

Covingham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 4th July 2016
In Covingham Park Primary School, The Harriers, Covingham

Present: Cllr Osbourn (Chair), Cllr Benfield (Vice Chair), Cllr Curtis, Cllr Sandle, Cllr Haigh, Cllr Foss, Cllr Paginton, Cllr Kennedy, Cllr Hawkes,

In attendance: 2 members of the public present.

1. Apologies

None received.

2. Declaration of Interests

None declared.

3. Consider Co-option of Parish Councillors

The Chairman welcomed Stuart Kennedy, local resident to the meeting. Stuart introduced himself and stated reasons for wishing to join the Parish Council. The Clerk confirmed that criteria for serving as a Parish Councillor had been met.

Members resolved unanimously for Stuart Kennedy to serve as a parish councillor for Covingham Parish Council. The Clerk asked Cllr Kennedy to sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office form. Members introduced themselves to Cllr Kennedy.

4. Approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 6th June 2016

Minutes of the meeting held on 6th June 2016 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

5. Matters arising from the previous minutes

Item 9 of the previous minutes (grass cutting). Members noted the issue of infrequent grass cutting by Swindon Borough Council contractors and commented that it had been over 2 months between cuts. Members also commented on the amount of grass that is left after cutting. Covingham Parish Council were previously reluctant to take over responsibility for grass cutting, however Swindon Borough Council appear to be showing the quality of the standard of service that will be provided for grass cutting in the future.

6. Public forum

One member of the public commented on the issue of the poor standard of Borough grass cutting, and stated that it is a disgrace to the area. Members also noted concerns about grass falling into drains which could cause blockages. The Chair encouraged the lady to contact local Ward Councillors with concerns.

Members noted that the issue with the grass cutting is Borough wide, however presently it is still the responsibility of Swindon Borough Council to cut grass to a good standard. Cllr Paginton pointed out that the Borough will no longer be providing this service by 2020.

7. Clerk's Report

Members received the following report from the Clerk:

Website

Terms of reference to be agreed at July PC meeting.

Audit Update

Financial information has been sent to External Auditor by deadline date of 24th June.
Relevant information has been published on the website for public viewing of unaudited accounts.

Handyman Report

A report from John is attached to this report.

Issues to note this month:

- Grass cutting at Redrow: Clerk has spoken to Rob Core at SBC to clarify grass cutting as SBC contractors and Lee Wells are both cutting areas at Redrow. It appears that there has been a miscommunication at the Borough regarding Redrow. Rob Core will be pursuing financial recompense with Kirsty Cole for the grass cutting we have been doing.

Parish Van

The Parish Van has been taxed for a further six months. Clerk to be reimbursed for paying on card.

Grass cutting tender update:

Three tender letters plus map have been sent to:

- Allbuild Services (Lee Wells, current grass cutting contractor)
- Countrywide (recommended by Haydon Wick Parish Council)
- Bawden Contracting Services Limited

Any quotations received to be presented at July PC meeting.

8. Verbal Update from the Chairman

No verbal report required this month.

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

No report from the Police this month.

10. Community Governance Review Stakeholder Meeting

Cllr Curtis reported that she attended a meeting at Swindon Borough Council on 22nd June, the purpose of which was to bring Stakeholders up to date with preliminary engagement across the Borough regarding the Community Governance Review (CGR).

Members noted that it has been proposed to merge Covingham, Nythe, Eldene and Liden together as a part of this review.

Members discussed the implications of this in depth and noted lack of attendance of the Ward Councillors at such an important time. Cllr Curtis informed members that she had pointed out that Ward Councillors do not attend Parish Council meetings.

Members resolved unanimously to hold a Special Meeting of the Parish Council in order to formulate a response to Swindon Borough Council by the deadline of 31st July 2016. Members noted that a decision will be made by the Borough in August following the deadline for engagement responses.

ACTION CLERK: Clerk to request the attendance of Ward Councillors at the Special Parish Council meeting.

11. Covingham Square recycling units

Members noted the continuous issue of fly tipping, particularly at the back of Covingham Shops. Cllr Benfield commented on the cost of landfill tax that would have to be paid by the Parish Council if we were to take over this service from the Borough Council in the future. It may be a possibility to remove the recycling area in the future to save this problem. This will be discussed as a future agenda item.

12. Reports from Parish Council Committee Chairs:

- Environment Committee (Chair Cllr Sandle):

Members received the following Environment Committee Report:

Allotments

The annual general meeting of the Wanborough Parish Council's Allotment Committee was held on Monday 20th June 26, 2016. The following items were discussed:

Waiting List

Currently there are four Covingham Residents on the waiting list. One is waiting for a Specific Plot. One requires a Full Plot. Two others on the list are happy to take any plot that becomes available.

Reps report

If you can recall Cllr Benfield and I suggested that the monitoring of the allotments should be carried out by a selected group of plot holders. This was actioned and has been quite successful. Since the last meeting, six initial warning letters have been sent out; the committee is waiting for replies. If any holder fails to reply and not commit to the necessary action of maintaining their plot, the plot will be taken away from them.

