

CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH PARISH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 21st August 2019 at 7.00pm at 32 The Circle

Present Cllr J Ballman (Vice-Chair)
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)

Public None

167 **Apologies**
Cllr D Moffatt (Chair)
Cllr K Parker
Cllr P Baker

168 **Declarations of Interest & Applications for Dispensation**
None

169 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 17 July 2019 be approved as a correct record.

Cllr J Ballman ran through the minutes for comments.

It was confirmed that an update on the StreetSmart Contract and Leases would be provided under the relevant agenda items later in the meeting.

Cllr J Rodrigues referred to Min. 129 and asked if there was any update on the Reaching Communities Fund bid. The Parish Manager confirmed that there was no further update available. He added that the FA bid for £5,000 for new goal posts had been awarded.

170 **Finance & Staffing Committee**

Cllr S Exell referred to Min. 136 and asked for an amendment to be made.

Cllr J Yeowell for an update on Festive Lighting. Cllr K Small responded that Rodbourne Road had been tested and passed for festive lights to go ahead and be placed. Cricklade Road needed additional testing which Cllrs were chasing up on.

Cllr J Ballman added that the posts on Cricklade Road had failed as they couldn't hold the weight of the proposed motifs. Additional testing is being carried out to confirm the maximum weight the posts could hold.

It was confirmed that ETL were completing the testing.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee Meeting held on 6

August 2019 be confirmed and adopted with the amendment requested.

171 Planning & Environment Committee

Cllr P Exell presented the Minutes of the meeting held 10 July 2019. He informed Members that a productive meeting had been held with the residents of Barnfield Close. The Parish Manager added that the residents had given thanks to the Parish Council their assistance despite not getting the result wanted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee Meeting held on 10 July 2019 be confirmed and adopted.

Cllr P Exell presented the Minutes of the meeting held 7 August 2019. He informed the Committee that Cllr J Yeowell had spoken well at the Swindon Borough Council Planning Committee meeting re: the planning application for 5 Barnfield Close. Cllr J Ballman added that the presentations given good but unfortunately the vote had been lost.

Cllr S Henderson asked about Noticeboards and his request to place a noticeboard around Moredon Community Centre. Cllr P Exell confirmed that this would need to be considered by the Leisure & Amenities Committee.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee Meeting held on 7 August 2019 be confirmed and adopted.

172 Leisure & Amenities Committee

Cllr S Exell referred to Min. 165 and asked if there was a resolution. Cllr M Lucas responded that discussions had taken place and there were disagreements as to whether the Parish Council should be getting involved with SBC Highways issues.

Cllr S Exell informed the Committee that she understood a safety order was being put in place as a result of the new development. A request had gone through the Highways system and was being assessed as minor highways works in September 2019. It should be known by October 2019 whether the request has been successful.

It was suggested that if the request was unsuccessful the Parish Council could look at having a policy for minor highways works and how they are prioritised so that smaller projects which would have an impact on residents can be prioritised correctly.

Cllr S Exell added that she was please that the TRO at Barnfield Close had been included on the agenda.

Cllr J Ballman spoke of the issued raised as to whether the Parish Council should be requesting TROs and the crossover between Parish Councils and Swindon Borough Council (SBC).

Cllr K Small commented that Highways were an SBC matter and that SBC Ward Cllrs should be representing their respective areas. He added that he had no problem with the Parish Council representing areas as a public body, but decisions should lie with SBC.

Cllr J Ballman spoke of SBC taking on a Highways Officer.

The Parish Manager informed that the Committee that conversations had not yet taken place with the relevant person at SBC and it was expected that talks with Parish Councils and the employment of dedicated Highways Officer would take place in October or November 2019.

Cllr R Ballman asked about the Compost Tea Brewing kit and commented that it had been spoken about a lot but not purchased. Cllr M Lucas responded that some information had been sent through to himself by the Estates Manager which he was to look at and the item would then be brought back to the Leisure & Amenities Committee

for a final decision.

Cllr R Ballman asked whether quotes for relocating bus shelters had been received. The Parish Manager confirmed this was with the Deputy Clerk and the final costs were to be brought back to the Leisure & Amenities Committee for a decision.

Cllr D Montaut raised concerns over the Parish Council taking on SBC works and roles. He suggested that the Parish Council was exceeding its position further than may be reasonable and that the role of the Parish Council was becoming highly strategic and that Cllrs and Officers were not able to make decision at this level or carry out works.

Cllr S Exell suggested that under the power of competence and with CILCA qualified officers; Parish Councils had stepped up by taking on responsibilities of SBC.

Cllr J Rodrigues agreed with the comments made by Cllr D Montaut and stated that there was nothing wrong with the Parish Council making decision but there was a need to be wary of affordability.

