

# Covingham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 3rd September 2018 at  
7.15pm

*Due to being locked out of the school and the need for urgent business to be discussed and decided the meeting took place at one of the Councillors private address. Two Councillors stayed at the publicised meeting place until 7.10pm to ensure that any Members of the Public that wished to attend were aware of the situation and could still attend*

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**Present:** Cllr Curtis (Chair), Cllr Benfield, Cllr Hawkes, Cllr Sandle, Cllr Waywell

**Also in attendance:** Emma Kingsley (Parish Clerk) and one Member of the Public

## 1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Summerhill and Cllr Bacon

## 2. Declaration of Interests

None

## 3. Approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd July 2018

**Resolved:** The Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018 were approved and signed as a true record.

## 4. Matters arising from the previous minutes

**Contractor:** Cllr Curtis informed Cllrs that all is going well. The weed killing has taken place on all streets, although it has not been effective due to being left too late.

Cllr Curtis congratulated the Cllrs on a successful clean up day.

The new litter bin has been installed in Cole Close car park, which has resulted in less rubbish on the floor. The Parish Maintenance Engineers have noted they are generally picking up less litter from the floor as the bins are being well used.

All parts had been received for the bench in Covingham Square and it has been re-instated.

**Facebook:** Cllr Benfield commented that the Facebook page has made a huge difference to the way the parish operates and is very positive. It was agreed that the page will remain moderated.

**Covingham Library Trust:** It was noted that there has still been no contact from Cllr Heenan.

**Flower Boxes:** Flower boxes have been fitted in Faconscroft and Wrenswood, but are yet to be filled. Policy to be resent to the resident in Wrenswood and to be given until the end of November 2018 to fill.

**Action:** Clerk

The Maintenance Engineers had strimmed the signs at each end of Merlin Way as requested.

## 5. Public forum

One member of the public was in attendance to participate in items 12 & 13, on the agenda.

## 6. Verbal Update from the Chair

**Covingham Square** – The Borough Councillors were asked for help with the condition of the Square and the service area behind the shops due to the conditions that the homeless people were creating. SBC Officers have confirmed that responsibility for cleaning the area lies with Property Services, not Covingham Parish Council. To date, nothing has been done, but sadly it would be short lived due to the continued misuse of the area by the homeless people. It will remain our aim to have the area

cleaned as it is not acceptable for the business owners and residents from the flats to have to deal with what they are experiencing on a daily basis.

**Homeless Persons** – the Police have the view that the long-standing person is a magnet that encourages others to join him. He has been served with a Community Protection Warning and then a Community Protection Notice, both of which forbid him from entering the Square. Due to him ignoring the conditions he is about to be served with a Criminal Behaviour Order, which ultimately could lead to imprisonment, although they are hopeful that he might have a change of mindset as one of his reasons for choosing to live like he does is not wanting to be confined within bricks and mortar.

**Transfer of Services Deed** – During the discussions about the condition of Covingham Square, it was suggested that CPC was responsible for more than we believed that we had signed up too. A meeting was held with SBC, to talk about the contents of the deed. As there are still some questions this subject will be raised at the next Swindon Area Committee meeting as other Parishes must be affected. It was explained that needles are classified as litter, and as such the Parish Council should clear them, not report them to SBC. The two Maintenance Engineers were quite clear that they could not just leave any needles that they found and would deal with them going forwards. The Maintenance Engineers have both been provided with ballistic trousers for their personal safety and now have a full sharps kit on the van to enable safe collection and storage of any needles, before being disposed of in the correct manner via PPS at Barnfield Road depot.

**Anti-Social Behaviour** – has been an issue over the whole area this summer with Smitanbrook Park being very badly affected, primarily due to groups of teenagers being moved on by the Police from the Eldene area. Covingham was viewed as a nice area with very little trouble because the residents did not ring the Police to report any instances of trouble. The crime stats for Covingham, as reported on the Wiltshire Police website, have more than doubled in the last few weeks due to the residents now picking up the phone and ringing 101, which is allowing the Police to gather intelligence and build a picture of what is happening here. Several residents have also reported seeing more of a police presence which is welcomed.

