

## **CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH PARISH COUNCIL**

### **FINANCE & STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING**

Minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2019 at 7.00pm at 32 The Circle

**Present** Cllr S Exell (Vice-chair)

Cllr J Ballman  
Cllr R Ballman  
Cllr M Lucas  
Cllr D Moffatt  
Cllr J Rodrigues

Cllr J Yeowell (non-committee member)

**Officers** A Reeves (Parish Manager)  
A Briggs (Estates Manager)  
H Morgan (Deputy Clerk)  
M Szczepanek (Project Manager)

**82 Apologies**

Cllr K Small (Chair)

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

None

**84 Magic Table Demo**

A representative from a supplier of the Tovertafel 'Magic Table' attended the meeting. An overview of the equipment and its uses was given.

The Parish Manager mentioned that a table may be being purchased by Swindon Borough Council (SBC) which the Parish Council may have the opportunity to share on a rota basis, but it may not always be available on the days the proposed Dementia Café would run.

Cllr R Ballman commented that should the Parish Council decide to purchase a 'Magic Table' they could rent it out to other groups and organisations who would benefit from it.

**85 Minutes of previous meetings**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee meeting held 4<sup>th</sup> June 2019 be approved as a correct and accurate record.

**86 Grant Applications & Ward Allowance Spend**

The Parish Manager informed the Committee that the Police had been invited to present on an agenda item discussed in the Finance & Staffing Committee meeting held 4<sup>th</sup> June 2019 re: the purchasing of pushbikes.

The Parish Manager handed over to the PC in attendance.

PC Nick Finning introduced himself as a member of Team 3 from North Swindon which covered the 'DC' area which included Penhill, Pinehurst, Rodbourne and Moredon.

PC Nick Finning explained the issues that PCs are currently facing, such as the use of mopeds, gathering of youths in specific areas, drug dealing, ride outs etc. He went on to comment on the difficulty Police have when patrolling in marked vehicles as these can be seen from far away and there is often a need to leave

vehicles and approach on foot. PC Nick Finning mentioned some particular areas where youths gather which are hard to access in cars.

The Committee were informed that PCSOs working in another area had been granted e-bikes by another Swindon Parish Council which has assisted them in tackling Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) issues.

PC Nick Finning stated that he would like to be able to approach young people easily and engage early on, as well as being able to respond to incidents quickly.

2 bikes are currently stored at Pinetrees Community Centre which were acquired from those that had been found and/or seized by the Police but had not been claimed. PC Nick Finning confirmed that 26 miles had been covered in 1 shift on the pushbikes currently being used. He added that travelling on pushbikes makes it easier for the public to approach officers and report incidents to them rather than calling 101.

PC Nick Finning explained the problems with obtaining Police funding for pushbikes; where any bikes issued are done so for individual use and could not be shared with other officers. The benefit of the Parish Council providing a bike would be that it could be used by more than 1 PC and across teams.

The Parish Manager confirmed the amount the Police had originally requested for the pushbikes they intended to purchase.

Cllr J Ballman commented on the modest cost and that the amount may not cover the cost of bikes which would most suit the needs of the PCs. He went on to talk about the range of ability of electric bikes available.

PC Nick Finning stated that he had originally spoken with Mitchell Cycles with the intention of purchasing the same bikes as those being used by other officers in North Swindon but had been advised by Cllr J Ballman of alternative suppliers within the parish.

PC Nick Finning informed the Committee that he and PC Adam Tape had trialed a bike from the advised alternative supplier which was more robust and faster than the bike originally suggested. The cost of the alternative bike was confirmed as £1,800.

Cllr D Moffatt questioned how easily the bikes could be adjusted for different users. It was confirmed that the seat height could be adjusted, and the power of the bikes would adjust to the user i.e. how fast they were going and how much assistance was needed.

PC Nick Finning commented that he wanted to avoid purchasing a bike which would need to be registered as being motorised.

