

# Covingham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2017  
In Covingham Park Primary School, The Harriers, Covingham

**Present:** Cllr Curtis (Chair), Cllr Benfield (Vice Chair), Cllr Bacon, Cllr Foss, Cllr Hawkes, Cllr Kennedy,  
**In attendance:** Members of the public

**1. Apologies**

Received from Cllr Paginton

**2. Declaration of Interests**

Cllr Foss declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item Number 11, Financial Matters (reference grant requests).

**3. Approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2017**

Minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2017 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

**4. Matters arising from the previous minutes**

Parish Van: Cllr Curtis reported that she visited the M4 Van Centre and fed back cost and mileage information to members. Members noted the benefits of sponsorship and received a figure for the amount to trade in the current Parish Van. The Parish van is due for an MOT in November 2017. Members noted that there is currently thick, black smoke coming from the van exhaust. Members resolved to have a further agenda item for this matter in September (ACTION CLERK).

**5. Public forum**

One member of the public present. Sue Willis thanked Councillors Sandle and Benfield for cutting back weeds at Osprey Close. Cllr Curtis asked Sue to read a poem she had written to members regarding litter, named 'A thankless task'. Members thanked Sue for her poem. Sue gave permission for her poem to be uploaded onto the Parish website and place on the notice boards.

**6. Clerk's Report**

Members received the following report from the Clerk, and noted reports via email from the Parish Handymen. ACTION CLERK: Place a separate bullet point under Clerk's Report to receive and comment on report from the Parish Handymen.

**Audit Update**

Papers have been posted via Special Delivery to the external auditor. An acknowledgement of receipt of papers has been received via email.

**Fete – 2nd July**

Business cards and name labels have been purchased from Vistaprint for the Parish Council stand at the local school fete on 2nd July. Total cost of £32.96.

**Pensions Update**

The Clerk has posted signed Nest papers (signatory approval for Direct Debit), as part of the process of setting up pensions for Parish Council employees.

**Handyman's Report**

John's full report will be circulated via email to members.

**Parish Van insurance**

Clerk has added Martin, our new Assistant Handyman to the Parish Van insurance – the cost for this was £25.

**Letters sent this month:**

As actioned at the June PC meeting, letters have been sent to SBC re. Council Tax Support Grant, Police Commissioner re. communication and attendance at Parish Council meetings and SBC re.

planning objection to the hot food vending van.

**Meeting start time from September 2017**

Clerk has contacted the School site manager to see if the Parish Council meetings can start at 7pm from September 2017. Awaiting response.

Cllr Hawkes queried an item within the Parish Handyman report regarding signage. The Clerk reported that she had checked with the insurance company to find out if signage is required for parks and equipment. We are not required to have any signage, although we may choose to. Lack of signage will not affect our insurance cover.

**7. Update from the Chairman**

Cllr Curtis thanked members for taking part in the recent Covingham Green Day held at Covingham Square. Many positive comments have been received from members of the public. Cllr Curtis also thanked members for turning out at the Friends of Covingham Park Primary School fete. Some interest was generated for becoming a parish councillor. Cllr Curtis informed members that the Website Working Party have begun to look at current Parish Council policies (see Item 9).

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

Cllr Foss informed members that he completed a Police Survey on behalf of the Parish Council. Members noted an email circular, distributed to residents in other areas of Swindon and commented that it would be good for Covingham Parish to receive an email update.

Members noted that the Clerk wrote to the Police regarding update communication. No response received to date.

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

- Environment & Recreation Committee (Chair Cllr Sandle):

The next meeting of the Environment Committee will take place on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2017. Cllr Sandle thanked members for taking part in the clean-up of Covingham Square for the Green Day and suggested another Green Day to clean up other areas in the Parish. The Christmas tree on Covingham Square has been watered and is currently in a sorry state. Cllr Benfield commented on the poor state of repair of the surface area of the car park at Cole Close.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Ward Councillors re. surface condition of Cole Close.

