

CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH PARISH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 16th January 2019 at 7.00pm at 32 The Circle

Cllr D Moffatt (Chair)
Cllr J Ballman (Vice-Chair)
Cllr R Ballman
Cllr P Exell
Cllr S Exell
Cllr M Lucas
Cllr S Henderson
Cllr D Montaut
Cllr K Parker
Cllr D Patey
Cllr K D Small
Cllr S Thompson
Cllr J Yeowell

Officers Andy Reeves (Parish Manager)
Hannah Morgan (Deputy Clerk)
Aaron Webb (Youth Worker)

Public One

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

349 **Apologies**

Cllr P Baker
Cllr J Rodrigues
Cllr T Smith

350 **Declarations of Interest & Applications for Dispensation**

None

351 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 19 December 2018 be approved as a correct record.

352 **Finance & Staffing Committee**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee meeting held on 8 January 2019 be confirmed and adopted.

353 **Planning & Environment Committee**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee held on 9 January 2019 be confirmed and adopted.

Cllr P Exell referred to Minute 343 and confirmed that the Parish Council would be returning funds to Swindon Borough Council as they had been transferred to the Parish Council in error.

Cllr P Exell referred to Minute 345 and confirmed that a couple of sites had been

identified where local residents could be written to. Cllrs were asked to identify roads to be lettered.

It was confirmed that the Planning & Environment Committee had delegated authority to review and comment on all planning applications on behalf of the Parish Council.

354 Leisure & Amenities Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Leisure & Amenities Committee held on 9 January 2019 be confirmed and adopted.

Cllr S Exell asked about the planning permissions needed to install noticeboards around the Parish. Cllr D Moffatt confirmed that alternative processes would be looked into.

Cllr D Moffatt updated Cllrs on the delay of the transfer of assets.

355 2019/20 Budget

Cllr K Small presented the draft 2019/20 Revenue & Capital Budget. It was confirmed that both budgets had been presented to and endorsed by the Finance & Staffing Committee although some changes had occurred since.

The budget suggested a 3.99% increase in the precept.

Cllr K Small referred to an email sent out re: Cllrs Remuneration and confirmed that this would be discussed and agreed at the AGM.

Cllr K Small went on to provide more details about the individual budget lines.

Cllr P Exell asked about the Committee Budgets and whether there would be funds available within these for some works being considered on the grass verges on Whitworth Road. Cllr K Small stated there could be an opportunity to use some of the Community Enhancement Fund for these works later in the year.

Cllr S Exell suggested Cllrs could contribute some of their Ward Allowances towards the works.

Cllr D Montaut asked about the availability of funds for street sign cleaning. Cllr K Small responded that it would be expected that this work would be completed under the new and improved StreetSmart contract.

The Parish Manager confirmed that some additional funds would be expected to be received from Swindon Borough Council (SBC) for the dilapidation costs for the assets to be transferred.

Cllr D Moffatt put the budget to vote and moved that it be approved. All unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the draft budget presented by accepted and approved.

356 RAG System

The Parish Manager displayed the RAG system and gave an overview of the system and explained how it was developed. He went on to run through the 18/19 Capital Projects included.

Cllr D Moffatt commented that the system was not adequate and required a narrative.

Cllr D Montaut commented that the RAG system did not show a good output to date and

stated that the 3 projects in Red needed to be looked at in more detail.

Cllr R Ballman responded that there was no problem with the system and it could be easily understood. The system being shown was only a snapshot and didn't include completed projects.

Cllr S Exell suggested there was a problem with items coming from the Finance & Staffing Committee and Full Council being given priority over items which come from the other 2 Committees.

The Parish Manager agreed and stated that timescales for resolutions would be useful. Cllr S Exell added that some activities were time critical, such as the SHELAA.

Cllr J Ballman said that the system presented may not be perfect, but it works. It would be a useful tool if sent out to Cllrs a week prior to meetings.

Cllr K Small stated that it had to be appreciated that all RAG systems differ and that it would probably take approx. 6 months to develop a system that worked for the Parish Council. It had to be ensured that delegated authorities were followed and most projects agreed by committees did not have to be agreed by Full Council.

He agreed with Cllr D Moffatt's comments re: the need for a narrative and added that the system was a monitoring system for projects not an appraisal system for staff.

It was confirmed that projects being completed by the Youth Worker and Grants Manager were included in the system.

Cllrs K Small & D Montaut left the meeting at 8.56pm.

357 Chairs, Officers and Members Report

Cllr P Exell gave details of a 'Open Space Audit' Swindon Borough Council (SBC) had asked Parish Councils to be involved in.

Cllr D Moffatt referred to the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) presentation given to Cllrs prior to the meeting and suggested the Parish Council advocate for a representative to attend PCC meetings. He queried the powers given to PCSOs.

358 Exclusion 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.

359 Staffing

The Parish Manager confirmed that the Estates Manager role had been advertised. It was explained that usually 1 member of the Staffing Panel and 1 Officer would sit on the interview panel for all roles.

The Parish Manager informed Cllrs that J Ballman had raised an issue over the ambiguity if the 2 people conducting interviews could not agree and had suggested that 1 additional member of the Finance & Staffing Committee sits on interview panels.

The Parish Manager added that he didn't feel it necessary for Cllrs to be involved in interviews for LC1 grade roles, such as the premises assistant roles, as successful candidates for these roles had little to no contact with Cllrs. All agreed.

RESOLVED that Cllrs would not sit on the interview panels for LC1 grade roles.

Cllr S Exell stated that you could not have more Cllrs than Officers on an interview panel and if an additional Cllr was to be added the process an additional Officer would also need to be included. She added that there was an issue with the lack of Cllr training and

those sitting on an interview panel should have the appropriate training.

Cllr R Ballman queried that statement that you couldn't have more Cllrs than Officers on an interview panel as this wasn't the case at Swindon Borough Council (SBC). She added that having a 3rd person would alleviate the situation where an agreement couldn't be reached, which has occurred previously.

Cllr D Moffatt explained he had been looking into legislation and stated that the Parish Clerk was legally responsible for the actions of the Parish except where the Parish Council disagrees with the Clerks actions. For this reason, you could not have a situation where the Clerk is out voted, only situations where an agreement could not be reached and employment would not be made.

Cllr D Moffatt confirmed that the suggestion was for the Parish Manager and 2 others to conduct interviews.

Cllr J Ballman confirmed that the suggestion was not a criticism of any previous decisions made.

Cllr S Henderson commented that the Parish Council as a body sets policy and that the Parish Manager made appointments to put the policy in place and that the selection of people to complete tasks sat with the Parish Manager and he was happy that the current set-up was satisfactory.

Cllr M Lucas commented that he didn't disagree with the current process or the suggestion being put forward. He stated that all Cllrs have different skill sets and could provide guidance and information to assist those interviewed for specific roles. Cllr P Exell added that within his workplace technical questions were written by those not necessarily involved in the interview processes.

Cllr J Ballman queried the shortlisting process. The Parish Manager confirmed this was conducted by himself prior to interviews.

Cllr D Moffatt summarised the options and put these to vote:

1. 1 member of the Staffing Panel + 1 Officer conduct interviews
2. 1 member of the Staffing Panel + 1 Officer + 1 other Cllr conduct interviews

7 Cllrs voted for option 1, 3 Cllrs vote for option 2, 1 Cllr abstained from voting.

RESOLVED that the no changes be made to the recruitment & interview processes.

Cllr M Lucas suggested all Cllrs provide the Parish Manager with details of the background, employment history etc. for future reference.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Council