

Covingham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 7th March 2016
In Covingham Park Primary School, The Harriers, Covingham

Present: Cllr Hayward, Cllr Short, Cllr Haigh, Cllr Foss, Cllr Hawkes, Cllr Curtis, Cllr Benfield, Cllr Osbourn, Cllr Sandle, Cllr Paginton

In attendance:

Gemma Cheal (parish clerk), members of the public

1. Apologies

Received from Cllr Davis.

2. Declaration of Interests

None declared.

3. To Consider the Co-option of Parish Councillors

The Chairman welcomed Mr Tony Paginton to the meeting. Tony informed members that he used to serve on the Parish Council previously and would like to become a member due to his interest in the Eastern Development Area, development at Redlands and road infrastructure. Tony may be able to give members insight that could be beneficial.

Members resolved unanimously to co-opt Tony Paginton as a member of Covingham Parish Council. The Clerk gave Cllr Paginton a welcome pack and asked him to sign a 'declaration of acceptance of office form'.

4. Approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 1st February 2016

Minutes of the meeting held on 1st February 2016 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

5. Matters arising from the previous minutes

Item 15 of the previous minutes: Cllr Haigh asked the Clerk for an update from Ward Councillors on the possibility of updating the street lights on Kingfisher Drive to Beacon lighting, similar to the lights on Ermin Street. The Clerk informed members that Cllr Heenan had emailed the Clerk to say that he will raise it with Officers. The two things to mention now though is that Kingfisher is a safe road and already has a crossing, and SBC will probably seek a contribution from the Parish. Members noted comments from Ward Cllr Heenan.

ACTION CLERK: Clerk to contact Stratton Parish Council to ascertain costings for street lights on Ermin Street.

Members noted improvements to the appearance of Covingham Square, however disappointment was expressed regarding the 3ft high screening fence.

6. Public forum

A local resident expressed an interest in flower boxes for Heronscroft. Cllr Sandle informed the resident that the Parish Council are prepared to provide the boxes, but the residents will have to maintain them. The resident informed Cllr Sandle of his email address to progress this further. The resident also commented on the signs on Merlin Way that require straightening. The resident was informed that this is the responsibility of Swindon Borough Council. **ACTION CLERK:** The Clerk informed the resident that a request would be made to the Council about the signs.

The resident expressed concerns about renewable energy proposals at Key Point in South Marston. Cllr Haigh informed the resident that this will be raised for discussion under item 17.

7. Clerk's Report

Website

March agenda item. No progress to date from Scott Wichall.

Handyman Report

Members noted a report from the Handyman.

Actions from February Parish Council meeting

- Committee list has been updated and circulated to members.
- Clerk has contacted the Swindon Area Committee (SAC). Covingham Parish Council previously paid £55 membership in 2012/13. Invoices for membership to SAC for the next financial year will not be sent until May. Covingham Parish Council has been invited to attend the last SAC meeting of this financial year on 17th March 2016 at 7.30pm at Haydon Wick Parish Council Offices at **no charge**.
ACTION CLERK: Cllr Paginton recalled previous Parish Council membership of a similar organisation. The Clerk agreed to look into this.
- Clerk has written to Debbie Fitchett regarding non-attendance at Parish Council meetings. Debbie is no longer a Parish Councillor.
- Clerk has emailed Kirsty Cole, SBC regarding the resolution made by the council on 1st February 2016. Kirsty has asked the Parish Council to consider inviting her to a future meeting to understand members concerns and reasons for their decision and to see whether the Borough could do any work to see if they could let a contract, to allow Covingham to take them over a bit later in the Spring/Summer. When SBC did the Highworth transfer, they provided a joint service for a few months and then Highworth took control from 1st June.
- Clerk has emailed Ward Cllr Heenan regarding the lighting at the crossing on Kingfisher Drive. Awaiting response.
- Remaining grant figures have been checked following a request at the February Parish Council meeting. We currently have £450 of grant money remaining this financial year.
- Planning response has been sent to Swindon Borough Council regarding the Redlands planning application.
- Swindon Borough Council has not yet confirmed our precept request.

