

CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH PARISH COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held at
Pinetrees Community Centre, The Circle, Swindon, SN2 1QR on
Wednesday 17 November 2021 at 7.00pm.

Present

Cllr John Ballman
Cllr Ray Ballman
Cllr Marilyn Beale
Cllr Ian Edwards
Cllr Paul Exell
Cllr Steph Exell (Chair)
Cllr Mick Lucas (Vice Chair)
Cllr Raj Patel (via Zoom)
Cllr David Patey
Cllr Javes Rodrigues
Cllr Will Stone
Cllr James Yeowell

Officers

Andrew Briggs (Estates Manager)
Andy Reeves (Parish Clerk)
Jodie Smart (Head of Finance & Governance, via Zoom)

Public

There were no members of the public present. However, the Clerk read a question which had been submitted to him from Dr C Shell “*Given the acknowledged cultural and educational role of the Swindon Museum and Art Gallery, particularly for urban Swindon, does the Central Swindon North Parish Council support, at least in principal, Central Swindon South Parish Council's proposal to take over the running and re-opening of the Museum and Art Gallery, pending the Borough Council's fulfilment of its long-term (?over-the-horizon) plan for a Cultural Centre location? If not, why not?*”

Members agreed the following response:

Councillors were naturally saddened to hear of the closure of Apsley House. Councillors were particularly concerned that such an important asset which has served residents across the town for decades had been able to deteriorate, the extent, it's very future has been put under the spotlight

In relation to the South Swindon Parish Council 'rescue proposal'; Councillors were of the understanding the proposal had already been considered unviable by Swindon Borough Councils Cabinet. In the main from the significant building improvements needed to Apsley House. The proposal also meant the building would need to remain closed while these works were carried out. It would also remove the only two disabled accessible rooms in the current museum by converting them to book space. As far as we are aware, none of those concerns have been overcome.

As is the case with most Councils, we too face a number of financial and resource pressures, understanding how to support existing and new services is a fine balance, by understanding our limitations and diverting resource/time in the most effective way we can.

With that in mind, Councillors considered we should now prioritise the importance of ensuring art remains accessible and out of storage. The Council felt we could utilise our extensive asset base to display works away from the town centre. We have been for some time exploring options to expand the scope of the existing 'Art on Tour' programme alongside the Civic Office display.

If Apsley House was permanently closed, this was considered important as the Council could:

- 1. Engage with new audiences locally beyond the physical boundaries of town centre venue(s).*
- 2. Make artwork accessible without the need to utilise vehicles or public transport.*
- 3. Create virtual exhibitions.*
- 4. Make artworks more accessible with an interactive map view, potentially through our library network.*

To summarise, the Council overwhelmingly support the continuation of the art gallery in Apsley House however feel that if this is the decision Swindon Borough Council wishes to take, then due to our own resource constraints, the Council must adopt a 'damage limitation' strategy of this regretful decision.

FC095 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr P Baker and Cllr K Small.

FC096 **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr J Ballman declared interests as a Member of the RSPB and HBUF.

FC097 **Minutes of Previous Meetings**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 20th October 2021, 23rd June 2021 and 19th May 2021 be approved as true and correct records.

The Chair suggested that all committee Minutes be approved en masse.

FC098 **Environment & Planning Committee**

The Committee Chair presented the minutes of the Environment & Planning Committee meeting held on 20th October and 3rd November 2021 to be approved as a true and correct record.

FC099 **Finance & General Purposes Committee**

The Committee Vice Chair presented the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 2nd November 2021 to be approved as a true and correct record.

FC100 **Leisure & Recreation Committee**

The Committee Chair presented the minutes of the Leisure & Recreation Committee meeting held on 7th October 2021 to be approved as a true and correct record.

FC101

Community Wellbeing Committee

The Committee Chair presented the minutes of the Community Wellbeing Committee meeting held on 3rd November 2021 to be approved as a true and correct record.

RESOLVED that all committee minutes listed from FC098 to FC101 be approved as a true and correct record.

FC102

Terms of Reference – Grounds & Street Cleansing Working Group

Members NOTED the draft terms of reference for the Grounds and Street Cleansing Working Group. A copy of which appear as Appendix A in the Minute Book.

Members discussed the contract and the methodology around the review.

Cllr D Patey suggested an amendment to the terms of reference (point 2) that the working party will make recommendations for ‘amendments’ rather than ‘improvements’ to the current service position.

RESOLVED to approve the terms of reference for the Grounds and Street Cleansing Working Group as per Appendix A with the above amendment.

FC103

Play Area Strategy and Implementation Planner

Members NOTED the draft terms play area strategy and implementation planner, copies of which appear as Appendices B and C in the Minute Book.

Members discussed the play area strategy and the affordability. The Chair confirmed that the budget setting was now underway and that the strategy would inform the budget requirement for the play areas.