Cllr J Yeowell asked if the tenants of Kiln Lane had been consulted. The Parish Manager confirmed that a consultation had not yet taken place.

Cllr J Yeowell asked when the bus shelter at Summers Street was to be installed. The Parish Manager stated that installation was expected to take place around the 2nd week in September 2019.

It was confirmed that a decision had been made previously that Planning & Environment Committee meetings would take place at 6pm and Leisure & Amenities Committee meetings at 7pm going forward.

Cllr J Ballman commented on the Parish Council taking on SBC roles and responsibilities and the perception of double taxation.

Cllr K Small confirmed that SBC continued to provide the role of Education and Highways authorities and Social Services by law. The Parish Manager agreed that the Parish Council could not take on statutory services.

Cllr K Small referred to Min. 157 and expressed concerns over the Youth Worker update. He stated that the Youth Worker was initially employed for completed direct serious youth work and for dealing with challenging people in communities and those causing anti-social behaviour (ASB). The update provided gave the perception that role had developed into providing 'soft' youth work.

The Parish Manager informed the Committee that the Youth Worker had been meeting with SBC to develop a supervision and monitoring agreement for the Youth Worker. He thanked Cllr R Ballman for enabling the Parish Council to make connections with SBC to enable them to develop a supervisory strategy. He explained that the Youth Worker was being monitored against agreed terms monthly as many of the young people taken on were being referred through the Police or Social Services. There is 'work and reward' structure in place; as well trips and days out young people are getting involved with community work. The Parish Manager confirmed that he believed the right young people were being targeted and the work being completed was appropriate. He commented that there was a risk that the workload would become too much as referring agencies were under resourced.

Cllr K Small suggested that the Youth Worker update needed to be more detailed and

needed to reflect the strategic work being completed.

Cllr R Ballman commented that the Youth Worker hadn't been present at the meeting and the Estates Manager was giving the update on the Youth Workers behalf.

Cllr J Rodrigues commented that the role of the Youth Worker could only continue for a limited period and was at the mercy of the Grants Manager finding funding to continue. He added that at the end of term it may be the want of Cllrs to continue the role which will be at a cost to the Parish Council.

It was suggested that it may be worthwhile setting up a group, similar to the Social Cohesion Working Group, to look into youth problems to make sure funds are being spent fairly.

The Parish Manager confirmed that the Youth Workers contract runs out in December 2020. He agreed that there was a need to demonstrate the impact of the youth work carried out and provide Cllrs with a quantitative way of measuring the cost against the money saved by other agencies through the reduction of ASB.

He added that a report would be provided to Cllrs to make a judgement in the future.

Cllr J Rodrigues commented on the Parish Council saving the Police money through the reduction of ASB and the provision of bikes. It was stated that this was not the role of a Parish Council and was not affordable. The need for the Grants Manager to focus on securing funds for the provision of a Youth Worker was highlighted.

The Parish Manager commented that the Grants Manager had brought in approx. £53,000 of funding to date against the cost of employment, £13,200k. He added that work being completed was being carefully monitored and there were currently several other grant applications going through.

It was said that frustratingly there was very little funding available for youths and youth work.

Cllr D Montaut commented that due to the uncertainty of future funding, the Parish Council needed to start working on contingency plans to accommodate the continuation of the service. He said that church and community groups carry out youth work and the Parish Council should start to communicate and cooperate with them now and find out how they can assist them and vice versa. He added that the Police also work with young people in the area and there is funding available for this within their budgets. He commented that smarter working was needed to be able to continue with the work in a different form.

Cllr R Ballman suggested the Parish Council approach the Police Crime Commissioner for funding.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Leisure & Amenities Committee Meeting held on 7 August 2019 be confirmed and adopted.

173

StreetSmart Contract

The Parish Manager explained that a report had been provided at the previous Full Council meeting which was very detailed and further time was needed for it. Cllrs had been invited to attend a separate meeting to go through 7 options presented in more detail. The Parish Manager thanked Cllrs who had submitted responses to consider.

The Parish Manager confirmed that the Finance & Staffing Committee had agreed to spend up to £10,000 to employ a consultant to provide the Parish Council with final options available based on costings and provide a final service model. He reminded Cllrs that the Value for Money report provided a retrospective view and a snapshot of where the Parish Council were at that point in time, it didn't provide detail on how the Parish

Council could move forward.

With the help of Katie Fielding at WALC, who had provided details on consultants who were experts in their field, 2 telephone interviews had taken place and the selected contractor should be confirmed within the next week.

The consultant's job will be to look primarily at the 7 options available. Due to level of interest Cllrs showed towards providing an in house service slightly more emphasis will be placed on the option to provide an 'in house' service.