The Parish Manager informed members that it had been agreed that any bikes purchased would be stored inside Pinetrees Community Centre and that the Parish Council would be responsible for the safe keeping of the bikes. He went on to ask if the bikes were to be used across the Parish whether there would be an option to store the bikes elsewhere i.e. at Even Swindon Community Centre. PC Nick Finning confirmed that this would definitely be a possibility.

Cllr J Ballman commented on the benefits of travelling by bike due to the number of back alleys in Gorse Hill and the older parts of Swindon which sit within the Parish.

Cllr J Rodrigues asked who would be responsible should anyone or anything be injured or damaged as a result of the use of a bike. PC Nick Finning explained that

any individual officer using the bike would be responsible as PCs are trained to use equipment and do so at their own risk and Officers are responsible for any decision made whilst on a bike. He stated that this had been confirmed with Constable Andy Bridge. PC Nick Finning added that the Police would be responsible for the maintenance of the bikes.

Cllr D Moffatt moved that the Parish Council purchase the suggested bikes from historic undefined developer contributions received at the cost of £1,800 per bike, £3,600 in total. Cllr J Ballman seconded. All agreed.

**RESOLVED** that that the Parish Council purchase 2 bikes at the cost of £3,600 for the Police and that the funds come from historic undefined developer contributions.

PC Nick Finning was thanked for attending the meeting and presenting the reasons for the need of pushbikes.

The Parish Manager confirmed that the Parish Council would purchase the bikes and liaise with the Police around the storage at Pinetrees Community Centre. He added that recognition that the Parish Council had purchased the bikes had been discussed and would be published on Social Media.

Cllr S Exell suggested the Police be invited to a future meeting to give an update on any success of bikes being used and how they had been used. PC Nick Finning agreed and stated he would coordinate diaries with the Parish Manager.

## 87 **Projects Update**

A written report was circulated, a copy of which can be found as Annex A in the Minute Book.

### Churchward Allotments

The Projects Manager stated that some bald patches had become visible within the hardstanding car parking area installed and that Linnet Construction had been asked to provide some grit to cover them.

Cllr M Lucas had reported that traffic leaving the site have obscured views of the road due to the hedges on the left and it had been suggested a mirror could be installed to alleviate the problem.

### Even Swindon Community Centre, Jennings Street

The Projects Manager informed the Committee that the vinyl flooring had been completed, including the additional area leading into the kitchen.

Signage and decoration was needed to make the new library doors good.

The Projects Manager stated that the contractors had been slow in completing outstanding items.

It was said that the Management Committee were keen to have a break from works and the disruption caused and that they would like a meeting with the Projects Manager, Parish Manager and Cllrs to discuss the issues experienced.

The Projects Manager confirmed he was looking into a short-term option for replacing the lighting tubes not working in the main hall. Cllr D Moffatt suggested replacing just the tubes which were not working.

Cllr D Moffatt informed members that the management committee had been publicly appreciative of the work of the Parish Council and Projects Manager at their AGM which was attended by approx. 30 people.

The Parish Manager commented that the management committee was made up of volunteers who manage the facility on behalf of the Parish, so the parish doesn't have to directly. He added that the infrastructure costs of the building will always be the responsibility of the Parish Council so there was a vested interest to spend money where needed.

Cllr S Exell asked about the cost of the suggested works to replace the failed lighting tubes in the hall. The Projects Manager responses that he and Cllr M Lucas had wanted to meet with contractors that day to discuss the possibility of re-lamping all lights and replacing the diffusers.

Cllr S Exell suggested that the matter be put on hold until costs for the options available could be reported at a future meeting. All agreed.

**RESOLVED** that a report on the options for lighting in the main hall at Even Swindon Community Centre and the related costs be presented at a future Finance & Staffing Committee meeting.

Western Community Centre

The Projects Manager confirmed that the options for solar panels was not being looked into at this point in time.

**88      32 The Circle**

A written report was circulated, a copy of which can be found as Annex B of the Minute Book.

Cllr D Moffatt informed the Committee that the 1<sup>st</sup> contractor was accredited on Check-a-Trade with many positive reviews.

The Parish Manager stated he was confident that bridging agreement could be obtained for works could begin prior to the lease being signed.

