



Minutes of the meeting of Covingham Parish Council

**Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

At 7pm via Microsoft Teams Meeting

**Present:** Cllr Bacon, Bates, Benfield, Curtis (Chair), Hawkes, Ricketts, Sandle, Wichall.

**Also in attendance:** Laura Evans (Clerk), two members of the Neighbourhood Policing Team and two members of the public.

Cllr Curtis opened the meeting with the following statement, The Parish Council would like to join with the rest of the Nation and our local authority, Swindon Borough Council, in extending our condolences to Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal Family following the death of His Royal Highness, Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh.

**1. Apologies**

No apologies were received.

**2. Declaration of Interests**

Cllr Curtis reminded Members that they should declare any known interests in any matter to be considered at the beginning of the meeting and during the meeting if it becomes apparent that they have an interest in the matters being discussed.

**3. Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 were approved, and will be signed at a later date due to the current Covid-19 social distancing regulations

**4. Minutes of Extraordinary meeting**

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2019 were approved, and will be signed at a later date due to the current Covid-19 social distancing regulations

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

Covingham Park extension of lease, Firecrest play area transfer and works to reinstate the Gateway still outstanding. This matter was discussed at the Swindon Area Committee meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> March as several Parish Councils have the same issue. The reason for the delay given is the amount of work and shortage of staff to progress.

Adult exercise equipment – the fixings have proved to be a problem due to not being able to remove the caps off the bolts. An alternative method has now been devised, but yet to be deployed.

Dorcan Brook – still no update has been provided by SBC.

Dog poo bins – under used bin relocated next to the problematic one. The majority of bins around the area are now being used to absolute capacity, plus some.

## 6. Public forum

A member of the public asked when the last time a Borough Councillor attended a Covingham Parish Council meeting. Cllr Curtis confirmed that Ward Cllr Kevin Parry attended the virtual meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020.

## 7. Police Matters

The Neighbourhood Police Team provided an update on recent activity in the area and priorities for the future, including the recent tackling of local drug lines. Patrols have been increased in areas of Covingham that are seeing anti-social behaviour taking place, to provide reassurance to residents and to deter those who may be trying to cause trouble.

The main concern for the Neighbourhood Police Team is the reluctance of Covingham residents to report crimes no matter how small to 101 immediately, as this intelligence or information can help provide a more targeted approach to what is happening in the area.

Cllr Wichall asked if the Community Speed Watch would be restarting soon, but currently this is still on hold due to the Coronavirus social distancing guidelines. Police Officers have been doing more speed checks recently. A suggestion was made that the Parish Council consider a Speed Indicator Device as the speeds recorded from the machine help the Police to target areas that need speed checks to be carried out.

Cllr Curtis thanked the Neighbourhood Police Team for the work they have been doing in the area.

## 8. Chairs Verbal Update

**Dog fouling** – excessive dog poo being left was discussed at the Swindon Area Committee meeting. Several Parishes have tried numerous things in an effort to reduce it. Extra notices displayed have been ripped down, campaigns on Facebook pages and in local magazines have had no effect. Blunsdon Parish Council engaged with responsible dog walkers, who in turn had ‘policed’ those not complying, as they did not want to get a bad name, which appears to have had some success. The question of SBC possibly training local Parish Council staff in enforcement was discussed, although it was thought that could be difficult for employees that were local residents. One of the larger Parish Councils wanted to ‘buy in’ enforcement services from a neighbouring authority but it was not approved at a higher level. It was agreed by all at the SAC Meeting, that it was a general problem, made worse by the increase of dog ownership during the lockdowns, with no easy answer on how to solve it.

**Thermofisher** – submitted a formal request to SBC on March 10th for the parking restrictions in Cole Close car park to be relaxed temporarily to allow their employees to use it without the fear of penalty notices being issued, as had been experienced. The Parish Council was consulted, to which several of the Councillors provided an opinion, and no objections were raised, in fact it was agreed and suggested to be the sensible option. SBC were informed of the Parish Council opinion on 14th March. On Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April, an update from SBC was received stating that as the situation had not improved, it was agreed to suspend the 2-hour maximum stay limit in Cole Close car park until the end of June and have requested that the spaces nearest the shop be left free for visitors to the shop.

**Covingham Park** – play equipment set on fire resulting in the central cover plate on the green spinner being damaged. Wicksteed has been asked if there is a spare part available rather than replacing the complete unit. The Contractor that installed the play equipment has been out to assess if the ground where the old play area was situated is now in a good enough condition to carry out the reinstatement works, awaiting confirmation date for when that will be started.