Planning Training

Swindon Borough Council has offered to carry out some training for parish councils to help them to gain more of an understanding of the planning process. South Marston Parish Council has contacted me to ask if we would like to attend a training session with them. South Marston are happy to host in their Village Hall. ACTION CLERK: Clerk to contact SMPC to progress planning training.

Forthcoming meetings:

- Ethical training: 9th March 2016, 7pm at Haydon Wick Parish Council Offices
- Borough/Parish meeting: 10th March 2016, 5.30pm at Civic Offices
- SAC meeting: 17th March 2016, 7.30pm at Haydon Wick Parish Council Offices

Members noted that Kirsty Cole is pressing for a further meeting with Covingham Parish Council to discuss the transfer of services. Members commented that clarity is needed on the potential cost of services and the range of works that Covingham could be required to take on. Members noted that Kirsty may be present at a Borough/Parish meeting on 31st March.

Members discussed the Annual Assembly and considered who may be available to be the guest speaker this year. Cllr Foss agreed to talk to local resident Bev, who may be able to give a talk (ACTION CLLR FOSS).

8. Verbal update from the Chairman

Cllr Osbourn expressed his disappointment with the lack on Police presence at Parish Council meetings and informed members that he has written to the Chief Constable to express disappointment.

Cllr Foss asked if the Clerk is copied into circulation of a Police Briefing email and offered to forward this on to the Clerk in future for information.

9. **Police Matters** (Update from local neighbourhood policing team)
No report from the Police this month.

10. **Discuss taking part in a 'Green Day' for Covingham (Request from Ward Cllr Parry)**
Members discussed the forthcoming Green Day on Saturday 2nd April.

The Parish Council pointed out that Swindon Borough Council has overall responsibility for litter picking for Covingham Parish and noted the good work of the Parish Handyman who keeps the parks tidy.

Members resolved unanimously not to take part in the Green Day as a Parish Council, but commented that individuals may help if they so choose.

11. **Receive quotes for further seating around Covingham Park**

The Chairman informed members that approximately 10 companies have been contacted; however more detail and costings are required.

ACTION CHAIRMAN: Chairman to re-contact companies to request further information. Cllr Paginton to have a look around southerly area to see if there is a requirement there for further seating in this area.

Cllr Benfield mentioned that a resident of Robinsgreen is interested in installing a new bench and will pay for the cost, as long as he can have a plaque in memory of his wife. Members agreed to this request.

12. **Discuss appointing a contractor for website improvements**

Cllr Osbourn informed members that he had been to see Scott Wichall as previously agreed. Unfortunately, Scott does not have the time to carry out improvement works to the website.

Members noted that there is currently enough money in the Capital Budget to pay for a new website and resolved for the Parish Clerk to obtain further information from other Parish Councils regarding contractors that they have used to build their websites, to include costings. Clerk to also contact Swindon Web (ACTION CLERK).

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

- Environment Committee (Chair Cllr Sandle):

Members noted that the wall around the recycling bins by Covingham Shops is low and consequently, does not serve a purpose. Cllr Osbourn and Cllr Benfield had an on-site meeting with Swindon Borough Council Officers on 3rd March to discuss what will be maintained by Swindon Borough Council and what will be maintained by Covingham Parish Council. StreetSmart are to continue maintaining the grass area and trees (including those recently planted as part of these works). Cllrs requested for areas that were dug up to be seeded. Members noted that StreetSmart will be re-doing some of the paving slabs as gaps were too large.

Members discussed lighting along the footpath by the shops, the general appearance of the flats above the shops and the area the back of the shops.

ACTION CLLR OSBOURN: Cllr Osbourn agreed to contact Ward Cllr Parry regarding the shops.

Vandalism: Cllr Sandle reported that there had been, on quite a few occasions, broken glass in the Skate Board Park. Members noted that this is a particular concern for young children and dogs that frequent the parks. The police have been informed and have promised to carry out spot checks. Cllr Benfield agreed to put a note in the Handymag (ACTION CLLR BENFIELD).

Vandalism of Street Boxes: Members noted that street boxes at the end of Swallowdale had been subjected to vandalism and theft.

Members noted that the drains have been cleaned in Covingham but the streets require sweeping.

Cllr Sandle informed members that the number of daffodils will be checked, particularly around the trees, to see if they need to be replenished around September time.

