

CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCE & STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd September 2019 at 7.00pm at John Moulton Hall

Present	Cllr K Small	(Chair)
	Cllr S Exell	(Vice-chair)
	Cllr J Ballman	
	Cllr R Ballman	
	Cllr M Lucas	
	Cllr D Moffatt	
Officers	A Reeves	(Parish Manager)
	A Briggs	(Estates Manager)
	H Morgan	(Deputy Clerk)
	M Szczepanek	(Project Manager)

Public None

176 **Apologies**
Cllr P Baker
Cllr J Rodrigues

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

178 **Minutes of previous meetings**
Cllr S Exell requested an amendment be made to the minutes of the previous meeting.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee meeting held at 6th August 2019 be approved as a correct and accurate record with the amendment requested.

179 **Grant Applications**
Pinehurst Initiative Forum – for improvements to the garden outside Pinetrees
It was confirmed that this item would be covered under agenda item 9.

South Western Ambulance Charity, Swindon North Community Response Group – for a Razier lifting chair and first aid equipment – for people who have had falls to help get them up safely

The Parish Manager summarised that the application, and introduced representatives from the applying organisation, Neil & Sharon.

Neil & Sharon explained that they worked alongside the ambulance service as volunteers who were alerted to local incidents, within 1.5 miles (8 minutes) via smart pagers.

Funds were being raised for a Raizer lifting chair which enabled the lifting of non-injured people from the ground to a standing position.

A demonstration of a lifting chair was given.

Cllr J Ballman asked where the chair held was used. Sharon confirmed that she had been using the chair around Royal Wootton Bassett over a year's trial period and during this time the chair had been used countless times and thanks had been

received from many grateful patients and their families. She added that it makes a real difference to people's quality of life if they can be lifted off the ground quickly after an accident.

The cost of the chair was confirmed as £3,200.85 and the applying group were asking for £1,200.85 towards the cost to purchase a chair for Neil to use around Haydon Wick, Moreton, Rodbourne, Pinehurst and Penhill.

It was confirmed that any funds granted would be received by the South Western Ambulance Service Foundation Trust (SWASFT) and would be ring fenced for use by the group that raised them.

It was confirmed that if a chair was purchased it would be the owned by and the responsibility of the SWASFT, but it would only be used by a specified member of the Swindon North Community Response Group.

Neil stated that the equipment would mostly be used by himself within the parish.

Cllr D Moffatt asked for further information re: where the chair would be used. Neil explained that he was based in Haydon Wick and responded to incidents with 8 minutes of the area.

Cllr K Small spoke of his knowledge and experience of First Response Units. He went on to say that he was unsure of the benefit to be had by the Parish and suggested the chair should be funded by NHS. If the Parish Council were to agree to fund the local taxpayer would be paying for something that should be paid for by national taxes.

Cllr R Ballman was supportive of the application and funding the full £1,200.85 being requested.

Cllr D Moffatt stated he was happy to support an amount pro-rata to the number of parishes the chair would be used in, i.e. a third be offered by the Parish Council and a third be requested from Stratton and Haydon Wick Parish Councils.

Cllr S Exell offered support for funding the full amount requested.

Cllr J Ballman was supportive of funding the full amount requested without being prescriptive about the areas the chair was to be used in.

Cllr M Lucas suggested £400 be granted.

Cllr J Ballman proposed £1,200.85 be granted, seconded by Cllr S Exell.

A vote took place.

3 voted in favour of granting £400, 3 voted in favour of granting £1,200.85.

The Chairs casting vote was in favour of granting £400.

RESOLVED that £400 be granted to SWASFT, Swindon North Community Response Group towards the purchasing of a Razier lifting chair.

The representatives from the applying organisation were informed that they would be welcome to return and apply for further funding if they were unsuccessful in obtaining funding elsewhere.

Swindon North End Bowls Club – for shed and materials for improvements to a path to the equipment store.

The Parish Manager introduced the application and representative from the applying club.

The representative explained that the club had taken on the site building from Swindon Borough Council (SBC) 3 years ago and as the club were still in existence and had funds in the bank they were looking to invest and kick start projects.

The representative referred to a report provided with the application which explained the requirements and needs the were being applied for.

It was confirmed that the club had 49 members in total, 19 of which lived within the parish. The representative informed the Committee that the club would be trying to encourage new members in the future and were already advertising in Pinehurst.