## 9. Clerks Verbal Update

The VAT Reclaim has been submitted for October 2020 to March 2021.

## 10. Parish Maintenance Engineers

- **Monthly Reports** – Another busy month for the Maintenance Engineers. It was noted that a total of 179 bags of Fly-tipped waste had been removed from April 2020 to March 2021.
- **Grounds Maintenance Matters**  
No matters needed addressing.

## 11. Reports from Parish Council Working Parties and Committee's

- **Environment Working Party**  
Cllr Benfield attended the Wanborough Allotment meeting and confirmed that there are both Wanborough and Covingham residents on the waiting list. The previous two vacant allotment spaces were given to residents of Covingham.
- **Data Protection & Governance**  
Nothing to report
- **Planning Working Party**  
Dealt with under item 12

## 12. Planning Matters:

### a) To consider any planning applications:

**Application:** S/HOU/21/0560

**Location:** 30 Baskerville Road, Covingham, SN3 5DD

**Proposal:** Erection of a single storey front extension

**Resolved:** The meeting agreed that there is no objection to this proposal.

### b) To note any comments from the Planning Working Party submitted between meetings.

**Application:** S/OUT/20/0533

**Location:** Land at Foxbridge Village North, Wanborough Road Swindon

**Proposal:** Outline application for the erection of up to 299no. dwellings, commercial facilities up to 300 sq. m. (Use Classes A1/ A2/A3/A4/A5/ B1 & D1) with associated parking, landscaping, drainage, and heritage trail - Access not reserved.

**Resolved:** The following comment was submitted: All comments previously submitted on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2020, still stand.

The Dorcan Flood Storage area was an inappropriate way to retain water displaced by the development of Covingham. It traps water along the main water course and has caused actual flooding of properties on at least three occasions.

To allow the SUDS discharge and the overflow routing from the water displaced by the Foxbridge development to run into the Flood Storage area shows the lack of understanding of the real-time current flood risk situation and could be deemed negligent on the part of the developers.

### c) To note any decisions

**Application:** S/21/0036/TB

**Location:** Patheon Building, Kingfisher Drive, Covingham, SN3 5BZ

**Proposal:** Erection of infill of internal patio to create additional floor space and installation of roof plant and 3no. flues - Granted

**Application:** S/TPO/21/0101/LAND  
**Location:** 24 Lapwing Close, Covingham, SN3 5EB  
**Proposal:** Works to oak tree within BOS TPO (No. 2) 1997 – Granted

**Application:** S/HOU/21/0055  
**Location:** 1 Honeybone Walk, Covingham, SN3 5DL  
**Proposal:** Erection of a two-storey side extension - Granted

**13. Financial Matters**

- a) To approve Finance Statement and payments approval list  
**Resolved:** Cllr Hawkes proposed approval of the Finance Statement and payment approval list. Cllr Sandle seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.
- b) To receive the end of year accounts reconciliation  
**Resolved:** The meeting noted that the end of year accounts were in a healthy position.
- c) Internal Auditor – to agree that Auditing Solutions be appointed the Internal Auditor for Financial Year 2020/21  
**Resolved:** Cllr Wichall proposed appointing Auditing Solutions for the Internal Auditor for the Financial Year 2020/21. Cllr Ricketts seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.

**14. S137 Grant Request**

To consider a grant request from Wiltshire Search and Rescue - see letter attached.  
**Resolved:** The meeting agreed that a donation would not be made as it does not fit within the terms of Covingham Parish Council’s S137 Grant’s Procedure. **Action - Clerk**

**15. Correspondence**

The meeting noted that no correspondence had been received.

**16. Admission of Public and Press: To resolve in accordance with Standing Order 3 (c) that ‘in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded, and they be instructed to withdraw’.**

*Reason: Staff Salaries*

**17. Staff Salaries**

To ratify the recommendation for approval made by the Personnel Committee to increase the salaries of the Clerk and two Maintenance Engineers as laid out in the NJC salary scales for Local Government Services.

**Resolved:** Cllr Benfield proposed the ratification by the Personnel Committee to increase the salaries of the Clerk and two Maintenance Engineers as laid out in the NJC Scales. Cllr Bacon seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.

**18. Matters for consideration.**

There were no matters raised for consideration.

The meeting closed at 8:11pm

Signed.....Dated.....