

CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH PARISH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 17th July 2019 at 7.00pm at 32 The Circle

- Present** Cllr D Moffatt (Chair)
Cllr J Ballman (Vice-Chair)
Cllr P Baker
Cllr R Ballman
Cllr P Exell
Cllr S Exell
Cllr S Henderson
Cllr M Lucas
Cllr D Montaut
Cllr D Patey
Cllr J Rodrigues
Cllr K Small
Cllr S Thompson
Cllr J Yeowell
- Officers** Andy Reeves (Parish Manager)
Hannah Morgan (Deputy Clerk)
Andy Briggs (Estates Manager)
- Public** One
- Public Session** There were no questions or comments made by the member of public present.
- 115** Apologies
None
- 116** Declarations of Interest & Applications for Dispensation
None
- 117** Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 19 June 2019 be approved as a correct record.
- 118** Finance & Staffing Committee
Cllr D Moffatt referred to Min. 84 and confirmed it had been agreed that the Parish Council purchase a Magic Table and proceed with the setting up of a Dementia Café.

Cllr D Moffatt referred to Min. 88 and informed members that 32 The Circle would be discussed later on in the meeting.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Parish Annual Meeting held on 22 May 2019 be confirmed and adopted.
- 119** Leisure & Amenities Committee
Cllr R Ballman asked about the question asked by the member of public present re plainings at Hreod Burna Urban Forest. Cllr D Moffatt confirmed that a report was to be presented at a future Leisure & Amenities Committee meeting.

Cllr S Exell referred to the cricket pitches at Mannington Rec and stated that residents were disappointed that they couldn't play cricket ad hoc as they had done previously. It was asked that the pitches be reinstated once the area had been transferred to the

Parish Council.

Cllr D Moffatt confirmed that he would be happy for officers to be instructed to proceed with reinstating the cricket pitches.

Cllr K Small commented that S106 monies relating to Lidl could be used to cover the cost of a new strip. Cllr D Moffatt confirmed that discussions were had with the developer of Lidl at the time it was being built and funds had been discussed and confirmed and these historic funds were available.

It was confirmed that a report regarding the cricket pitches would be presented at a future Leisure & Amenities Committee meeting.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Leisure & Amenities Committee held on 3 July 2019 be confirmed and adopted.

120 Planning and Environment Committee

Members were informed that the minutes of the meeting held Weds 10th July 2019 were not available and would be presented at the August 2019 Full Council meeting.

121 2018/19 Asset Register

The Parish Manager presented the Asset Register and explained that it was split by buildings and areas within those buildings and that the values included were either estimates or the purchase prices.

It was confirmed that the Churchward Avenue Leisure Garden site was now included.

The Parish Manager explained that the de minimis value was currently set at £50 and that with the number of assets increasing it had been suggested that the de minimis value be increased to £200 or £500.

It was confirmed that the furniture held at 32 The Circle was included with the Parish Office furniture.

The Parish Manager explained why buildings were included with a value of £1. He went on to explain that the van owned by the Parish Council had a depreciative value, but the auditors had advised that Parish Councils didn't depreciate assets. If the van was to be disposed of and/or sold and monies made would be noted at a relevant meeting and noted in the minutes of that meeting.

Cllr S Exell queried the weed killing equipment used by the Allotments Officer and asked whether glyphosates were being used. The Parish Manager confirmed this would be investigated.

Cllr D Montaut comments that weeds could be found growing across the parish. It was asked what action the Swindon Borough Council Grounds Maintenance Team were taking and whether value for money was being achieved by the Parish Council. The Parish Manager confirmed that a full report and options appraisal was to be presented later on in the meeting.

Cllr D Moffatt suggested the de minimis value of £50 be kept. All agreed.

RESOLVED that the de minimis value of £50 for assets remains the same.

122 2018/19 Annual Governance Statement

The 2018/19 Annual Governance Statement was presented, and the Deputy Clerk confirmed that it had not changed since being presented at the Extraordinary Full Council meeting held 28 June 2019.

The 2018/19 Annual Governance Statement was approved and agreed.

RESOLVED that the 2018/19 Annual Governance Statement be approved.

123 **2018/19 Annual Report**

The 2018/19 Annual Report and Accounting Statements were presented, and the Deputy Clerk highlighted the differences from the report presented at the Extraordinary Full Council meeting held 28 June 2019 and explained the reasons for the differences.

The 2018/19 Annual Report and Accounting Statements were approved and agreed.

