

Covingham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 7th December 2015
In Covingham Park Primary School, The Harriers, Covingham

Present: Cllr Short, Cllr Davis, Cllr Foss, Cllr Haigh, Cllr Curtis, Cllr Sandle, Cllr Benfield, Cllr Osbourn

In attendance:

Gemma Cheal (parish clerk), members of the public

1. Apologies

Received from Cllr Hayward.

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

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

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

4. Matters arising from the previous minutes

Item 4 of previous minutes: Cllr Benfield enquired about progress on updating the Covingham website. The Clerk informed members that Scott Wichall had agreed with the Chairman to update the website, although no progress has been made to date.

Cllr Foss requested for an item to be placed on a future agenda regarding more benches around Covingham Park. The Clerk agreed to place this as an agenda item next year (ACTION CLERK).

Item 11 of the previous minutes, regarding discussion on Council Tax: Cllr Benfield informed members that the Swindon percentage rate (for non parished areas) is £30.

Item 13 of previous minutes, regarding transfer of Redrow Estate to Covingham on May 1st 2016: The Chairman informed members that he made contact with Ward Cllr Parry approximately 2 weeks ago to seek clarification for what the Borough Council will be willing to give Covingham for the upkeep and maintainance of the estate. The Chairman is awaiting clarification and further information from Ward Cllr Parry. Cllr Benfield agreed that he would chase a response from Ward Cllr Parry.

Members agreed that Covingham Parish Council need more information from the Ward Councillors about what they will be taking on with the Redrow Estate.

5. Public forum

No comments or questions.

6. Clerk's Report

Members received the following report from the Clerk:

Play park repairs – carpet strip update

The carpet strip has now been repaired.

The small red springer with the moving arm: Playpark installation team took it apart to replace part, a bolt head has sheared off leaving the rest of the bolt in situ. Neither the team nor John has any means of drilling out the old bolt and cutting a new thread for a new bolt. They have put it back as the movement in the arm does not pose a hazard or risk. The company have since advised that the item cannot be repaired. A quote has been received for replacement at £420.80. Cllr Davis agreed to have a look at the equipment. (ACTION CLLR DAVIS).

Handyman Report

A full report from John is attached to this report. For information, John attended a play park safety inspection course. An update from John has been included in councillor packs this month. Members praised John's report following the playground inspection course he attended. Clerk to check with insurance company about an independent annual inspection (ACTION CLERK).

Police Contact

The Police sent an email to say that they are aware of the problems of anti-social behaviour on Covingham Park and have stepped up patrols in the area.

Play park inspection

The annual inspection of the playparks has taken place. A report has been received. The Clerk will forward the report to the Handyman for information and will report back any safety concerns to the Parish Council.

Responses to SBC

The Clerk has emailed a response to SBC re. Potential transfer of services to Covingham Parish Council as agreed at the November meeting. A request has also been sent for further information relating to Redrow.

Presentation to Scott Wichall

Scott cannot attend the December Parish Council meeting; however he has confirmed he can attend the January meeting.

Parish Van Tax

The Parish Van has been taxed for a further 6 months.

7. Verbal Update from the Chairman

The Chairman had nothing to report, other than to make councillors aware of correspondence between the Clerk, Ward Cllr Heenan and Ward Cllr Parry. The Ward Councillors will not attend Parish Council meetings unless they are specifically invited. The Chairman pointed out that an agenda is always sent to the Ward Councillors and expressed disappointment that they now need a formal invitation to attend.

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

The Police have emailed the Clerk to say that they are aware of the problems with anti-social behaviour on Covingham Park and have stepped up patrols in the area.

9. Proposed SuDs and Drainage Strategy for the NEV (Gareth Hawkes of Covingham Flood Group and Cllr Curtis)

Members noted that a response has already been written on behalf of the Covingham Flood Group. Gareth presented key points and concerns that were noted by the Flood Group. The main areas of concern include the Great Stalls West development area, overlapping flood zone 2 of the Environment Agency map. This is contrary to the reassurances that have been given in the past and there are concerns that the developers have been given the opportunity to divert drainage from Great Stall West area 8 south to the River Cole, rather than maintaining the natural drainage paths. If this occurs it will put extra pressure on Acorn Bridge.

Members agreed unanimously with the response written by the Flood Group and resolved for the Clerk to respond to Swindon Borough Council outlining key points, by the deadline of 18th December 2015.

Members thanked Gareth Hawkes for his presentation to the Parish Council.

10. Reports from Parish Council Committee Chairs:

- Environment Committee (Chair Cllr Sandle):

Members noted that vouchers have now been purchased for residents to maintain the flower boxes and can now be inserted in to Christmas cards, ready for delivery. Spring bulbs have been planted and Christmas trees have also been planted at the entrance of Kingfisher Drive (Dorcan Way end).

- Finance Committee (Chair Cllr Benfield):

Members noted that a 3rd quarter finance statement will be received in January. The Finance Committee need to review/amend/add to cost centre codes for the next financial year. Cllr Benfield will generate a paper for approval in due course.

A meeting of the Finance Committee will take place on Monday 4th January at 7pm, ahead of the full council meeting to agree the budget and precept. However, a response cannot be sent to Swindon Borough Council until we know what they expect the Parish Council to do in relation to taking over the maintenance of the Redrow estate, and whether or not they will reimburse the Parish Council for 11 months.

Cllr Osbourn informed members that he had made contact with Ward Cllr Parry to ask for further information regarding the Redrow Estate. Ward Cllr Parry is waiting for information and will relay this to Cllr Osbourn in due course. Members resolved unanimously for Cllr Benfield to chase a response from Ward Cllr Parry.

- Recreation (Chair Cllr Haigh/Cllr Osbourn):

Cllr Osbourn informed members that he has not received any further complaints about the location of the adult exercise equipment, so the equipment will stay in its current location to stand the test of time.

- Parish Plan/Highways Committee (Chair Cllr Curtis):

No report required this month.

- Covingham Flood Group report (Cllr Curtis):

Cllr Curtis informed members that the Environment Agency have confirmed that they have been given the go ahead for the reinstatement of the Eldene/Nythe flood storage area, but no start date has been given. Cllr Curtis informed members that the temporary Project Manager for the Canal Trust's Eastern Villages section made contact with the Clerk about possibly presenting to the Parish Council. Members agreed that this could be a possibility for the Annual Assembly in 2016.

11. Planning Matters

S/15/1834

Re: Erection of a single storey side and rear extension.

At: 31 Larksfield, Covingham Swindon SN3 5AD

No objections.

Members noted an issue with the Planning Section on the Swindon Borough Council website this month.

12. Financial Matters

- **Approve financial summary and cheque list**

Members approved the financial summary and cheque list, subject to one amendment, to include a cheque payment to Cllr Haigh for the amount of £40.50 for reimbursement of an engraved plaque for Scott Wichall.

- **Consider and grant requests received (current grant money available £850)**

No grant requests received.

13. Correspondence

Members noted the following received correspondence

Received from	Subject
Swindon Borough Council	Precept and Related Matters 2016-17

14. Matters for consideration

Cllr Sandle asked if the kicking wall could be repainted as it is looking tired. Cllr Osbourn informed Cllr Sandle that the whole area will be re-done in the future.

Members noted flooding problems in the corner of Covingham Park which have been mentioned, particularly by dog walkers.

Members noted positive feedback received from a local resident regarding the adult exercise equipment. It was noted that a club has been formed by a group of residents who regularly use the equipment.

Members acknowledged that improvement works have finally started on Covingham Square.

Meeting closed at 20:36.

Signed (Chairman):