A report and presentation will provide costs, projections and risks on which Cllrs can base a decision.

The Parish Manager spoke about the timeline; it would take approx. 8 weeks for the consultant to compile the report and it's hoped this can be presented in November 2019. Cllrs would then have up to 3 months to decide.

The Parish Manager confirmed that Swindon Borough Council (SBC) had to be given 3 months' notice to terminate the current contract and there was a risk that additional costs would be added if the Parish Council wished to extend the contract for a period of time whilst deciding.

The Parish Manager commented on the position of other Parish Councils and stated that this Parish Council were working in isolation and had to be mindful of the bigger picture. Cllr J Rodrigues commented on the opportunity which may arise in the future for the Parish Council to sell their service to others.

Cllr D Montaut commented on the use of costly consultants and the benefit of local intelligence.

Cllr K Small stated that it was with the Parish Managers remit to complete the work required.

Cllr J Ballman commented that someone with the right methodology was being employed to get the answers needed to all relevant questions.

The Parish Manager referred to best practise and the need for the Parish Council to be transparent and honest and the need to obtain independent advice and support when large sums of were involved.

174 Leases

The Parish Manager informed the Committee that signed leases for 32 The Circle, Chapel Street Toilets, Gorse Hill Community Centre and Pinetrees Community Centre had been received.

The lease for Chapel Street Toilets was for 10 years and the others were for 25 years with a deed of variation to be put in place to 99 years.

The Parish Manager commented that new solicitor dealing with the leases was making good progress.

It was confirmed that all buildings were being leased on a peppercorn rent except for 32 The Circle which was for £4,000 a year.

175 Parish Council Representatives' Report

Cllr J Ballman asked for an update on the Moredon Sports Hub.

The Parish Manager informed members that the Moredon Sports Hub had been running silently in the background. British Cycling had undergone a review which resulted in Sky pulling out and new sponsors joining. New officers were put in place within British Cycling with differing views to previous officers which had stalled the Moredon Sports Hub project.

The Parish Manager explained that he had been meeting with the Swindon Borough Council (SBC) project team for 6 months and they were getting down to final detailed and it looked as though the FA and British Cycling would agree a plan by October 2019 at which point SBC would need to put a bid into both parties to put in the infrastructure.

SBC would need to put in a grant application to the FA and British Cycling by November 2019 and to do this a preferred partner was needed. SBC's preferred partner is the Parish Council.

The Parish Manager confirmed that SBC Lead Officers had been invited to attend the Full Council meeting to be held in September 2019 to go through the business plan, arrangements and provide much needed detailed.

The Parish Manager spoke of the numbers received to date which were not encouraging but didn't take into account local context or include additional services. SBC were revising numbers and paying for a consultant to review reports and present to the Parish Council what arrangements may be best for them. He added that the numbers had previously been based on a Manchester development which hadn't been built.

Cllr K Small declared an interest and left the meeting at 8pm.

The Parish Manager explained that further analysis of the risks of cycling was important as it involved high costs and low incomes.

The Parish Manager recommended that Cllrs visit a Cyclopark in Gravesend to see the facility and meet with a representative to have informal discussions over the management.

Cllr J Ballman agreed that Cllrs should visit the facility in Gravesend and suggested all Cllrs needed to take an interest in the Sports Hub. He went on to say that a decision would not be easy to make and needed to be informed and things being said needed to be challenged.

The Parish Manager stated that if the Parish Council were to declare an interest in the development in January 2020, funding would be confirmed and released, and building would have to commence within 6 months.

Cllr J Rodrigues raised concerns over why SBC would want to pass the management of the facility on to another party. He suggested that the Parish Council should be focusing their attention on the StreetSmart contract.

The Parish Manager agreed in part and suggested the Parish Council needed to look at options and benefits and how they could reduce the required subsidy. He added that given the timeline the Parish Council were in a good place for negotiating and there were a range of things that could be asked for.

Cllr S Exell commented on the strategic importance of the strategic piece of land the development was to be built on. It was said that the Parish Council had a responsibility to protect the land and needed to look at all financial risks. Cllrs were urged to think hard.

Cllr J Ballman commented on the lack of interest from SBC on projects which did not fit their view of what they should be providing.

Cllr R Ballman agreed that SBC had no interest in providing leisure facilities.

Cllr S Thompson commented that he couldn't see what the project had to do with a Parish Council as it would be a regional facility.

The Parish Manager agreed that the Parish Council needed to think about the benefit to

the Parish Council and its parishioners.

The Parish Manager urged Cllrs to look at the accounts for the Cyclopark in Gravesend.

Cllr J Ballman confirmed that an informed decision would need to be made when further information was available.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Council