

Minutes of the ordinary Meeting of Covingham Parish Council held on:

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026**

At 7.00pm in the Small Hall at St Paul's Church and Community Centre, Covingham

**Present: Councillors Bates, Curtis, Hawkes (Chair), Kay, May, Parsons, Ricketts, Sandle, Wichall**

**Also in attendance:** Laura Cutter (Clerk & RFO)

**1. Apologies**

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

**2. Declaration of Interests**

Cllr Hawkes reminded all 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 the previous meeting held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

**Proposed:** Cllr L Sandle;                      **Seconded:** Cllr S May

**Vote:** Agreed with one (1) abstention.

**RESOLVED:** To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026 as a true record.ew

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

- **Flood Alleviation Area:** Trees 4 Climate project has been approved and the grant has been awarded for the Parish Council to conduct maintenance. Contractor will bill Great Western Community Forest directly and start work once the Multi Use Games Area has been completed in late February/ early March.
- **Dorcan Brook:** No updates.
- **RoSPA and Caloo:** Enquiry made with Regional Manager for Caloo who agreed to review the documents and provide a formal response. The lifting of the base on the Covingham Skate Park ramps may have been due to the weather as no issues currently.
- **Weed Spraying:** No response. Swindon Local Councils Forum has recently written to parishes to gather data and this will be reported back at the Forum meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2026.
- **Environment Agency:** Awaiting a response for a meeting.
- **Web Space:** Councillors were reminded to keep their mailboxes tidy, by checking archived files, sent and deleted items. Retrieving documents ok from the website. Chair is reviewing other options and will report back in due course.
- **Swindon Borough Council – Collection of Swindon Half Marathon Signs:** No response – Clerk to chase.
- **Web Reports:** Outstanding issue with the Content Management System that the Parish Council uses. These issues have been ongoing since 2023, which causes a bugging issue to clear the accessibility checks. Navigation pane down left side of the website does not give explanation of the pages. Councillors will review the website and feedback any comments for improvement via the Chair.

**5. Public Forum**

There were no Members of the Public present.

## 6. Flower Box Request

Members received a request for a flower box at Peregrine Close. After discussion it was agreed to accept the application. *Action: Instruct Maintenance Engineers to collect materials for building the flower box and the Clerk to apply for a licence via SBC Highways.*

**Proposed: Cllr D Kay;**

**Seconded: Cllr S Wichall**

**Vote: Agreed unanimously.**

**RESOLVED: To approve the installation of a flower box at Peregrine Close.**

## 7. Police Matters

No update was received as no Police personnel were in attendance.

## 8. Chairs Verbal Update

- **Shared Leadership Forum (Swindon Borough Council)** – attended the meeting and received an update on plans for the Prevention First hubs, which will intergrate the Borough's Services in different areas of the parish, focusing first on the areas within Swindon with the highest deprivation. Nothing currently planned in East Swindon.

Only seven parishes out of the twenty one across the Borough attended the Leadership Forum, unfortunately the Chief Executive Officer and Leader were unable to attend. Swindon Local Councils Forum may represent these meetings and will be considering future provisions.

- **Wanborough Allotments** – Cllr D Kay declared an interest in this item. Chair attended a meeting with Wanborough Parish Council (WPC), addressing various issues. WPC will take responsibility for managing the allotments, including keeping documentation updated, carrying out site checks, and following up on plots that are not being maintained. WPC is also considering improvements to the site and working collaboratively with the Allotment Group. A draft agreement has been prepared for both parish councils to review and councillors have been invited to visit the allotments.
- **Wiltshire Association of Local Councils, Environment Meeting** – Climate and Biodiversity presentation held with a desire to meet net zero, feedback given was that the two higher level authorities should be leading on these items given a disparity in the size of each parish.

## 9. Clerks Verbal Update

Nothing to report.

## 10. Parish Maintenance Engineers

- Monthly Reports: Noted.
- Play Inspection Reports: Noted.

Members noted that fly tipping seems to be increasing locally and this will continue to be monitored. To the rear of Sandpiper properties there is a piece of open space, which is severely overgrown and encroaching on resident properties. To clear a two metre strip the cost will be £375.00. This will enable Swindon Borough Council access to be able to clear the fly tipping. Members agreed to the quotation and to add to the regular work programme where necessary.

**Proposed: Cllr J Ricketts;**

**Seconded: Cllr S Wichall**

**Vote: Agreed unanimously.**

**RESOLVED: To approve the cost of £375.00 and add to future maintenance programmes where necessary.**

## 11. Temporary Removal of the Speed Indicator Devices

Members considered temporarily removing the speed indicator devices, due to maintenance accessibility in winter conditions and whilst these have become deterrents for speeding locally, residents are used to having them there. The proposal was to temporarily remove for two months and then put up in Merlin Way in the spring. Battery issues also need to be explored with a regular



with an extended grace period to the end of April to allow end-of-year documentation to be completed.

**Proposed: Cllr V Curtis;                      Seconded: Cllr S May**

**Vote: Agreed unanimously**

**Resolved: Agreed to continue with Bright Pay at a cost of £84.00 per annum.**

**17. Accounting Packages**

Members received an update from the Clerk & RFO regarding the accounting packages for April 2026/27. After discussion it was agreed that Parish Accounts Software, seems to be the most practical. A free month trial period was offered by the supplier ahead of utilising the system from April 2026.

**Proposed: Cllr S Wichall;                      Seconded: Cllr J Ricketts**

**Vote: Agreed unanimously**

**Resolved: To subscribe to Parish Accounts Software at a cost of £15.00 per month/ £180.00 per annum.**

**18. Swindon Borough Council: Statement of Licensing Policy Update 2025**

Members noted the live consultation until 10<sup>th</sup> February 2026. There are no comments at this time.

**19. The Handy Mag**

Members agreed to the contents for the Handy Mag article to include:

- Multi Use Games Area
- Flood Alleviation Area

**20. Matters for consideration**

It was reported that a car, with a for sale sign on it, is permanently left in the Covingham Square Car Park.

The meeting ended at 20.41

Signed.....

Date.....