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters arising from the previous minutes

Members noted a report given at the March meeting regarding clarification from Bernie Brennan at Swindon Borough Council for street cleaning and litter picking in Covingham and agreed that this should be carried over to the May meeting. ACTION: Cllr Short to provide update at the May meeting.

Cllr Benfield informed members that he had contacted Swindon Borough Council Law and Democratic Services as previously agreed, to enquire about how to reduce the size of a Parish Council, for information. Members agreed to keep the size of the Parish Council membership as it currently stands at 15 members.

Members noted that Cllr Parry assured Cllr Benfield that improvement works to Covingham Square would be completed by the end of March.

Cllr Foss informed members that Covingham Park Primary School had asked him to show a sample of fabric curtain material to the Parish Council. New curtains will hang in the lower school hall where the school have recently had a new ceiling put in. The school was able to put the money that the Parish Council had given to them towards the curtains. Members were delighted at the colourful sample shown.

Members agreed that any future committee for Redrow would be discussed next year.

5. Public forum

No comments or questions.

6. Clerk's Report

Members received the following report from the Clerk:

Precept Update

Swindon Borough Council has confirmed that the total amount Covingham Parish Council will be receiving for 2015/2016 is £40,799.00. This is made up as £36,300.00 **as requested for the Parish precept** and £4,499.00 for the Council tax Support. It will be paid in two instalments of £20,399.50, the first on 24th April 2015 and the second of £25th September 2015.

Financial Matters

I have met with the Chair of Finance to review the following documents:

- Asset Register
- Risk Assessment
- End of year financial statement
- Clerk's contract of employment
- Q4 Financial Statement

Audit update

I am compiling financial documentation to get ready to complete the Annual Return Form and will arrange for an internal audit to take place in due course.

Complaints/issues this month

- I have included an item on the agenda for April to discuss our current dog waste service as the dog bins have not been emptied weekly. This has been reported to me by our Handyman.
- I have contacted the Borough asking for them to help support one of the trees located in the North side of Covingham Park as it needs re-staking and our Handyman does not have the tools for this job. Currently waiting for a response.

Report from Handyman for March

1. Van serviced 5/3/2015
2. 11/3/2015 Filled in / repaired ruts in grass in Covingham park & cut down tree stump by skate board park (Tree broken off/snapped off - cause unknown)
3. 12/3/2015 Re-roofed lock up
4. Removed string from new tree branches which council had left tied up after planting
5. Measured up & costed 2 planters for Kingfisher Drive
6. Bought materials & made 2 planters
7. Installed planters at Kingfisher drive (Dorcan end).
8. Engine warning light on van checked by garage, no problem identified and light went out.

Signed: John Ricketts

Date: 31st March 2015

Members noted the litter report from the Handyman.

7. Dog Waste Service Issues

The Clerk informed members that the dog bins had only been emptied twice during March. The dog bins are monitored daily by the Handyman and a report has been given to show the frequency of dog bin emptying. Members noted that an invoice had been received requesting payment for weekly emptying of the dog bins for March. Members resolved unanimously to pay the invoice, less the 2 weeks that the dog bins were not emptied. The Handyman and the Clerk will continue to monitor the service.

8. Verbal Update from the Chairman

The Chairman reminded members about the Election of Chair, Vice Chair and Committees at the May Parish Council meeting and asked for nominations to be sent to the Clerk.

9. Police Matters (update from local neighbourhood policing team).

No report received.

10. Adult Exercise Equipment Update

Members received several brochures showing various examples of exercise equipment, including the company that manufactured the equipment in Quarry Road in Old Town.

Correspondence had been received from a local resident regarding exercise equipment, however it was decided upon further investigation that the proposed equipment whilst good for body building, would not be appropriate for Covingham.

Members discussed the possibility of receiving funding through Sports England. The cost of installing the equipment would be approximately £9,000.

The Chairman agreed to pass the brochures to Cllr Short, Chair of the Highways and Recreation Committee, and agreed to have this as an agenda item at the May Parish Council meeting for further discussion.

11. Reports from Parish Council Committee Chairs:

- Environment Committee (Chair Cllr Sandle):

Members received the following report from Cllr Sandle:

Allotments

Cllr Benfield and Cllr Sandle attended the Wanborough Parish Allotment meeting in March, amongst the items discussed were: The new Terms of Reference, Leak in water trough, Lack of care of the pathways between some of the allotments boundaries need to be addressed.

Pickards Field

No progress has been made on this site; in fact it is reverting back to nature, with grass at least two feet high.

Nythe Allotments

We are now referring all new applicants to contact the Nythe Allotment Society.

Street Boxes

Our Handyman has done an excellent job in erecting the two boxes at the entrance to Kingfisher Drive. Cllr Benfield and Cllr Sandle have planted some flowers. Cllr Benfield has spoken to the Manager of Morrisons for possibly adopting/sponsorship for the two boxes. Although very interested; permission from their Head Office is required.

