

CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCE & STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 05 December 2017 at 7.00pm at Pinetrees Community Centre

Present Cllr K Small (Chair)
Cllr S Exell (Vice-chair)
Cllr J Ballman
Cllr D Moffatt
Cllr P Exell (Non-committee member)

Officers A Reeves (Parish Manager)

Public One

Public Session There were no comments or questions from the members of the public present.

253

Apologies

Cllr T Smith
Cllr P Baker
Cllr J Rodrigues

254

Declarations of Interest & Applications for Dispensation

None

255

Minutes of previous meeting

Minutes of the Finance & Staffing meeting held 7th November 2017 were approved as a correct and accurate record.

256

Grant Applications

The Parish Manager presented Councillors with a grant application from the Open Door Centre (Swindon & District) for £1,127.20

Disabled access to the Pickards Field Community Gardens is limited and several attempts of unhindered wheelchair access have proved complex.

The grant is to request a decking area suitable for wheelchairs, that would run up and concurrent with raised bedding areas. Wheelchair users could then access the leisure gardens from a sloped deck and tend to flowers/vegetables independently.

Mr James Manley attended from the Open Door project to present the proposal and for Councillors unfamiliar with Open Door an opportunity to look at photographs of projects to date.

Cllr J Ballman suggested that in the spirit of inclusivity; this is a project the Parish Council would wish to support itself and may be better placed financially to support the decking directly where ancillary VAT savings could be made.

Cllr S Exell requested that a follow up meeting is conducted on or around project completion in June 2018 for a possible official opening event and to allow Councillors to see for themselves the benefit of the funds.

RESOLVED that the Parish Manager proceed with commissioning the project directly from the Parish revenue budget up to a maximum of £1,000. Open Door will be requested to contribute the remaining £127.20. That a weather proof plaque is attached to the decking advising users that the Parish Council are the primary sponsor. That the Parish Manager organises a follow up meeting and official opening event with the Open Door representatives in June 2018.

257 **Chapel Street Public Toilets**

Chapel Street Public Toilets have been inherited from SBC in an extremely poor state of repair with damaged sanitary ware, poor decoration and no working hot water. In July 2017 it was agreed at full council to bring the facilities up to an acceptable standard.

Marcus Szczepanek, the project manager presented a proposed schedule of works (attached) with two quotes received from suppliers. The works were split into two parts; achievable for £25k and under (£24,303.58) and additional items which were deemed to be required.

The Parish Manager advised that contract opportunities and contract awards of £25,000 and above in accordance with information gained from the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 should where possible be advertised on the Contracts Finder portal for our area (South West Portal in Wiltshire).

With the additional items requested to include a new integrated hand washer in each toilet, new urinal trough, replace cubic doors and toilet entrance doors came to £41,102.38

Cllr K Small noted the comments from the Parish Manager.

The Parish Manager requested views from Councillors on how they felt about toilet closures and if any objections were raised to either a full toilet closure for a set agreed period to expedite works or whether a temporary unisex toilet could be created while works are underway to ensure some limited provision. Councillors suggested a temporary removal of the RA-DAR key to the disabled toilet and to use this as the interim toilet for both males and females.

RESOLVED to proceed with the full schedule of works up to the value of £41,102.38 to include preliminaries and additional items. For the Project Manager to contact SBC building control with scheme of works. To utilise the disabled toilet as an interim facility whilst work underway (Subject to contractor approval). That the Project Manager at the same time; reviews the current state of the Pembroke-Gardens facility, inherited in a similar state of dis-repair and report back to the January F&S committee for consideration.

258 **Budget Update**

A report was circulated outlining the current YTD estimate budgeting financial position which Councillors requested to continue at every meeting. This can be found as Annex A in the Minute Book.

The Parish Manager advised that there are difficulties in matching the SAGE nominal codes with the budget headings presented by the Clerk. The Parish Manager advised that for 2017/18 the budget headings should correlate to the SAGE System with Further Analysis codes enabled for greater forensic breakdown.

Councillors were presented with the Purchasing Transaction log for November 2017 and the new GPC transaction log for November 2017. These can be found as Annex B and Annex C in the Minute Book.

A discussion around the reports, figures and overall budget took place.

Cllr D Moffatt again advised the current budget layout was commensurate with a smaller parish precept and did not adequately reflect the need for detailed headings, revenue breakdown spend and capital improvements. There needed to be a greater understanding and correlation to accurately predict revenue impact on capital decisions currently underway.

Cllr K Small & Cllr S Exell discussed the need for scrutiny on low level outgoing purchases to

ensure the Parish is pro-active in the detection of potential fraud & corruption as sums of expenditure increase.

