

# Covingham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2017, following the Annual Assembly, in Covingham Park Primary School, The Harriers, Covingham

**Present:** Cllr Osbourn (Chair), Cllr Benfield, Cllr Foss, Cllr Paginton, Cllr Curtis, Cllr Hawkes, Cllr Kennedy, Cllr Bacon, Cllr Wilkinson, Cllr Haigh, Cllr Short

**In attendance:** Gemma Cheal, Parish Clerk

- 1. Apologies**  
Received from Cllr Sandle.
- 2. Declaration of Interests**  
None.
- 3. Consider co-option of new parish councillors**  
Not applicable.
- 4. Approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2017**  
Minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2017 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.
- 5. Matters arising from the previous minutes**  
None.
- 6. Public forum**  
No members of the public present.

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

<b>Play Park repairs</b>
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New swing chains have been fitted by John.
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<b>Meeting with Grass cutting contractor</b>
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The Chair and I met with Lee Wells on Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> March to discuss taking over additional duties from 1 <sup>st</sup> April, including grass cutting, road sweeping and hedge cutting. Lee has agreed and signed the contract and is ready to start works.
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<b>Euro bins</b>
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SBC have confirmed that the Euro bins are due to be installed in the coming week at the agreed location by Covingham Shops.
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<b>Handyman Report</b>
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Key notes to report from John this month:
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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Replaced slam plate on gate to children's play area</li><li>2. Replaced 7 Rivet (s) in skateboard park</li><li>3. Removed two sofa base cushions fly tipped on Kingfisher Drive</li><li>4. Litter picked Lovell Close</li><li>5. Removed 24 N02 cartridges from Pheasant Close/Cole Close/Covingham Square</li><li>6. Installed new swings in play area</li><li>7. Removed cans/bottles from both drains in skateboard park (approx. 40 in total)</li><li>8. Tarmac dumped by travellers in Covingham Park finally removed by SBC on 23/3/2017</li><li>9. Carried out initial clean-up of Cole Close &amp; Covingham Square (5 hours)</li></ol> |
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Signed: John Ricketts
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Date: 31st March 2017
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<b>Actions for the Clerk from March PC meeting:</b>
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- Agenda item for April – for agreement of plaque for the Christmas tree.
- Grant cheque included in payment schedule for Covingham Park Primary School following approval of grant at March PC meeting.
- Clerk has contacted SBC to request Utilities Company make good the land at St. Paul's Drive.
- Clerk to Ward Councillors requesting for the cycle barrier to be lowered between Dovetrees and Robinsgreen.

**Comments/questions arising from the Clerk's Report:** Members noted the amount of litter collected by the Handyman. The number of Eurobins provided by SBC has not been adequate and more have been subsequently requested. Additional litter collected has been stored in the lock up shed. Members discussed grass cutting that has been cut by the Parish Council appointed contractor and noted positive comments received.

**8. Verbal Update from the Chairman**

The Chairman pointed out that prior to April 1<sup>st</sup> 2017; he had been inundated with grass cutting complaints. The have subsequently been picked up by the Parish Council appointed contractor.

**9. Automatic enrolment pension scheme: Update following Swindon Area Committee (SAC) meeting and agree next steps.**

Members received update information on both the Wilts Pension Fund and the NEST Scheme, including employee and employer contributions for both. Members noted that contributions were higher with the Wilts Pension Fund.

**Members resolved** for the Clerk to adopt the NEST Scheme for Covingham Parish Council. Cllr Short requested for his vote against joining the NEST Scheme to be formally recorded.

**10. Transfer of Services**

• **Update from Borough/Parish meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2017**

Members received a report from Cllr Hawkes regarding the borough/Parish meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2017. The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss the 'deed' that covers the transfer of services from Swindon Borough Council to Parish Councils. The SAC and rural Parishes had previously stated that the deed should be the same for each parish so all parishes had the same terms. The schedule would differ as this covered the services the individual parish would take on. Members noted that the revised Deed was made available in time for the Parish Council meeting. Members noted Insurance terms required by the Parish Council of 10 million pounds which we have in place, but only 5 million is covered with our appointed contractor. Members noted that fly tipping was also discussed as part of the meeting.

• **Protecting the parks**

**Members unanimously resolved** to apply to make Covingham Park and Smitan Brook Park areas of Community Asset.

**Members unanimously resolved** for The Planning Committee to actively monitor as an on-going process, the list of lands in Covingham that have been ear-marked for development.

• **Receive revised Deed from Swindon Borough Council: Agree next steps**

Members noted the revised Deed received from Swindon Borough Council.

Members **Resolved** to sign the revised deed from Swindon Borough Council. Cllr Foss requested for his vote against the proposal to be formally recorded because it is his belief that the Parish Council are failing to protect the parks from future development.

