

Covingham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 5th September 2016
In Covingham Park Primary School, The Harriers, Covingham

Present: Cllr Osbourn, Cllr Benfield, Cllr Sandle, Cllr Kennedy, Cllr Foss, Cllr Curtis, Cllr Paginton, Cllr Wilkinson

In attendance: Gemma Cheal (Parish Clerk), members of the public

1. Apologies

Received from Cllr Hawkes and Cllr Haigh.

2. Declaration of Interests

None declared.

3. Consider Co-option of Parish Councillors

The Chairman welcomed Jackie Wilkinson to the meeting. Jackie introduced herself to councillors and expressed her interest in joining the Parish Council. The Clerk informed members that the criteria for serving as a Parish Council had been met.

Members resolved unanimously for Jackie to serve as a Parish Councillor for Covingham. The Clerk asked Cllr Wilkinson to sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.

4. Approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 4th July 2016 and the Extraordinary meeting held on 18th July 2016

Minutes of the meeting held on 4th July 2016 and the Extraordinary meeting held on 18th July 2016 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

5. Matters arising from the previous minutes

Members noted the issue of epicormic growth and the growth of hedges from private gardens, encroaching on to the footpaths in Covingham. Members noted that it is the responsibility of home owners to ensure that any overhanging hedges are cut back.

Members noted correspondence received by Cllr Osbourn, that was subsequently passed on to the school regarding hedgerows encroaching footpaths around the school. Members noted that the school have a contract in place for the hedges to be cut twice a year.

An issue with overhanging hedge between Patheon and Dorcan School has been passed to Ward Councillor Parry. Members noted that an Officer had been out to inspect the growth, although it is not known whether or not the growth has been cleared.

Cllr Curtis informed members that she attended a Stage 3 Stakeholder meeting on 1st September regarding the Community Governance Review. Various groups were in attendance from areas such as Lawn and Badbury Park.

Members noted the positive outcome for Covingham, following the response made to Swindon Borough Council, stating that Covingham do not wish to be grouped with neighbouring Parish Councils. Plans are in place to create 4 'super parish councils'. Members noted that following the consideration of the report by Cabinet, and by the Scrutiny Committee on 22nd August, the formal Consultation of Stage 3 of the review runs to 30 September 2016.

Transparency Fund: Cllr Foss asked about the possibility of applying for the Transparency Fund through the National Association of Local Councils (NALC). The Clerk informed members that she had spoken to Katie Fielding at NALC. Unfortunately Covingham Parish Council does not qualify as the Parish Council has an annual turnover of over 25K.

6. **Public forum**
No comments or questions.

7. **Clerk's Report**
Members received the following report from the Clerk:

Update on Benches

Lee Wells has been contacted about a quote for supply and installation of 2 benches. Currently awaiting quote – Clerk chased with Lee on 30th August.

Councillor Packs

Hard copies of documentation will be available at the September meeting. Hard copy packs will be delivered to councillors as normal for the October meeting.

Finance

The Q1 Finance Statement was circulated to members on 11st August for approval formally at the September Parish Council meeting.

A number of payments were required during August – namely dog bins and grass cutting. These were made online, in accordance with the Parish Council financial regulations.

Audit Update

Currently waiting outcome from External Auditors.

Handyman Report

Key notes to report from John this month:

1. Replaced 7 rivets in skateboard park
2. Repaired "dedicated" bench in Covingham Park
3. Painted 2 benches in playground
4. Painted the 3 seats in skateboard park
5. Removed 6 N20 cartridges from Smitan Brook Park
6. Painted 2 benches by basketball court in Covingham park.
7. Painted 2 benches in Smittan Brook Park
8. Cleared out drain, and replaced drain cover in Skateboard park.
9. Painted 2 benches in Covingham Park. All benches/seats in both parks, now painted/refurbished.
10. Cut back hedges/brambles etc in Lapwing Close

Signed: John Ricketts

Date: 30th August 2016

Forthcoming meetings:

- Community Governance Review Stakeholder Meeting (1st September) VC to attend
- Swindon Area Committee Meeting (15th September, 7.30pm at Blunsdon Village Hall) GH and DB to attend
- Swindon Design Review Panel Presentation (15th September, 5.30pm at SBC Council Chambers) GH to attend

Councillors to feed back at the September meeting.

Handyman holiday

John will be taking holiday from 19th to 23rd September, for information.

Grass cutting tender update:

- Countrywide have submitted a tender (circulated to members via email). To be discussed further at the September Parish Council meeting.