RESOLVED to approve the play area strategy as per Appendix B

FC104

Adoption of Moredon and Raybrook Wildflower Meadow

Members NOTED the meadow management plan, a copy of which appears as Appendix D.

Members discussed the Meadows in question and in particular the merits of hiring a baler over purchasing, at least in the first years of the lease so that an evaluation of use and cost can be made.

RESOLVED:

- to approve the Clerk to enter into negotiations with Swindon Borough Council to lease Moredon and Raybrook Wildflower Meadows.
- To approve the expenditure of up to £2,500 be set in the upcoming budget for the hire of a baler for use at Moredon and Raybrook Wildflower Meadows.
- That the management of the Moredon and Raybrook Wildflower Meadows and their lease negotiations be managed by the Working Group and then the Environment and Planning Committee upon formal adoption.

FC105

Festive Lighting

Members NOTED the recommendation of the Estates Manager regarding festive lighting for 2021 as Swindon Borough Council have confirmed that they cannot survey lighting columns that the Parish Council had planned to install lights. A copy of which appears as Appendix E in the Minute Book.

The Chair requested feedback from the Ward Councillors affected by the Officers recommendation. Cllr R Ballman and Cllr D Patey confirmed that they were happy with suggestions to install Christmas lights on Moredon and Rodbourne Cheney Library and St Marks Pavilion. Cllr Beale requested that decoration be installed inside John Moulton Hall rather than outside. The Estates Manager confirmed that there was enough funds to install lighting on two buildings only and that he would negotiate with the supplier for extra decoration for the inside of John Moulton Hall.

RESOLVED to approve the Christmas lighting at Moredon and Rodbourne Cheney Library, St Marks Pavilion and a Christmas Tree or similar internal decoration at John Moulton Hall.

The Chair moved agenda item 12 to the end of the meeting due to commercially sensitive information.

FC107

Budget Planning Timeline & Budget Codes

Members NOTED the budget planning timeline presented by the Head of Finance & Governance, a copy of which appears as Appendix F in the Minute Book.

Cllr J Rodrigues expressed concern over the growing budget for staffing costs. The Clerk explained that as the Parish Council has grown and taken on more services the staffing levels have had to increase to cope with this. The Chair stated that Cllr Rodrigues request for a staffing review had been noted.

RESOLVED that the budget setting timeline be approved as follows:

F&GP Committee consider the six-month budget review, year-end projections and proposals for budget setting.	2 November 2021
Community Wellbeing Committee considers its budgets and make recommendations via its Committee Clerk & Chair.	16 November 2021
Leisure & Recreation Committee considers its budgets and make recommendations via its Committee Clerk & Chair.	3 November 2021
Environment & Planning Committee considers its budgets and makes recommendations via its Committee Clerk and Chair.	17 November 2021
Extraordinary F&GP to consider recommendations of the committees and agree recommendations to Full Council.	30 November 2021
Extraordinary Full Council to consider recommendations of the FGP Committee.	30 November 2021
Further review of budgets at Committee meetings.	W/C 29 November 2021
FGP to consider recommendations from Full Council.	7 December 2021
Full Council considers FGP recommendations and suggests any further amendments	15 December 2021
Any major amendments to Committee budgets to be reconsidered at Committee level	5-6 January 2022
Extraordinary FGP to consider final budget recommendations	12 January 2022
Extraordinary Full Council meeting to agree final budget and precept demand for 2022/23	26 January 2022

FC108

CIL & S106

Members NOTED the draft CIL & S106 policy, a copy of which appears as Appendix G in the Minute Book.

Members discussed the draft policy, stating that they would like to see real life examples of the CIL income with the proposed allocation. Cllr J Ballman also stated that the allocation will only benefit wards that have the potential for development.

The Chair and Cllr J Ballman declared that they are members of the Swindon Borough Council Planning Committee.

RESOLVED that the policy to be taken back to the Environment and Planning Committee for review, taking into account members points of view.

FC109

Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED that in accordance with the provision of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, Section 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations, the public and press be excluded during consideration of the following items on the basis of **Commercially Sensitive Matters**.

FC106

Moredon Community Centre

Members NOTED the report of the Estates Manager. The Estates Manager informed Members that the boilers at the Moredon Community Centre had stopped working and required urgent replacement. The Estates Manager presented three quotes to Members.

RESOLVED to approve expenditure of £12,750.00 for Lake Edge Ltd for the purchase and installation of 2 no 50KW Worcester boilers at Moredon Community Centre. Cost to be attributed to the asset survey major capital ear marked reserve (EMR 325).

FC107

The Clerk gave a brief verbal update that there would not be a community governance review until the New Eastern Villages are complete. This means that the discussion on existing deeds is now open. The Clerk will provide further update at the next Full Council meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Council.