- Finance Committee (Chair Cllr Benfield):
Members agreed unanimously for appraisals to be carried out by Cllr Benfield for the Clerk and Handyman.
- Recreation (Chair Cllr Osbourn/Cllr Haigh):
No report this month.
- Parish Plan Committee (Chair Cllr Curtis):
No report this month, however members noted that a planning meeting is scheduled for 8th March where the Master Planning document for the New Eastern Villages will be put before the Borough Planning Committee.
- Covingham Flood Group report (Cllr Curtis):
No report this month.

14. Planning Matters

Application Number: S/16/0220

Proposal: Erection of a two storey side extension, single storey rear extension and porch (retrospective) at 5 Martinfield, Covingham, Swindon, SN3 5BA.

DECISION: No objections.

Application Number: S/16/0344

Proposal: Erection of a first floor side extension at 3 Fitzmaurice Close, Covingham, Swindon, SN3 5BS.

DECISION: No objections.

Members commented that any verges that are damaged should be made good.

Members noted a planning application received after publication of the agenda for a 2 storey side/rear and single storey extension at 19 The Buntings.

15. Financial Matters

- Approve financial summary and cheque list.
Members unanimously approved the financial summary and cheque list.
- Receive quote for additional grass cutting at Redrow.
Cllr Benfield informed members that he met with Lee Wells on site to discuss the additional grass cutting required for Redrow. Members resolved to wait for a written quote from Lee Wells as additional areas for cutting had been identified and the original quote given to the Clerk required amendment.
- Consider and grant requests received (current grant money available £450).
No grant requests received.

16. Correspondence

Members noted the following received correspondence

Received from	Subject
SBC	Refuse/recycling sacks.
Tony Paginton	Expression of interest in becoming a Parish Councillor.
Covingham Post Office	Closing times for refurbishment (15 th March 2016).

Kirsty Cole, SBC	Transfer of services – further discussion request.
Kirsty Cole, SBC	Precept confirmation (paid late April and September).
SBC	New Eastern Villages Development – Consultation and Information Events.
Ward Cllr Heenan	Response to email sent re. beacon street lighting.
South Marston Parish Council	Planning training. ACTION: Clerk to contact South Marston Clerk to express interest in attending planning training.
Local resident	Street light issues in Hawkswood.
Andrea Stanley, SAC	Membership information and dates of future meetings.
Mrs Sherwood	Grounds maintenance request
Mr Phillips	Transfer of service implications – changes in Covingham
Teresa Martin	Grounds maintenance
Ron Leach	Adhoc request (additional duties)
Helen James	Grounds maintenance
David Thompson	Council tax increases
NALC	External Arrangements for Local Authorities. The Clerk summarised changes. Noted by members.
The Tower Mint Ltd	Commemorative Medal for Queen Elizabeth's 90 th Birthday.

Members noted the number of emails received this month from local residents. The Clerk informed members that she had responded where applicable, referring residents to contact Swindon Borough Council directly for grounds maintenance and adhoc requests, via the Ward Councillors.

17. **Matters for consideration**

Cllr Haigh informed members that he attended a meeting about the proposed Renewable Energy Centre which is to be sited close to the A419 by South Marston.

He stated that the main concern that he had was not any toxic waste coming from the plant, as this would be strictly controlled and comply to the required standards, but the amount of traffic that would be entering and exiting the plant. The figures he was given at the presentation were At peak times, in 8 vehicles per hour and 7 out. Evenings , in 7 vehicles per hour and 8 out. This is a total of 148 movements. Members noted that this will cause major problems on our already congested roundabouts in the area.

Cllr Haigh commented on grass supports for adult exercise equipment. Would like to see them further back from the path.

Cllr Sandle raised concern about the amount of debris accumulating on the cycle path by the school and enquired about whether or not the School Site Manager could do something about it. Cllr Foss agreed to talk to the school to see if something can be done.

Cllr Curtis and Cllr Hawkes agreed to attend the Swindon Area Committee (SAC) meeting on 17th March 2016.

Members noted that once again, Covingham Parish Council is one of the lowest in the authority for Precept for 2016/17.

Meeting closed at 21:06.

Signed (Chair):