Parish Councillors agreed they were happy with the results of the boxes already installed & agreed to the completion of installing two boxes at the entrance to Kingfisher Drive, (Merlin Way end) plus the same in Covingham Drive.

Parish Councillors agreed to the proposal of the cost of the manufacture & installation of the boxes be met from the capital budget & in 2016/17 a new cost centre set-up to cover the maintenance of the boxes.

Bev Holton from Swallowdale has kindly offered us some surplus decking she has, which is of the same quality material that was used for the boxes in Swallowdale. Parish Councillors agreed that Cllr Benfield could store the wood until required.

Sunflower

Unfortunately we have received no response to our sunflower competition. We have however planted some sunflowers which are now beginning to sprout. When the time is right we will plant them against the walls at the entrance to Kingfisher Driver. Cllr Foss informed Cllr Sandle that the school is happy to take part in the competition.

- Finance Committee (Chair Cllr Benfield):

Members noted that the end of year accounts have been finalised. A confirmation of the Precept and Council Tax Support Grant has now been confirmed in writing from Swindon Borough Council. The Parish Council risk assessment has been reviewed and completed. The Parish Council Asset Register has been reviewed and completed.

Members noted that the Parish Handyman will receive a Contract at the end of his probationary period.

- Highways and Recreation (Chair Cllr Short):

No report this month.

- Parish Plan Committee (Chair Cllr Curtis):

Members discussed Section 106 money and a plan for the parish. Work on a Parish Plan was previously put to one side due to work on the Eastern Development area. Members agreed that the Parish Council should list facilities we would like to see in the Parish, as well as the importance of safeguarding the parks in the Parish from development. Cllr Curtis agreed to put something in writing for circulation and comment.

- Covingham Flood Group report (Cllr Curtis):

Members noted that the Flood Group was formed a year ago today and things are starting to move forward.

Cllr Curtis reported that the meeting that had taken place with a consultant that Swindon Borough Council had employed to look at flood defence, focusing on Covingham and Nythe was very positive. Members noted that a Thames Water consultant is now in contact with Gareth Hawkes of the Flood Group.

The next Multi-Agency meeting is scheduled for Monday 20th April 2015.

12. Planning Matters

- Application Number: S/15/0354
Re: Erection of an additional 100,000 litre vertical liquid nitrogen tank and the installation of an external solvent recovery unit and associated works. (Revision).
At: Patheon Building, Kingfisher Drive, Covingham, Swindon, SN3 5BZ
- Application Number: S/15/0397
Re: Erection of a two storey rear extension and porch.
At: 19 Kestrel Drive, Covingham, Swindon, SN3 5DP
- Application Number: S/15/0427
Re: Erection of a replacement Porch
At: 10 St. Andrews Green, Covingham, Swindon, SN3 5ER

No objections.

13. Financial Matters

- **Approve financial summary and cheque list**
The financial summary and cheque list was approved subject to an adjustment to the dog waste invoice and total.
- **Receive Q4 budget statement**
The end of year finance statement was received and agreed by members.

- **Review of Asset Register**
Members received a copy of the current Asset Register. Members unanimously agreed the Asset Register.
- **Consider and grant requests received (current grant money available £1000)**
No grant requests this month.

14. Correspondence

Members noted the following received correspondence

Received from	Subject
Swindon Borough Council	Public Notice (waiting and loading restrictions and parking places consolidation) Order 2014 (Variation N.7) Order 2015
Swindon Borough Council	Adoption of Swindon's Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule
Swindon Borough Council	Notice of adoption of proposals for the replacement of a Local Plan (Regulations 26 and 35)
Covingham Park Primary School	Letter of thanks for £250 donation
Email from local resident (Church Warden)	Bulbs for garden outside St. Paul's Church.

15. Matters for consideration

Cllr Benfield commented on the email from the Church Warden. The Warden asked if the Parish Council would consider donating plants and bulbs. Cllr Benfield recommended for the Church to contact the Parish Council to ask for a grant for consideration. Members noted issues with vehicles parking on the grass by the Church and agreed that this issue should be resolved by the Church. They could for example, place a sign about additional parking.

Cllr Curtis informed members of an issue at an address at Sandpiper Bridge. A resident has removed a boundary fence and has installed a footpath. The removed materials have been dumped. The resident has doubled the size of the boundary by his property, but has halved the size of public access. This is a concern, particularly with emergency vehicle access. Agreement was supposedly given by a Ward Councillor.

ACTION: The Chairman and Cllr Curtis agreed to have a look at the area and will contact a Borough Enforcement Officer if appropriate.

The Chairman asked the Clerk to contact the Bobby Van Trust to ask them to direct future correspondence directly to the Clerk.

Meeting closed at 20:55.

Signed (Chair):