Cllr S Exell reiterated the recommendations of the report and asked if the suggested works met the needs of members.

It was confirmed that no works to be completed towards the front of the building at this stage.

Cllr J Ballman commented that he would prefer for the ceiling to be left as it was if wires etc. could be tidied up.

The Parish Manager stated that a lot of work had been completed at John Moulton Hall to keep the ceiling as it was. He added that in previous meetings members had expressed a preference for a suspended ceiling at 32 The Circle due to the potential saving on energy costs.

It was commented that a suspended ceiling could create a small corridor like space and could make the room feel claustrophobic.

Cllr S Exell asked for the Projects Managers input. It was suggested that there was a possibility of a curved ceiling being installed. The Estates Manager commented that he would look into the options and costs for installing a curved suspended ceiling above the existing beams.

Cllr J Rodrigues left the meeting at 8.37pm.

Cllr D Moffatt stated that he would prefer a suspended ceiling and that if a suspended ceiling wasn't to be installed something would need to be done re: insulation.

Cllr J Ballman queried the height of the suspended ceiling. It was confirmed that some of the existing beams would be showing if a suspended building was installed.

Cllr R Ballman commented on the appearance of the beams showing under the existing suspended ceiling.

Cllr S Exell called for a vote on the suspended ceiling:

1 vote for leaving the existing ceiling as it is

3 vote for a suspended ceiling

1 abstained from the vote

**RECOMMENDATION** that a suspended ceiling be installed at 32 The Circle.

Cllr S Exell commented on the total cost given in the report of £16,000 and that it seemed like a good starting pointing and a large improvement on figures spoken of previously.

Cllr J Ballman agreed that the works probably couldn't be completed for less money and that the amount seemed proportional to the rent and would achieve the aims of the Council.

Cllr D Moffatt stated that the acoustics, options for projection and a table needed to be looked into.

Cllr D Moffatt suggested that Full Council be recommended to be mindful to accept a contractor for the specified works for a cost in the area of £16,000 with a contingency to be added. All agreed.

**RECOMMENDATION** that Full Council be mindful to accept a contract for the works for a cost in the area of £16,000 with a contingency to be added.

**89     Pinecones Café – Pinetrees Main Kitchen**

A written report was circulated, a copy of which can be found as Annex C in the Minute Book.

Funding

This had been discussed with the Grants Manager and it was suggested if a bid was to be submitted it be done so by the Parish Council so they can manage the funds directly and retain control.

Recommendation

The Estates Manager confirmed that the recommendation should read 'Quotation 2 & 3' at the beginning of the first paragraph.

The Parish Manager explained why the café would need to go out to tender after year 1. He added that it was not beneficial to have an annual rolling contract and that by going out to tender an overview of the market and options available could be obtained.

It was confirmed that the Olive Tree Café had stated that they would still like to the kitchen facilities if they weren't successful in submitting a bid for the café when it goes out to tender.

Cllr J Ballman asked what was wrong with the existing kitchen and who would benefit from any changes made. The Parish Manager responded that the changes were wanted to make the kitchen suitable for teaching, which the Olive Tree Café are keen to do. He added that Swindon College had advised on the layout and had expressed an interest in supporting teaching and that the yield would be social.

It was confirmed that a professional tutor would be provided and paid for by the Olive Tree Café/Twigs.

The Estates Manager informed the Committee that the Olive Tree Café Manager had suggested some courses would be offered for free and others paid for.

It was confirmed that the Pinecones Café had amended their opening hours and now opened at 10am and closed at 3pm.

Cllr R Ballman questioned the benefits of the proposed refit if the Olive Tree Café weren't successful when the café goes out to tender.

The Parish Manager explained the risks and benefits of an annual rolling contract and/or a 3-year tender process. The preference would be to go through the tender process as it provided the best security. He added that it needed to be established whether the Olive Tree Café would be happy with a rolling contract.

Cllr D Moffatt commented on the funds requested by the Olive Tree Café in the past.

It was confirmed that currently the Olive Tree Café do not pay anything to the Parish Council for use of the café space.