Cllr J Ballman informed members that he had connections with the club over years and a general improvement in conditions since the club took over from SBC could be seen. He added that the club encouraged social inclusion which Cllrs should support

Cllr J Ballman proposed that the total amount being requested, £829.67, be awarded. Cllr M Lucas seconded the proposal.

Cllr K Small queried whether the club was open to 'walk-ins'. The representative explained that the club was not an open/public space and the facility for walk-ins didn't exist, but any newcomers would not be turned away. He went on to talk of 'Club Play' on Fridays evenings where any one is welcome, and kit can be loaned to those wanting to play.

Cllr S Exell asked if, for consistency, any funds awarded would be pro rata based on the number of club members that lived within the parish. Cllr K Small responded that the club itself sat within the parish.

Cllr D Moffatt stated he would be happy to fund the full amount being requested. All agreed.

RESOLVED that £829.67 be awarded to the Swindon North Ends Bowl Club for a shed and materials for improvements to a path to the equipment store.

180 **Projects Update**

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

John Moulton Hall

The Projects Manager confirmed that it would be ensured that heaters and boilers were working properly ready for the winter periods and that the Community Centre Manager and Estates Manager would be asked for input prior to the inspection with Affleck.

Cllr R Ballman commented on the walls being marked by chairs and suggested the Parish Council consider installing a rail or something similar to prevent further damage.

Even Swindon Community Centre, Jennings Street

The Projects Manager referred to the bulge in the flooring and stated that a cooler period was being awaited to see what effect it had on the defect. A sub-contractor would then be contacted to advise on the problem and make good.

Cllr S Exell spoke of the difficulties experienced during the works and the lessons learnt. She stated she would be keen to see an outside party install the auto-doors. The Project Manager stated that it was believed that the doors had already been

manufactured by an outside specialist and the fitting had been agreed. He added that if the doors hadn't been manufactured the Parish Council could bring in a specialist to fit the doors themselves. Cllrs J Ballman and M Lucas agreed.

The Parish Manager agreed with the suggestion that the Parish Council brings someone in themselves to fit the auto-doors if they hadn't been manufactured and suggested the preferred contractor who had previously fitted new doors at Moredon & Rodbourne Cheney Library and Pinetrees Community Centre be contacted.

Cllr K Small commented that he would want to see the new doors installed by 14th October 2019.

The Project Manager confirmed he would contact the sub-contractor to find out the status of the doors.

The problems experienced and possible compensation was discussed. It was said that it was best practise for Parish Councils to not provide bad reviews or references. Cllr K Small suggested informing other Swindon parishes that references would be available if requested.

The Projects Manager comments on the success of projects completed when buildings were empty. Cllr R Ballman agreed with the comments.

The Projects Manager confirmed that 10 light tubes had been replaced in the main hall. 5 were still not working and this was to be looked into. Cllr K Small commented that it should be noted how quickly the tubes burn out as this could indicate an underlying problem elsewhere.

Cllr J Ballman suggested for any future projects the Parish Council should insist buildings be empty and booking moved elsewhere to prevent problems.

The Projects Manager left the meeting at 8.05pm.

181 Ward Allowance Spend Requests

None received.

182 Moredon Sports Hub

The Parish Manager displayed the latest layout and informed the Committee that an update on the context and finances was to be given.

The Parish Manager explained that he had been working with Swindon Borough Council (SBC) and Price Waterhouse Cooper to find a revenue model that could work for the Parish Council.

The initial programme had been difficult and put a stop to SBC being willing to undertake private procurement.

The Parish Manager referred to revised figures and revisions made with SBC. He went to say that the Parish Council needed to think holistically about what they were trying to achieve.

The Parish Manager spoke about Social Mobility, Sports, Crime & Young People and Health and the role of the Parish Council.

It was stated that a subsidy will always exist.

The Parish Manager ran through the current timeline and spoke of 'Hidden Capital Costs' which the Parish Council would need to be aware of.

Cllr D Moffatt commented that it was anticipated that the capital would be trimmed. The Parish Manager agreed and mentioned the capital and revenue elements and impact of reduction of community space.

The Parish Manager spoke of suggested amendments to the proposed staffing structure.

Cllr K Small commented on the possibility of automating systems and suggested cleaning duties could be soaked up within other roles.

The Parish Manager went on to speak of income assumptions

Cllr S Exell expressed some concerns over gender inclusivity.

Cllrs made further comments around youth football, and mixed gender and age football.

Cllr S Exell questioned the need for a croquet area. Cllr D Moffatt responded and explained the use of and thoughts around the croquet area.