RESOLVED that the 2018/19 Annual Report and Accounting Statements be approved.

124 **StreetSmart Options Appraisal**

Cllr S Thompson and a member of the public arrived 7.23pm.

The Parish Manager presented an options appraisal for the Swindon Borough Council (SBC) StreetSmart contract. He explained that the contract was of a high value and that the Parish Council needed to ensure best value and that the general consensus was that the Parish Council were not happy with the current service.

The Parish Manager went on to say that the snapshot taken via the Value for Money review was misleading and that SBC had undertaken a staffing restructure and the report was not reflective of the current time as key members of staff had been removed and a large management fee had been introduced so the Parish Council were paying an additional £36,000 for less staff.

The frustrations of the Parish Council had been communicated to SBC earlier in the year and as a result the management costs had been reduced and then removed but this wouldn't stick beyond the current year.

The Parish Manager highlighted what was included under the current SBC StreetSmart contract.

It was confirmed that the StreetSmart Contract would be kept as a standing agenda item for future meetings so Council would be kept up to date on goings on and discussions being had by the Working Group.

Cllr R Ballman asked if the Working Group had met. The Parish Manager confirmed that members of the Working Group had met with SBC Officers and had met informally.

Cllr D Montaut commented on the management fees being introduced by SBC and that it was a way of SBC passing on high admin costs.

The Parish Manager explained that there was resource available to manage a taskforce in house and that it would make it easier for the Parish Council to be accountable and react to comments and requests for works.

Cllr J Ballman agreed with the earlier comments made by Cllr D Montaut and the statements made by the Parish Manager. He went on to speak of works required in Gorse Hill and explained that residents wanted to see an improvement.

Cllr K Small commented on the slides presented and summarised that essentially 4 options had been presented.

The Parish Manager commented on the procurement costs that would be incurred if the contract was to go out to tender via OJEU. He went on to explain the slides and options being presented.

Cllr D Montaut commented that a good report had been presented but the issue was too complex to absorb at one meeting, but he was encouraged by the report and the opportunities presented. He added that his preference would be to bring the service in house.

Cllr R Ballman confirmed that the Council were being asked for permission for the options presented to be discussed by the Working Group. She added that bringing the service in house was her preferred option.

Cllr D Patey commented on the management fee introduced by SBC and that if the service was managed in house fees would still be incurred via the Parish Councils own staff.

Cllr P Baker asked that the Working Group give TUPE transfers careful consideration. The Parish Manager agreed and explained some of the difficulties with transferring staff.

Cllr K Small commented on the current service being provided and the various options presented. He summarised that going to an external provider or bringing the service in house were the best options.

Cllr S Exell commented on the loss of economies of scale and said that where possible the Parish Council should look at sharing costs and equipment and that the equipment needed, and items used less often would need to be looked at.

Cllr S Thompson stated his preference would be to bring the service in house.

Cllr M Lucas stated that he was sceptical about partnering with other Parish Councils and preferred the option to bring the service in house.

Cllr P Baker left the meeting at 8.14pm.

Cllr S Henderson thanked the Parish Manager for presenting the options appraisal which appeared complex and didn't clearly show the impact of the various options. He added that he would like to take the time to drill into the report and look at what the possible impacts would be.

Cllr J Yeowell commented that he was leaning towards a direct provision and bringing the service in house.

Cllr J Ballman commented that the direct provision option should be looked at with cost effectiveness being the main driver. The Parish Council want to improve what is being delivered and reduce costs. He stated he was in favour of the Working Group looking at the option of an in house provision in detail.

Cllr D Moffatt confirmed that the Council were not being asked to make a decision that evening. He went on to comment on the various options presented.

The Parish Manager confirmed that he had got an indicative steer on the preferred option and explained that the next step would be to provide a report on costings.

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Leases

The Parish Manager advised that he was disappointed that no leases had been signed to date. He explained that the locum solicitor employed by Swindon Borough Council (SBC) had finished slightly prematurely. He had met with SBC the previous week and they had admitted that the amount of work required had been underestimated and he had been told that a trainee locum would be put in place.

The Parish Manager stated that the draft leases received contained a number of errors. He added that other Parish Councils were looking at taking on leases of 99 years and it was suggested that this Parish Council may also wish to consider 99 year leases as accessibility to capital was often curtailed by time.

The Parish Manager confirmed that traction hadn't been lost and officers were still working on getting leases completed and signed.