Cllr Kennedy updated members on a meeting that took place with the grass cutting contractor, the Clerk and Cllr Curtis to discuss areas of grass cutting that had been missed and were not cut to a good standard. Strimming was also discussed as part of the contract. The grass cutting contractor has agreed that strimming will take place with no additional cost to the Parish and has offered one day per month for an employee to cut main areas in the Parish. Members noted that the grass cutting contractor will be purchasing new equipment soon that will help to cut the grass more efficiently. The Parish Handymen currently strim both parks in Covingham and will strim the side-streets. Grass cutting will continue to be monitored.

- Finance Committee (Chair Cllr Benfield):

No report this month.

- Parish Plan/Highways Committee

Members noted correspondence from Swindon Borough Council regarding a Planning Appeal for the Lotmead development. Members unanimously agreed to respond to the Statement of Case.

ACTION: Members of the Planning Committee to draft wording for a response for circulation to the Parish Council for comments.

- Personnel Committee

The first meeting of the Personnel Committee has been scheduled for 13<sup>th</sup> July 2017. Terms of Reference to be adopted.

- Covingham Flood Group update (Cllr Curtis):

The next meeting of the Covingham Flood Group will take place on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2017.

- Parish Website Working Party (Cllr Hawkes):

Cllr Hawkes informed members that he is currently making sure that the website is in line with current transparency requirements. All inaccurate and outdated information has been removed from the website. Cllr Hawkes is uploading documentation on behalf of the Parish Council. The website is up and running. A review of the Parish Council Standing Orders and Financial Regulations will take place, ready for circulation to members for the September 2017 Parish Council meeting. The Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council is in-line with Swindon Borough Council's Code of Conduct. Draft minutes of Parish Council meetings will be published on the website within two weeks of the meeting. Cllr Curtis recently attended training for Parish Council Chairs, organised by Swindon Borough Council. The Chair should be the driver to ensure all policies are up-to-date.

## 10. Planning Matters

**Application No.** S/HOU/17/0914

**Re.** Erection of a two storey/first floor rear extension, and 4 no. front and rear dormer windows.

**At.** 6 Bullfinch Close, SN3 5HP

**Comments:** None.

## 11. Financial Matters

- Approve financial summary and cheque list:  
Members resolved to approve the financial summary and cheque list.
- Agree purchase of new laptop for the Clerk:  
Members resolved for the Clerk to purchase a new laptop, as well as a printer that is compatible for Instant Ink.
- Approval of 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Finance Statement:  
Members resolved to defer this item until September 2017.
- Request from Covingham Park Primary School for book token awards (£75):  
Members noted that the Parish Council instigated these awards approximately eight years ago. Members unanimously resolved to give £75 grant to Covingham Park Primary School for book tokens, for the awards for head boy and girl. Cllr Foss will present the award this year on behalf of the Parish Council. The school will apply to the Clerk in future years.

## 12. Correspondence

Members noted the following received correspondence

Received from	Subject
Mrs Polley, Headteacher of Covingham Park Primary School	Grant request for book tokens (head boy and girl awards).
Local resident (email)	Grass cutting complaint on Merlin Way.  ACTION: Clerk to forward to SBC Highways Inspector.

## 13. Matters for consideration

Cllr Hawkes asked members if the Handyman reports, including litter picking graph should appear of the website. Members agreed that this could be useful for local residents.

Cllr Bacon commented on speeding on Kingfisher Drive and noted that there is no 20mph speed limit by the school, although there is a sign by Dorcan School. Members informed Cllr Bacon of a previous requirement to have a 30mph speed limit in order to have a pedestrian crossing. Members discussed speed warning signs and speeding figures from the last Police Check. Cllrs Curtis and Kennedy had previously offered to participate in Community Speedwatch, although despite making contact to

enquire, this did not come to fruition. ACTION: Clerk to contact Police (Devizes), re. Community Speedwatch. ACTION: Clerk to query with Ward Cllr Parry.

Cllr Kennedy enquired about the possibility of re-siting the benches on Covingham Park, to be nearer the play parks. Members informed Cllr Kennedy about the reasons for positioning the benches where they are currently located. Careful consideration was given in order to ensure that there were not sited near to street lamps or in close proximity to housing.

In recognition of the hard work and dedication to the Parish Council, the Chair presented Cllr Foss with a leaving gift on behalf of the Parish Council and thanked him for his service.

Meeting closed at 20:40.

*Signed (Chair):*

DRAFT