

Minutes of the Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council held on:
Monday 4th August 2025
At 7pm in the Small Hall at St Paul's Church and Community Centre, Covingham

Present: Cllr Bates, Curtis, Hawkes (Chair), Parsons, Ricketts, Sandle and Wichall

Also in attendance: Laura Evans (Clerk)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Bacon (unavailable), Cllr Kay (unavailable), and Cllr Walker (unavailable).

2. Declaration of Interests

Cllr Hawkes 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 7th July 2025 were approved and signed as a true record.

4. Matters arising from the previous minutes

Dorcan Brook Bank- no update

Naming of a footpath- no update

Grounds Maintenance Tender Process- The Tender Panel is Cllr Hawkes, May, and Ricketts. The Tender Panel to meet on 3rd September 2025 at 10:00am to open all submissions.

5. Public forum

No questions or comments were received from members of the Public.

6. Police Matters

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

7. Chairs Verbal Update

Cllr Hawkes attended the Swindon Borough Council Shared Leadership Forum and gave an update.

Cllr Hawkes explained that an essential upgrade to the software running the website is necessary.

8. Clerks Verbal Update

Swindon Borough Council have published a new Code of Conduct, effective 1st September 2025, with a recommendation that it is adopted by all Parish Councils. This will be added to the next agenda for discussion.

Action- Clerk

ATBShop Event- A new date will be arranged to replace the event on 31st July that was cancelled due to the weather. Once confirmed it will be advertised on the website, Noticeboards and Facebook.

Action- Clerk

9. Parish Maintenance Engineers

- **Monthly Reports** – No comments were received.
- **Grounds Maintenance Matters**

Lapwing Close- An area of public land to the rear of a property in Lapwing Close had been identified as overgrown and causing damage to a property fence. This had not been included in the Transfer of Services and is classed as extra work. The Grounds Maintenance Contractor has quoted £185+VAT to clear a three-foot margin adjacent to the property fence.

Resolved: Cllr Ricketts proposed the Grounds Maintenance Contractors quotation be accepted to cut the vegetation at Lapwing Close. Cllr Wichall seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.

Kerb Lines- Road sweeping of the kerb lines will be taking place from 11th August to 14th August 2025. Clerk to post to Facebook.

Action- Clerk

10. Planning Matters:

a) To consider any planning applications.

Application: S/OUT/22/1415 (2nd August)

Location: Land North Of Redlands Farm, Wanborough Road Swindon SN4 0AA

Proposal: A Hybrid Planning Application for a residential development, associated works, infrastructure, parking, new / retained habitats, and ancillary development to include - full details for the erection of 124 dwellings (Class C3), public open space, NEAP, landscaping, sustainable drainage, roads, vehicular access and pedestrian / cycle paths and an outline proposal (Means of Access not reserved) for the erection of up to 124 dwellings (Class C3), public open space, landscaping, bridge crossings, safeguarded canal corridor, sustainable drainage, roads, vehicular access, and pedestrian / cycle paths.

Resolved: The following comment was submitted;

Covingham Parish Council object to this planning application for the following reasons:

1. Access to the site is from Wanborough Road via the Redlands development. This route should be for Redlands only, as traffic exiting the site would be able to travel northwards through Covingham. Access to Land North of Redlands Farm should be via the Southern Connector Road with exits from the NEV via Commonhead Roundabout or via the District Centre and the A420.
2. Part of the site is outside the New Eastern Villages Red Line. The development must be contained within the area defined for the NEV.
3. This development relies on infrastructure provided by other development areas. If Foxbridge North is allowed to go ahead in its current application form, then there will be more reliance on the primary school. This could impact on Covingham Primary School which the Parish Council find unacceptable.

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

Application: S/HOU/25/0839

Location: 25 Swanbrook, Covingham, SN3 5AJ

Proposal: Erection of a two-storey side extension.

The following comment was submitted;

Covingham Parish Council have no objections to this proposal.

c) To note any decisions

Application: S/HOU/25/0597

Location: 2 Tealsbrook, Covingham, SN3 5AU

Proposal: Erection of single storey side extension- Granted.

11. Financial Matters

a) To approve Schedule of Payments August 2025

Resolved: Cllr Wichall proposed approval of the Schedule of Payments August 2025. Cllr Sandle seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.

Cllr Curtis raised concerns about including the bank fee on the payment schedule, noting that this fee is mandatory. The meeting agreed to remove the bank fee from the schedule of payments.

b) To receive the monthly accounts reconciliation

Resolved: No comments were made regarding the monthly accounts reconciliation.

12. Flowerbox Request

To agree installation of two flower boxes by the street signs for Passmore Close.

Resolved: Cllr May proposed the installation of two flower boxes. Cllr Wichall seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed. Clerk to request installation by Maintenance Engineers. **Action- Clerk**

13. Allotment Update

No further progress has been made regarding the formal relationship between the two Parish Councils for the allotments.

14. Basketball Courts

The Council reviewed potential improvement to the Basketball courts. After a discussion it was decided that no improvements would be made to the Smitanbrook courts due to objections from local residents. It was decided that the creation of a multi-use games area, which would include a basketball court, on Covingham Park was worth a full evaluation. The meeting noted a potential conflict between this project and the adjacent natural flood alleviation project.

Resolved: The Meeting agreed that Cllr May should obtain full costs and present at the next meeting.

Action- Cllr May

Cllr Hawkes to make Trees for Climate aware that the Parish Council is considering changes to the basketball court on Covingham Park.

Action- Cllr Hawkes

15. The Handy Mag

The meeting agreed to not submit an article this month.

Action- Cllr Hawkes

16. Matters for consideration

Cllr Curtis raised concerns that a litter pick being organised in Covingham by the Ward Councillors on 23rd August could be perceived as an insult to the work of the Maintenance Engineers as the area had been identified as requiring specific action to clean it up.

Cllr Curtis asked why the July agenda, draft minutes and August agenda were not published on Facebook.

The meeting closed at 8:20pm

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