The Estates Manager added that he was continuing to chase SBC. He stated that 3 leases had been received over 8 weeks and then several were received at once. A list of the errors and issues with the leases received was being created and would be sent to SBC the following week.

Cllr D Moffatt agreed that the Parish Council should look at getting leases for 99 years.

Cllr J Ballman agreed.

All agreed.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council would ask for 99 year leases.

Cllr D Moffatt asked for approval to be given to the Clerk to sign leases on behalf of the Parish Council. All agreed.

RESOLVED that the Clerk be given permission to sign leases on behalf of the Parish Council.

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32 The Circle

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

The Estates Manager informed members that the report presented hadn't changed much since being presented at the July 2019 Finance & Staffing Committee meeting.

He mentioned that he had concerns over one of the contractors ability to complete the large scope of works.

A 3rd quote had been requested from Affleck and alternative contractors had been contacted but little response had been received.

Cllr S Exell stated that she didn't agree with the recommendation of the report as the 3rd contractor had been given plenty of time to respond to the request for a quote. It was suggested that the Council proceed with the recommendation of the Finance & Staffing Committee and proceed with the preferred contractor.

Cllr K Small supported the comments made by S Exell and agreed that Affleck had been given enough time to respond and should be taken out of the process. He added that there was no evidence to justify not supporting the lowest quote received and that the contractor had all of the expected accreditation.

It was confirmed that both contractors had received the same specifications, the cost of the suspended ceiling was not included in the 2nd quote presented, and the cost of subcontracted electrical works had been provided for in the report.

Cllr R Ballman asked if a quote could be requested for a suspended ceiling and suggested this would be needed before Council were able to make a decision.

Cllr D Moffatt moved that the higher quote be accepted as the lower quote was incomplete and utilised subcontractors. All agreed.

RESOLVED that the higher quote be accepted, and the contractor asked to proceed with the works at 32 The Circle.

127 **Moredon Sports Hub**

Cllr D Moffatt explained that the development was moving slowly. The running costs and Business case had been discussed with professionals and a report was to be made available 29 July 2019.

It was confirmed that 4 football pitches remained under Swindon Borough Council (SBC) control and they were reasonably well used and were not to be administered by the Parish Council.

It was stated that the Grants Manager had given reassurance that grant funding would be available.

Cllr J Ballman suggested that the Parish Council should wait to receive report before making a judgement on the development.

Cllr K Small declared a non-pecuniary interest and stated that he had heard that there was a possibility that a youth team may take over the pitches and changing room in Moredon and that this caused worry about adult football being taken away from the area. It was asked if this provided a stronger case for opening the pitches at Mannington Rec on an additional day.

Cllr J Ballman confirmed that the Moredon pitches being spoken of were not being transferred to the Parish Council so they had no control. He added that the Parish Council could only gain control if they were to run the Moredon Sports Hub development.

The Parish Manager confirmed that the detailed business case with costs and revenue provisions had not been received. This had been delayed as a number of changes had been made. It was suggested that the turnover was considerably low and the costs exceptionally high.

The Parish Manager went on to say that he and the Grants Manager would be working with partners to confirm numbers included in reports.

Cllr S Exell commented that a lot of work would be needed at Mannington Rec if adult football moved there from Moredon.

128 **RAG System**

The Parish Manager displayed the up to date RAG system.

The Estates Manager confirm that he was awaiting a response to a query re: the sand at St Marks as it may be possible to top up the existing sand.

The Deputy Clerk explained the current situation with the bus shelters and noticeboards.

It was confirmed that a meeting was to take place in August 2019 to discuss putting in place an annual rolling contract with The Olive Tree Café to continue running the café at Pinetrees Community Centre.

It was confirmed that the lighting works had not been completed at Even Swindon Community Centre.

Work on the Neighbourhood Plan was to begin once the 18/19 AGAR had been submitted.

A date was to be received for the works to be completed at the Churchward Avenue Leisure Garden site.

Tests for the festive lights had been completed and a report was to be received.

Cllr J Ballman commented that it would have been useful to have seen the RAG System prior to the meeting. The Parish Manager confirmed that the RAG System would be sent to Cllrs.

129 Parish Council Representatives' Report

Cllr S Henderson confirmed that the Grants Manager was embarking on a bid for £500,000 from the Reaching Communities Fund and she had asked for 2 Cllrs to work with her on the bid.

Cllr S Exell confirmed she had attended a workshop and the works seemed worthwhile. She added she would be happy to help the Grants Manager if it was felt she had the correct skills set.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Council