



Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on:

**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2024**

At 7pm in the Small Hall at St Paul's Church and Community Centre, Covingham

**Present:** Cllr Bates, Curtis (Chair), Hawkes, Kay, May, Ricketts, Sandle, Walker and Wichall

**Also in attendance:** Laura Evans (Clerk)

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr Bacon (unavailable). Apologies were **not** received from Cllr Roy.

**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**

**Resolved:** The Minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024 were approved and signed as a true record.

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

Outstanding Historical issues – no further information or update available

Naming of a footpath – no update

Eurobins – no further contact

Parish flower box – completed

Wanborough allotments – no meeting has been arranged, to date. Cllr Kay has been informed by Covingham allotment plot holders that emails and telephone calls are not being responded to by the Clerk of Wanborough PC.

**Action – Cllr Curtis**

Litter bin in Covingham Park – received and installed

Tree Survey – completed and report received. Clerk to circulate the link for access to all Councillors.

**Action - Clerk**

Basket ball court in Smitanbrook Park – no funding currently available for the suggested refurbishment. The current surface of the court is in good condition, but the basketball poles and nets need upgrading and the lines re-painted. More research is needed to be able to identify which companies supply basketball court equipment for advice and quotes to be obtained in the first instance

**Action - Cllr May**

No response has been received from SBC regarding the request for assistance and guidance to improve the drainage of the park by creating a natural flood alleviation area.

## 5. Public forum

No questions or comments received from members of the Public, as none were present at the meeting.

## 6. Police Matters

No Police personnel were present at the meeting so no update provided.

## 7. Chairs Verbal Update

A request has been made for the installation of a memorial bench in Covingham Park. Before a decision is made, Cllr Curtis suggested a policy is drafted to ensure a consistent approach is taken with all requests of this nature.

**Resolved:** Cllr Kay proposed a policy is drafted. Cllr Wichall seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.

**Action - Cllr Curtis**

Memorial Oak tree – a personal verbal request from a former Councillor for the tree to be known as 'Mary's Tree' in memory of his late wife who was instrumental in the choice and purchase of the memory tree.

Cllr Hawkes raised concerns that this could set a precedent and that the original purpose of the tree, a place to remember loved ones who have passed, should be retained.

**Resolved:** Cllr Hawkes proposed that the request be declined and the original purpose of the tree is retained. Cllr Kay seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.

Further Transfer of Services - Meeting held 5th August, no progress made. Further meeting to be held week beginning 12th August to provide details for SLCF to consider and ask the individual Parishes for comments.

## 8. Clerks Verbal Update

Nothing to report.

## 9. Parish Maintenance Engineers

- **Monthly Reports** – Another busy month. The meeting wished to note what a brilliant job the Maintenance Engineers do.

- **Grounds Maintenance Matters**

Kerb lines – The ad hoc road sweep that took place in early July removed 21 tonnes of sweepings and has cleared 90% of the kerb lines. The size of the machine that was used was too big to clear the hammerheads (40 in number) and in some areas the weeds that are left are firmly embedded in the ground and need to be removed manually. The Grounds Maintenance Contractor believes that this will take 4 x man days to finish the job totally with a cost of approximately £1,000.

**Resolved:** Cllr Ricketts proposed that the Grounds Maintenance Contractor clear the hammerheads for the approximate cost of £1,000. Cllr Walker seconded the proposal and it was unanimously agreed.

Spraying of the footpaths has been completed, the benefits should become visible.

First hedge cutting round has started.

Cllr May raised concerns that the school hedge is now growing over the path and is at eye level. Cllr Curtis to raise this issue with the school.

**Action - Cllr Curtis**

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

- **Data Protection & Governance**  
Nothing to report
- **Planning Working Party**  
Nothing to report

## 11. Planning Matters:

### a) To consider any planning applications:

The meeting noted that no applications had been received.

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

The meeting noted that no comments had been submitted.

### c) To note any decisions:

**Application:** S/LDP/24/0678

**Location:** 5 Moorhen Close, Covingham, SN3 5LN

**Proposal:** Certificate of Lawfulness (Proposed) for the erection of a single storey rear extension-  
Certificate of Lawfulness granted.

**Application:** S/HOU/24/0616

**Location:** 8 Gibbs Close, Covingham, SN3 5EW

**Proposal:** Erection of a single storey rear extension – Granted.

**Application:** S/HOU/24/0706

**Location:** 34 Popplechurch Drive, Covingham, SN3 5DE

**Proposal:** Erection of single storey rear extension – Granted.

**Application:** S/HOU/24/0693

**Location:** 22 Gilling Way, Covingham, SN3 5EQ

**Proposal:** Erection of single storey side and rear extensions and conversion of garage into living accommodation – Granted.

## 12. Financial Matters

### a) To approve Finance Statement and payments approval list

**Resolved:** Cllr Sandle proposed approval of the Finance Statement and payment approval list. Cllr Wichall seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed

### b) To receive the monthly accounts reconciliation

**Resolved:** The meeting noted that the accounts were in a good position.

## 13. Business Savings Account

To consider opening an Instant Access savings account with Barclay's

**Resolved:** Cllr Kay proposed that the Clerk proceed with the opening of an Instant Access account with Barclay's. Cllr Wichall seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.

The Clerk has a telephone appointment booked with Barclay's on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2024 to begin the process of opening an account.

**Action - Clerk**

## 14. Payment Transparency Policy

To review, agree and adopt the draft Payment Transparency Policy

**Resolved:** Cllr Wichall proposed the approval and adoption of the Payment Transparency Policy. Cllr Kay seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.

**15. Financial Regulations**

To review, agree and adopt the NALC model Financial Regulations 2024

**Resolved:** Cllr Kay proposed the approval and adoption of the Financial Regulations 2024 with the amendment to be made to section 6.2 from 'should' to 'must'. Cllr Wichall seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.

**16. Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Swindon Borough Council**

To discuss the draft recommendations for new council ward and ward boundaries for Swindon Borough Council.

**Resolved:** The meeting agreed that they are happy with the draft arrangements being proposed by the Boundary Commission.

**17. The Handy Mag**

The meeting agreed that the following should be included in the article:

- Weed Spraying/Kerb line road sweeping – to include a thank you to those who do their bit to help keep the area looking nice.
- Residents pruning overgrown vegetation from within their boundary lines
- Cleaning of street signs

**18. Matters for consideration**

Cllr Kay raised concerns over an overgrown bush on Dorcan Way heading towards the shops which is now growing over the path. Cllr Curtis to investigate. **Action - Cllr Curtis**

Cllr Kay explained that the skate park is very well used which is great but bikes and scooters using this facility are then heading onto the path resulting in some near misses with pedestrians.

Cllr Curtis had become aware of a rumour that a gypsy/traveller site was being planned at the back of the allotment site. One of the Wanborough Parish Councillors had confirmed that it was true and a retrospective planning application was visible on SBC's Planning portal although comments could not be submitted.

The meeting closed at 8:27pm

Signed.....Date.....