Expression of Interest

Received from local resident Jackie Wilkinson. Jackie attended the July Parish Council meeting. I have invited her to attend the September meeting and have allocated an appropriate agenda item to consider her request to join the Parish Council.

Members noted that the Handyman had cleared the camp site at Sandpiper Bridge.

8. Verbal Update from the Chairman

Members noted the email sent to the Chairman from Ward Councillor Parry asking if Covingham would be willing to join neighbouring parishes to share the cost of services. Members noted that the Chairman responded to Ward Cllr Parry to say that Covingham are currently looking into cost of taking on additional services at the moment and will be looking at the sharing of services to reduce costs as part of these discussions.

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

No report from the Police this month.

10. Reports from Parish Council Committee Chairs:

- Environment Committee (Chair Cllr Sandle):

Bulbs

A survey in the spring of this year was carried out to establish were additional bulbs would be required around the trees in both Smitanbrook & Covingham Park. We estimated it to be approximately 400; this included the cultivated strip in Covingham Square, were we intent to plant some bulbs too.

We will be having a bulb planting session, one Sunday, to be arranged, in the autumn & would welcome some help with this. If anyone who would like to offer a helping hand, in again making the parish a beautiful sight in the spring, please contact Gemma, your parish Clerk.

Response: Cllrs Curtis, Paginton and Kennedy offered to help with the bulb planting.

Swallowdale Floral Boxes

These boxes were installed & maintained by Beverley Holton, unfortunately, Beverley no longer resides in Swallowdale, but has agreed to continue to maintain the boxes. However, it looks as if Beverley is only maintaining the two boxes on the entrance to Swallowdale, not the one at the end by the park, which is in a sorry state; I would like to ask the parish council permission to have this box removed.

Response: Members resolved for the box to be removed.

Christmas Vouchers

Last year we sent a Christmas card enclosing a garden voucher for £10, as a token of our thanks, to all the residents who have & maintain floral boxes in the parish, this was extremely well received. I would like the parish council's permission to repeat this again this year.

Response: Members noted that the vouchers must be beneficial to the residents of the Parish and must not be for the benefit of an individual.

Members resolved unanimously for the vouchers to be purchased from a garden centre for planting up the floral boxes in the Parish, for the enjoyment of all residents of Covingham.

Seats

John has again excelled himself with the excellent job he has done on painting the seats, I would like our thanks recorded.

- Finance Committee (Chair Cllr Benfield):
Report under Item 12. Members noted a discussion paper regarding the forthcoming setting of the budget that Cllr Benfield circulated via email.

- Recreation (Chair Cllr Haigh):
Discussion on further seating to be discussed under Item 12.
- Parish Plan/Highways Committee (Chair Cllr Curtis):
Members noted a forthcoming Highways and Transportation event scheduled at Steam on 20th September from 6-8pm. Cllr Foss enquired about the format of the event, and may be able to attend. The Clerk informed members that she may be able to attend the event.
- Covingham Flood Group report (Cllr Curtis):
Cllr Curtis informed members that the Flood Group met in July, although there is little to report from the meeting. A meeting is scheduled for 10th October. Cllr Curtis will update members following the meeting.
- Parish Website Working Party (Cllr Hawkes):
The Clerk informed members that Cllr Hawkes now has access to username and password for the accessing of the website. Terms of Reference were agreed at the July Parish Council meeting.

11. Planning Matters

Application Number: SuDs Vision for NEV draft SPD

Re: Sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) for the New Eastern Villages (NEV) draft SPD

At: New Eastern Villages

Application Number: S/OUT/15/0753

Re: Outline Planning Application (with means of access off Wanborough Road not reserved) for the demolition and/or conversion of the existing buildings on site, and redevelopment to provide up to 2,600 dwellings, up to 1,765 sqm of community/retail uses (Use Class D1/D2/A1/A3/A4), up to 3,000 sqm of business/employment use (Use Class B1), a primary school, open space, strategic landscaping and other green infrastructure (including SUDs and areas for nature conservation), other associated road and drainage infrastructure, indicative primary access road corridors to the A420 and improvements and widening of existing route off Wanborough Road to provide pedestrian, cycle and bus access.

At: Lotmead Site, Eastern Villages, Swindon, Wilts.

Comments: No response required. Cllrs Curtis and Hawkes to monitor this planning application.

Application Number: S/OUT/15/1754

Re: Outline Planning Application (with means of access off Wanborough Road not reserved) for up to 200 dwellings (Use Class C3) with open space, landscaping and associated road and drainage infrastructure to form the southern part of Lotmead Village.