Cllr S Exell mentioned the restrictions on non-public usage of croquet and bowls areas and clubs. Cllr K Small agreed and stated he would be keen to see public usage of spaces.

Conversations around usage and public usage of bowls and croquet clubs ensued.

Cllr K Small queried a previous idea of installing a bowls area with the Hub. The Parish Manager responded that a bowls club had signed a 15 year lease to remain at Cheney Manor.

Cllr S Exell referred to the numbers and details provided and suggested the Parish Council should not be considering such a large subsidy for a facility that wouldn't be used exclusively by parishioners.

The Parish Manager explained that the Parish Council did not need to give note of their interest until November 2019 and that he would continue to work with SBC and other parties to produce a detailed business plan etc. for the Parish Council to consider at a future Full Council meeting before making a decision as to whether they are interested. He confirmed that no commitment would be made in November 2019. At the Full Council meeting to be held in September 2019 the Parish Manager would be requesting authority to proceed with investigating to produce a formal proposal for consideration.

Cllr J Ballman mentioned the possibility of obtaining sponsorship as the facility would be provided for the whole of Swindon.

Cllr K Small noted the report and endorsed the Parish Manager to continue with the work and present to Full Council at their meeting September 2019.

183 Mannington Rec – Cricket Strip

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

Cllr D Moffatt stated that he was happy to support the recommendations for the new season.

Cllr S Exell asked for the recommendations to be amended. She spoke of issues with the location of the existing strip and possible issues with boundaries and stated that the Parish Council needed to keep options open for club cricket and be mindful of

clashes with football matches.

Cllr K Small responded that clashes with football hadn't been an issue in the past but agreed that a strip had been moved and could cause problems.

Cllr S Exell suggested a consultation with the group that originally made the request was needed.

It was confirmed that there were cricket pitches available in other areas of Swindon.

The Estates Manager explained the origin of the figures included in the report and confirmed that there was a club wished to use the space being discussed.

Cllr J Ballman went on to speak of club cricket.

Cllr K Small stated that he was happy with the principal, but a decision needed to be made on the consultation required. He added that there was time to get pitches in place for April 2020 and he invited the Estates Manager to present a varied report at a future meeting.

184 Pinetrees Community Centre Garden

The Parish Manager gave an overview of a grant application received for funds to improve the garden area at Pinetrees Community Centre.

The Estates Manager ran through a report circulated, a copy of which can be found as Annex C in the Minute Book.

It was confirmed that the Parish Council owned the garden, as it was part of Pinetrees Community Centre, and a volunteer gardener managed and tended to it.

Cllr R Ballman queried how long the existing pergola had been in place and felt a water feature would be pointless.

It was commented that the Parish Council should be maintaining the garden to a better standard.

The Parish Manager explained that it had previously been agreed that volunteers would continue to maintain the garden with supervision from the Allotments Officer. He added that the garden had never been included in the schedule and to maintain it would come at a cost.

Cllr K Small commented on the logic of receiving a grant application for funding to improve Parish Council land.

If funding was granted it would be coming from incorrect budget line. If the Parish Council wished to improve the area funds should come from a minor capital budget.

Cllr D Moffatt agreed with comments made about the state of the garden and mentioned the disused table tennis area and abandoned space.

Cllr D Moffatt went on to agree with Cllr K Small that a grant application was not needed and suggested the Parish Council be involved in improvements of the garden and installation of a new pergola. He suggested that Parish Manager be given authority to spend funds needed to improve the garden with assistance of volunteers.

Cllr M Lucas agreed with the comments made about the unnecessary grant application. He commented that he was unsure about installing a new pergola and was against a water feature.

Cllr J Ballman spoke about the garden and its management.

Cllr K Small suggested £900 be allocated from the minor capital works budget to

upgrade the garden area at Pinetrees Community Centre under the direction of the Estates Manager and/or Parish Manager and that volunteers should be encouraged to maintain the garden.
All agreed.

RESOLVED that £900 be allocated from the minor capital works budget to upgrade the garden area at Pinetrees Community Centre under the direction of Parish Officers and that volunteers should be encouraged to maintain the garden.

185 **Southbrook Rec**

The Estates Manager explained that he was seeking authority to spend funds on having a deep clean completed in the changing areas at the Southbrook Rec.
All agreed.

RESOLVED that the changing areas at Southbrook Recreation Ground be deep cleaned.

The meeting closed at 9.28pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Finance & Staffing Committee