

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

**Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

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

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

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

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Bacon, May and Walker (unavailable).

**2. Declaration of Interests**

Cllr Curtis 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.

*Cllr Kay advised she has an interest in the Wanborough Allotments (Agenda Item 14).*

**3. Minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2026**

**Proposed:** Cllr D Kay ;                      **Seconded:** Cllr S Wichall

**Vote:** Agreed unanimously.

**RESOLVED:** To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2026

**Minutes of the extra ordinary meeting held on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026**

**Proposed:** Cllr D Kay;                      **Seconded:** Cllr S Wichall

**Resolved:** To approve the minutes of the extra ordinary meeting held on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026

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

- **Flood Alleviation Area** – Completed.
- **Dorcan Brook** – No response received.
- **Caloo** – No response received.
- **Website Updates** – No update available.
- **Speed Indicator Devices** – Have been reinstalled on Merlin Way.
- **Payroll Package** – Downloaded and ready to use for April payroll.
- **Account Package** – Will be downloaded to coincide with the new Council year.
- **Multi Use Games Area** – Received well. The basketball nets donated by Cllr S May are still in place. Remedial works to the surrounding ground has now been completed. The Maintenance Engineers have noticed an increase of litter; the situation will be monitored and reported back to a future meeting.
- **Councillor Allowances** – Reminder to submit an email to the Clerk & RFO to confirm that you do not wish to receive a Councillor allowance for 2026-27.

**5. Public Forum**

A Parish Maintenance Engineer and two members of the public were present. The members of public wished to observe the meeting. Query raised about the Thermo Fisher Factory which recently installed three air conditioning units. Emailed SBC Ward Councillors requesting some diffusers are installed to reduce the air conditioning system noise outwardly, but there has been no response. Residents in proximity to the Factory cannot have windows open at night because it's too noisy. The Chairman reminded the meeting that Covingham Parish Council did object to this application. *Action: Chairman*

to review the planning documents to see if there are any conditions implemented and the outcome of the initial queries.

One of the Parish Council's Maintenance Engineers was also present and reported a noticeable increase in household waste being disposed of in public litter bins following coverage in the Swindon Advertiser earlier this year. In addition, instances of bulk dog waste being left beside dog bins prior to collection have been observed.

The Maintenance Engineer also noted that the second phase of tree planting as part of the flood alleviation project has enhanced the area. He raised a query about whether drainage is present in the corner of Covingham Park. The Chairman confirmed that advisors from Trees for Climate and the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust had carefully selected and planted trees and hedgerows designed to naturally absorb water and thrive in those conditions.

#### **6. Police Update**

No Police personnel in attendance and no updates received.

#### **7. Chairs Verbal Update**

Covered the Clerk's annual leave 19<sup>th</sup> March – 13<sup>th</sup> April 2026.

#### **8. Clerks Verbal Update**

No updates.

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

- **Monthly Reports** – Members noted the reports.
- **Grounds Maintenance Matters** – The Grounds Maintenance Contractor would like to conduct a site visit with Parish Councillors at Covingham Park to discuss the mowing regime for the Trees for Climate area and agree a way forward for the new season. *Action: Cllr Ricketts, Sandle and Parsons agreed to attend the site visit and report back findings.*
- **Trees in Covingham Park** – Consider replacing the three vandalised trees in Covingham Park suggested to plant in the autumn months to get a healthier bare root. Decision can be made closer to autumn.

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

- **Data Protection & Governance** – No updates. Still working on the website improvements such as layout. All other documents are fully accessible.

#### **11. Planning Matters**

- To consider any planning applications** – No planning applications have been received.
- To note any comments from the Planning Working Party submitted between meetings** – No comments have been submitted.
- To note any decisions made by Swindon Borough Council** – No decisions have been made by Swindon Borough Council.

#### **12. Financial Matters**

- Members approved the Schedule of Payments for April 2026.**  
**Proposed: Cllr D Kay;                      Seconded: Cllr L Sandle**  
**Vote: Agreed unanimously.**  
**Resolved: To approve the Schedule of Payments as presented.**

- Members noted the monthly accounts reconciliation as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.**

**13. Southern Connector Road Update – Public Event**

Cllrs Bates, Curtis and May attended a meeting hosted by Vistry to discuss concerns from Covingham residents. Residents reported increased traffic, including large lorries and construction vehicles, along with further pressure expected from ongoing and future development in the Eastern Villages.

Swindon Borough Council has reviewed data from Speed Indicator Devices, provided by the Parish Council and recently installed speed strips on Merlin Way, though these do not differentiate vehicle types. Two Swindon Borough Ward Councillors were also present at the event. The road is expected to be resurfaced once construction is complete.

A nearby bridge requires repair, and part of the road may be opened for construction traffic, although the land is not owned by Swindon Borough Council. Increased family housing has led to more children walking and cycling in the area, while loose gravel and general wear have affected road conditions.

Despite previous assurances, no short- to medium-term remedial action is planned, and signage indicating the road would open in 2023 remains in place.

**14. Wanborough Allotments Draft Agreement**

Members received an update confirming that all points raised by Covingham Parish Council had been incorporated into the Draft Agreement document. Following a lengthy discussion, Members agreed that some further points needed to be clarified, therefore, the document could not be approved in its current form and requires further review. *Action: Chairman and Cllr Hawkes to discuss further and provide a response back to Wanborough Parish Council.*

**15. Request for Flower Box in Linnetsdene**

Members received a request for a Flower Box in Linnetsdene. Members agreed that this request was consistent with other roads off Covingham Drive. Members accepted the request and instructed the Maintenance Engineers to purchase the materials.

**Proposed: Cllr D Kay;**

**Seconded: Cllr S Wichall**

**Vote: Agreed unanimously.**

**Resolved: To accept the request for a Flower Box to be installed in Linnetsdene.**

**16. The Handy Mag**

- Call out for Community Event Ideas
- ATB Skate Park Event

**17. Matters for consideration**

**Cllr D Kay** – Advised that this was her last meeting as a Parish Councillor, as she has not put her name forward for the May elections. Reciting that it was an honour and a pleasure to have served on the Parish Council.

**Cllr L Sandle** – Advised that this was also her last meeting as a Parish Councillor, will continue to carry on doing the maintenance of the flower boxes for the remainder of this year in a voluntary capacity.

Flowers were presented to both Councillors to thank them for their dedication and support during their term of office.

The meeting ended at 20:06

Signed.....

Date.....