The Parish Manager commented on the café being at the mercy of the success of the Community Centre and 'walk-ins' and the opportunities for joint marketing.

Cllr S Exell suggested waiting for the café to go through the tendering process to see who submits bids and wins the contract.

The Parish Manager agreed that the tendering process would allow insight into the market and what the café could achieve.

Cllr R Ballman commented that she would be supportive of the course the Olive Tree wishes to offer. Many agreed.

Cllr D Moffatt suggested the Olive Tree Café Manager be invited to a future meeting to establish their longer-term goals in terms of the Pinecones Café and find out what they would like to achieve.

The Parish Manager suggested the Chair of Trustees also be invited.  
All agreed.

**RESOLVED** that the Olive Tree Café Manager and Chair of Trustees be invited to a future Finance & Staffing Committee meeting to discuss the future aims of the Pinecones Café at Pinetrees Community Centre.

## **90     Lighting Pollution Mitigation – Barnfield Close**

The Estates Manager explained that concerns had been raised over the lighting at the rear of the new development next to Barnfield Close and the impact on residents living there and that he had been asked to look into the options available to mitigate the problems.

The Estates Manager stated that he had been trying to contact various parties involved and had established that Planning Permission would be required to install a fence line due to the proximity to the Highway. He added that the Swindon Borough Council (SBC) Highways Department had advised that the visibility of drivers exiting the car park of the development would need to be considered but they had no objections in principal to the proposed fence.

The Estates Manager suggested neither the developer nor landowner wanted to take responsibility for the problem and the landowner had advised him to speak with the Travelodge to seek authority and input from them.

The Parish Manager stated that the responsibility fell with the landowner and that the Travelodge should be treated as a consultee, to gain their views on the proposed fence.

Cllr S Exell stated that she had received an email from SBC highways stating that the residents were eager for a fence to be erected to block the view from the car park to their properties and whilst they would prefer the fence to be on the development side of the landscaping, they were content that it is erected at the back of the footway and that SBC saw no reason why a planning application for the fence shouldn't be successful.

Cllr D Moffatt mentioned the CIL monies from the new development which would need to be spent. He went on to suggest a planning application be submitted for the full length of fence which could be reduced later.

The Parish Manager asked the Committee to confirm that they were giving the Estates Manager authority to proceed with submitting a Planning Application for the installation of 53m of fence at the rear of the new development at Barnfield Close. All agreed.

**RESOLVED** that the Estates Manager be given authority to submit a Planning Application for the installation of a 53m fence line at the rear of the new development at Barnfield Close.

The Parish Manager suggested that residents at Barnfield Close would need to be consulted. Cllr S Exell responded that she had spoken with residents and they were all keen to see the full length of fence installed.

## **91     Dementia Café**

The Deputy Clerk presented a written report prepared by the Admin Assistant, a copy of which can be found as Annex D in the Minute Book.

It was confirmed that the proposed Dementia Café would be held in the meeting room at Pinetrees as the Café was not ideal due to it being open to the public and restricted open space and the main hall being too large.

Cllr R Ballman stated that she would be keen to the 'Magic Table' shared across other community groups.

Cllr J Ballman proposed accepting and going ahead with the recommendations of the report. Cllr D Moffatt seconded. All agreed.

**RESOLVED** that:

1. To continue with the setting up of the Dementia Café, providing the initial set

up and running costs for a period of six months until a community group can be established to take over the entirety of the Dementia Café.

2. To purchase the Tovertafel 'Magic Table' complete package with 20 games at the cost of £8,850 plus VAT.

**92      Staffing Panel – Meeting Date**

Cllr S Exell asked for Cllrs to request suitable dates. The Parish Manager confirmed his availability the following week.

Cllr D Moffatt suggested a date be set once the Chair of the Finance & Staffing Committee had returned from holiday. The Parish Manager responded that he would like to meet as soon as possible.

Cllrs suggested meeting at 4.30pm on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2019 and confirmed the venue. All agreed.

**RESOLVED** that the Staffing Panel meet at the agreed time and venue.

The meeting closed at 9.37pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Vice-chair of the Finance & Staffing Committee