Discussions also took part about the Manure Heap, the progress on the installation of a Water Trough, a feasibility study into holding an Allotment Competition, Fly Tipping, and the need to update the Allotment Agreement. We were given the assurance that the Administration Costs stay the same for this year although the rent for individual plots may be increased.

Floral display

Unfortunately the boxes in Wrenswood have still have not been adopted, I would like to suggest that these boxes are removed & installed in Dovetrees.

Although we continue to receive favourable positive comments regarding the floral displays & poppies planted in Covingham, we have received a negative email from the Service Manager of Street Smart stating that some residents have complained about the poppies planted under the street signs. I am surprised they can actually see the poppies, when the grass is in such a poor state.

Comments: The Clerk informed members that the person that requested the boxes at Wrenswood had been contacted and asked to plant up the boxes as they had not yet been adopted. The boxes have subsequently been made ready to plant up. Councillors noted that the Handyman had already made a spare box and could make another for Dovetrees. This action was agreed unanimously.

- Finance Committee (Chair Cllr Benfield):

No report this month. Cllr Sandle commented about what would happen to the Parish finances should Covingham Parish Council be dissolved in the future? This is an area of uncertainty at the present time.

- Recreation (Chair Cllr Haigh):

Cllr Haigh informed members that he has had difficulty obtaining prices for the 2 benches for the Parish due to lack of information on the manufacturers websites.

ACTION CLERK: Clerk to contact Lee Wells for a quotation for obtaining and installing 2 benches.

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

Members received and noted a report from Cllr Curtis. Members noted that Cllrs Curtis and Paginton attended a Swindon Borough Council/Covingham Parish Liaison Meeting on 21st June 2016 with

Swindon Borough Council Planning Officers. Members noted a timetable for planning applications and update regarding the New Eastern Villages development.

- Covingham Flood Group report (Cllr Curtis):
Members noted that the next Flood Group meeting is scheduled for Monday 11th July. A report will follow.

- Parish Website Working Party (Cllr Hawkes):
Members received proposed terms of reference for the Parish website drafted by Cllr Hawkes.

Members noted difficulty accessing the website to make amendments as well as issues with the website appearing in Google Searches. Cllr Hawkes informed members that a Username and Password need to be obtained from the firm that we rent the internet space from, in order to make adequate changes. Cllr Foss commented on a Transparency Fund that is being offered for websites (ACTION CLERK).

Members unanimously agreed to accept the Terms of Reference for the Parish Website.

13. Planning Matters

Application Number: S/OUT/16/0021

Re: Outline Planning Application for the erection of up to 370no. dwellings, a local convenience store/community facility, primary school, open space, landscaping, access points to and from Wanborough Road and northern site boundary and eastern boundaries and associated infrastructure.

At: Redlands, Eastern Villages Swindon

COMMENTS: Cllr Curtis informed members that she could not see where amendments had been made. Members noted that letter sent from the Clerk had covered all points in previous response. Original comments still stand.

Application Number: S/16/1016

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

At: 16 Lapwing Close, Covingham Swindon SN3 5EB

COMMENTS: None.

Application Number: S/16/1015

Re: Erection of a roof to existing front porch.

At: 4 Dovetrees, Covingham Swindon SN3 5AX

COMMENTS: None.

14. Financial Matters

- **Approve financial summary and cheque list**

The financial summary and cheque list were approved and signed, subject to the removal of a payment to Getmapping Plc.

- **Consider and grant requests received (current grant money available £675)**

No grant requests this month.

- **Receive any quotations received for additional grass cutting (as part of consideration for taking on additional services).**

The Clerk informed members that a quotation had been received from Allbuild Services (Lee Wells), current grass cutting and dog waste contractor for the amount of £19,200 plus VAT. This is for fortnightly cutting from March to October. Members resolved to wait for further quotations before making a decision.

- **Receive any quotations received for additional seating on Covingham Park.**
Deferred until quotations are obtained.

15. Correspondence

Members noted the following received correspondence:

Received from	Subject
Stuart Kennedy	Expression of interested in joining Covingham Parish Council.
Bobby Van Trust	Thank you letter for grant received.

16. Matters for consideration

Cllr Hawkes asked if the Parish Council could go until September without having a meeting in August? Members noted this point and resolved to discuss the Community Governance Review at a Special Meeting of the Parish Council on 18th July at 7.30pm in the School.

Members noted that some local residents had talked about working together to cut grass locally in order to make the area neat and tidy. One local resident suggested that neighbours in one street in Covingham should get together not only to cut grass, but to sort out weed problems. This is a good example of positive community spirit.

Cllr Haigh mentioned the on-going problem of epicormic growth which was noted by members. Members also noted the issue of overhanging growth from bushes on to pathways. Members noted that it is the responsibility of the home owners.

ACTION CLLR HAIGH: Cllr Haigh to compile list of addresses so that the Parish Council can write regarding this problem.

Cllr Sandle reported that an ice cream van that stops at the school is driving around Covingham Park.

ACTION CLLR SANDLE: Cllr Sandle to try and obtain registration number.

Meeting closed at 21:00

Signed (Chair):