At: Lotmead Site, Eastern Villages, Swindon, Wilts.

Comments: No response required. This is an appeal. The Parish Council have previously commented on pre-application and actual application. All comments previously provided have been passed to the Planning Inspector.

12. Financial Matters

- **Approve financial summary and cheque list**
Members resolved to accept and approve the financial summary and cheque list.
- **Approval of Q1 Finance Statement**
Members resolved to accept and approve the Q1 Finance Statement.
- **Consider and grant requests received (current grant money available £675)**
None received.

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

The Clerk informed members that two quotes had been received:

Quote 1	To cut all areas (including parks and Redrow, fortnightly from March to October £23,860 + VAT
Quote 2	Based on a minimum of 10 cuts – fortnightly, March to October £25,000 + VAT (excluding parks). <i>Emailed for quotation to include parks</i>

Members noted that Quote 1 had not yet been received in writing and resolved to defer a decision until information had been received in writing.

Cllr Benfield circulated a report detailing thoughts/recommendations as part of considerations for taking on additional services, as follows:

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|---|------------------|---|
| 1 | Grass Cutting | Accept and obtain tenders |
| 2 | Hedge Cutting | Accept and obtain tenders |
| 3 | Dog Bins | Keep the current contract |
| 4 | Street Sweeping | Accept and obtain tenders and decide frequency |
| 5 | Graffiti | Only remove on our current equipment |
| 6 | Litter Bins | Establish who will be responsible for removing the collected rubbish currently SBC do this. |
| 7 | Covingham Square | Only maintain the area we have agreed with SBC namely the small flower bed |
| 8 | Public Toilets | Refuse |
| 9 | Weed Killing | Because of Health & Safety this will remain with SBC. |

Decision: Members resolved unanimously to accept the above recommendations.

Members noted that Lee Wells verbally informed the Clerk that he could hire a road sweeper for approximately £350 a day. Members commented on the issue of car parking on the streets that could have negative consequences for road sweeping. However, members agreed that this could be resolved by specifying the time of day for road sweeping with the contractor, and informing residents in the form of notices that could be put up in the streets.

Members noted that gully cleaning will remain the responsibility of Swindon Borough Council.

ACTIONS:

- Seek quotations for street sweeping (twice per year for the whole estate, including main roads in Covingham and Redrow).
- Seek quotations for hedge cutting. Clerk to enquire about a discount for 3 year fixed contract from contractors.

Members thanked Cllr Benfield and the Clerk for the work that had been completed to date on the transfer of services.

- **Receive any quotations received for additional seating on Covingham Park**

The Clerk informed members that she had contacted Lee Wells to ask him to quote for the purchase and installation of 2 new benches. Currently waiting for a quote.

Cllr Osbourn informed members that the Bowls Club will be closing soon and may have some benches that they will no longer have use for.

13. Correspondence

Members noted the following received correspondence

Received from	Subject
Local resident Mrs Kimber	Gym equipment. Noted by members. No further action.

RoSPA	Forthcoming play park inspection. Noted.
NALC	Town Planning from the Parish and Town Council perspective – 2 nd November. Cllrs Curtis and Paginton interested in attending, subject to spaces.

14. Matters for consideration

Members noted rutting on the parks in Covingham. The Clerk agreed to contact the dog bin contractor about the issue.

Members noted the issue of street lighting as reported in the local press.

Cllr Kennedy commented on the mess of the recycling centre in Covingham. Members noted that the recycle bins are constantly overflowing with rubbish and the area looks a mess. As part of discussions with the Borough, Covingham should consider asking the Borough to get rid of this area. Members encouraged Cllr Kennedy to direct issues as a resident directly to Ward Cllrs and the Cabinet Member for Streetsmart.

Members noted a request to place flower boxes at the end of Falconscroft. Members resolved unanimously for the box that will be removed to be placed at Falconscroft. Members noted that the Handyman may have a spare box that could be used.

Members noted an issue with the shed roof as reported by the Handyman. This is a recurring problem. The Handyman has carried out repairs in the past; however it looks as though a new roof is now needed.

Members resolved for quotes to be obtained for a replacement roof, to be considered by the Parish Council in October.

ACTION: Agenda item in October.

Cllr Curtis agreed to chase up a letter with Andy Brown, Swindon Borough Council Planning Officer regarding Patheon.

Meeting closed at 20:50.

Signed (Chairman):