## 7. Clerks Verbal Update

The Clerk informed the meeting that the cultivation license has been resubmitted to SBC due to some errors in the reporting of flower boxes, also some individuals that were responsible had moved away.

## 8. Working Parties and Committee's

- **Planning Working Party** – Cllrs Hawkes reported that the planning applications received were of normal extension work in Covingham. The next SBC NEV Liaison meeting was due to take place on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> September.

An exhibition for the proposed science park between The Marsh and Pack Hill in Wanborough is being held on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> September which is concerning in terms of traffic and flood risk.

- **Environment and Recreation Party** – Cllr Benfield informed Councillors that he and Cllr Sandle have cleared out some of the flowers boxes, ready for Autumn planting

- **Website Working Party**

**Website** - Cllr Hawkes confirmed that he has updated the new website with an updated version of the software. He will also research SSL certification, which will give a higher priority when searched in Google and will provide greater security.

**Facebook** - Cllr Hawkes said that the Community Facebook group is progressing well with 331 members at the time of the meeting. There is concern regarding group members inviting

friends to join which means that explicit consent has not been given by the individual to use their private data. It was decided that going forward people should be directed to the page to enable them to join at their discretion.

- **GDPR-** Cllr Hawkes tabled an amended Privacy Policy. for approval which was unanimously agreed. .

#### **9. Parish Maintenance Engineers:**

- **Monthly Reports-** Thanks were given by Cllrs for the excellent work done by the Parish Maintenance Engineers.  
Cllr Benfield will add information to The Handymag article of how to access the Maintenance Reports on the website.
- Action - Cllr Benfield**

#### **10. Planning Matters**

**Application:** S/18/1299

**Location:** Land Adjacent To 19 Kestrel Drive, Covingham Swindon SN3 5DP

**Proposal:** Change of use from public open space to domestic garden and erection of 2m. high fence

**Resolved:** The council raised no objections to the planning application

#### **11. Financial Matters**

##### **a) Approve financial summary and cheque list:**

**Resolved:** Cllr Sandle proposed that the Financial summary and cheque list was approved. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Curtis and unanimously agreed.

##### **b) To receive monthly bank accounts reconciliation**

Cllrs agreed that the accounts are on track following budget, and a draft budget for 2019/20 to be prepared in November 2018.

#### **12. Community Bulb Planting**

The Member of the Public commented that he had suggested on the community Facebook Page that he believed under planting of the trees, where the bushes had been removed, should take place in Smitanbrook Park which had been well received by the residents with offers of help. Cllr Benfield also said that he and Cllr Sandle had carried out a survey of the area to identify where additional bulbs were needed. It was agreed that a community planting event will take place on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2018 at 10:00am in Smitanbrook Park and additional identified areas. The event will be publicised on the Facebook Page and ask for volunteers to join us book to see if residents would be interested in taking responsibility of the planting in their own streets.

It was agreed that a clean-up event to maintain the area of Covingham Square would take place on the 30<sup>th</sup> September and will also be advertised on Facebook.

Health and Safety Advice Sheets and Risk Assessments would be needed for both events

**Action Clerk/Cllr Curtis**

#### **13. Facebook Photo Competition**

The Member of the Public suggested to help engage with the residents, a photo competition could take place to choose the cover photo for the Community Facebook Page. Cllr Curtis proposed the competition; the proposal was seconded by Cllr Waywell with all Cllrs in favour. The competition will open on the 17<sup>th</sup> September, with a winner decided by Cllrs on 8<sup>th</sup> October.

#### **14. Correspondence:**

Warm and Safe Wiltshire

The Parish Council agreed that they would not like to participate in warm and safe Wiltshire.

#### **15. Matters for consideration:**

Cllr Waywell enquired about the use of identification cards and whether this was something that could be investigated. Cllr Curtis explained that the Parish had some business cards which needed the contact details updating. Once completed, they will be made available. **Action – Cllr Curtis**

Cllr Hawkes made Cllrs aware that the Virgin Box along St Pauls Dive was still in disrepair and asked for this to be reported again. **Action - Clerk**

The meeting concluded at 9:00 pm

Signed.....

Date.....