RESOLVED that a separate finance audit working group be set up to meet EVERY TWO MONTHS to cross check expenditure and review accompanying invoices/receipts. Cllr S Exell will lead on establishing dates for the meetings. Meetings will be attended by Councillor R/J Ballman, Cllr S Exell & Cllr D Moffatt.

RESOLVED that the Parish Manager meets Cllr K Small to discuss the disaggregate of the core budget to a more meaningful format; agree capital sums to enable informed decision making on capital projects and for future forecasts predict actual year end spend to include confirmed expected expenditure (unbilled).

259 **Internal Audit**

The Parish Manager confirmed that the internal audit took place in November and that a report will be forwarded for Full Council around Mid-December.

The Parish Manager highlighted main areas for review which include a future lack of scrutiny on delegated authority to officers which has been resolved. Recommendations for an official order system to be implemented prior to any purchase (PO signed by the PM & Parish Chair) and implementation of a Disaster Recovery Plan. Full details will be made available for December Full Council.

260 **GPC**

The Parish Manager gave a verbal update.

The GPC Card is in use and the Parish Manager is currently the only cardholder. The draft terms of use were circulated for Councillors.

Usage will be reported to the newly established bi-monthly Auditing Working Group who will monitor detailed spend.

261 **Imprest for Parish Office**

The Parish Manager advised that a small imprest is required for those who pay for community centre bookings and allotment fees in cash. The Parish Manager requested an imprest of £50.00 to be retained in the safe. The bi-monthly auditing working group will check that the imprest remains at £50.00.

The Parish Manager will be responsible for ensuring it is adequately stocked with a mixture of coins and contact Gareth Adams at Barclays to determine how to access the funds.

RESOLVED to allow the two bank signatories to withdraw £50.00 cash from the Current Account ending 5216 to be used an imprest.

262 **Allotment Invoicing**

A report prepared by the Deputy Clerk was circulated a copy of which can be found as Appendix A in the Minute Book.

263 **Bruce Street Bridges / Transfer Bridges Planting**

The Parish Manager advised that the current sponsors for the Bruce Street Bridges/ Transfer Bridges Planting Scheme will be withdrawing funding from January 2018.

Councillors were asked if they would like to support the Bruce Street Bridges planting scheme from 2018. The total annual cost of the scheme is £2,644.84 including labour and materials.

RESOLVED that the Parish will support the scheme for the sum specified provided plaques are installed to advise motorists that the planters are 'Proudly sponsored by North Swindon

Parish Council' The Parish Manager is to advise the Chair of F&S when approval of the plaques from Highways is received.

264 Olive Grove

Cllr Moffatt provided a written report requesting the removal of problematic trees for the residents of 18-35 Olive Grove a copy of which can be found as Appendix B in the Minute Book.

SBC have advised that the cedar, rowan and malus should be completely removed as pruning would be fruitless. Surrounding shrubs can then be pruned back.

Cost of the removal is £290.00

RESOLVED that the Parish Manager arrange for the removal in consultation with Cllr Moffatt and local residents.

265 Admission of Public and Press

RESOLVED that in accordance with Standing Order 3d) that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they be instructed to withdraw; the reason being staffing employment. The Parish Manager also left the meeting.

**266 Appointment of Parish Clerk & Parish Manager
Employment of a Parish Manager**

Cllr Moffatt presented a report which outlined Swindon Borough Council's response concerning their position in relation to a TUPE transfer of the Parish Manager. It is SBC's opinion that TUPE does not apply to this employee or the role he is presently undertaking for the parish council.

In view of this Cllr Moffatt presented a detailed job description, person specification and timetable for the employment of a Parish Manager, which were agreed.

RESOLVED that the post will be advertised on the PC website from 6th December. Applications must be made in writing and posted to the PC Solicitors by the closing date of 20th December 2017. Short listing will take place between 27th – 29th December and interviews will take place the first week of January. The interview panel will consist of Cllrs Moffatt, J Ballman, Kevin Small & Step Exell. The present Parish Clerk will be in attendance.

The salary range for the post will be SCP 52-55, and the successful candidate will be offered the opportunity to join the Wiltshire Local Government Scheme. The Interview Panel are authorised to make a formal offer to the successful candidate, subject to the final approval of a PC meeting. The Committee further agreed that if the present Parish Manager is successful, then he will be offered employment based on his present SBC salary pay scale range (Grade T) along with honouring his present terms of conditions and length of service.

The meeting closed at 9.26pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Council