• **Firecrest View Play Area: Agree and sign Tenancy at Will**

**Members unanimously resolved** to sign the Tenancy at Will for the Firecrest View Play Area.

**11. Police Matters (Update from local neighbourhood policing team)**

The following update had been received from the Police this month:

Damage to a bus stop on Kingfisher Drive, Theft from the Cooperative, minor assault on Towcester Road and minor incidents of anti-social behaviour which appear to have been more neighbour related.

## 12. Reports from Parish Council Committee Chairs:

- Environment Committee (Chair Cllr Sandle):

Members received the following report from Cllr Sandle, reported by Cllr Benfield in her absence:

### **Cycle Track**

The new cycle track has now been completed & looks good, I appreciate this is in the Stratton Parish boundary, but as we were consulted on the application it is good to see that our reservations regarding the removal of the trees has been noted, they have planted an additional 25 new trees. Unfortunately they did have to remove our floral box, but our flowers are still blooming nicely under the street sign. ACTION: Clerk to ask Handyman to create new floral box.

### **Covingham Square**

How much better it looks already now the Bottle Banks have been removed. We now need to ensure the area is returned to its original state, namely parking slots and the redundant notices removed.

ACTION: Clerk to request removal of sign with Swindon Borough Council.

### **Fencing**

Both the Massager Pub & Mayhew the Dentist has removed their unsightly fencing & replaced it new fencing.

- Finance Committee (Chair Cllr Benfield):

To be discussed under Item 14.

- Recreation (Chair Cllr Haigh):

- **Update on bollards at Covingham Park and Prevention of Travellers:**

Cllr Osbourn informed members that the bollards are currently being stored by Lee Wells. Ward Councillors have asked for £500 payment for the bollards from the Parish Council. Members noted that they had previously been informed that they would be of no charge to the Parish Council. Cllr Osbourn is due to have a site meeting to discuss a plan and report back to members. Cllr Osbourn has enquired about the possibility of installing a kicking fence which could be more cost effective, with no maintenance required and a life span of between 15 and 20 years.

ACTION: Item on-going. Cllr Osbourn to report back to the Parish Council on plan with costings.

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

No comments.

- Covingham Flood Group report (Cllr Curtis):

Cllr Curtis informed members of the forthcoming presentation by The Wilts and Berks Canal Trust on 4th April at Coleview Community Centre, all welcome

The next meeting of the Flood Group is scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

- Parish Website Working Party (Cllr Hawkes):

Members noted a report circulated by Cllr Hawkes. Documents on the website have been re-indexed in an attempt to make them easier to find. Members agreed the changes made and commented that they have made a vast improvement.

**13. Planning Matters**

**Application No. S/HOU/17/0505**

Re. Erection of a detached single storey garden room.

At. 11 Avocet Close, Covingham, SN3 5HR

Comments: None.

Members noted that the draft New Eastern Villages, Supplementary Planning Document for Green Infrastructure had been received. **Members resolved** to write a letter of response to Swindon Borough Council, fully endorsing comments made in response by Ward Cllr Sumner.

**14. Financial Matters**

**• Approve financial summary and cheque list**

Members unanimously approved the financial summary and cheque list.

**• Receive Quarter 4 Finance Statement**

Members unanimously approved the Quarter 4 Finance Statement. Cllr Benfield commented on the need to be mindful of Capital Budget spend this financial due to this being the first year of taking over services from Swindon Borough Council.

**• Review of Parish Council Asset Register and Risk Assessment and Management documents**

Members unanimously agreed the Parish Council Asset Register and Risk Assessment and Management documents.

**• Appoint Internal Auditor**

**Members unanimously resolved** to appoint Peter Dennison as Internal Auditor for the financial year 2016-17.

**• Consider purchase of a plaque for Parish Christmas tree and receive quotation**

Cllr Benfield presented wording for a proposed plaque by the Christmas tree, for the amount of £61.16. This was approved unanimously by members.

**• Review of working hours for Parish Handyman and agree payment of overtime (members of public are asked to be excused for this item)**

Members approved for the working hours of the Handyman to be extended to 30 hours per week and agreed payment of 5 hours overtime.

**15. Correspondence**

Members noted the following received correspondence

Received from	Subject
Ward Cllr Parry	Weight restriction on Kingfisher Drive and Merlin Way
SBC	Sustainable drainage system (SuDs) vision for New Eastern Villages (NEV) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Ward Cllr Parry	Vehicles driving over grass verges at Terncliffe

**16. Matters for consideration**

Cllr Hawkes pointed out that some of the flower heads in the floral boxes are growing and obstructing signs. We previously agreed as a Parish Council to maintain the height of the growth by tucking flowers behind. ACTION: Clerk to ask Handyman to keep an eye on floral boxes.

Cllr Curtis commented on overhanging hedgerows in the Parish that are the responsibility of the home owners to maintain, some of which are dangerous. ACTION: Environment Committee to consider drawing up a flyer to post to home-owners once legality has been checked.

Cllr Bacon pointed out that the hump in the road (mini-roundabout) has not been removed since the cycle-path has been installed. ACTION: Cllr Osbourn to take this up with Ward Councillors.

Meeting closed at 21:00  
Signed (Chair):