

CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH PARISH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 19th February 2020 at 7.00pm at 32 The Circle

Present Cllr J Ballman (Vice-Chair)
Cllr R Ballman
Cllr P Exell
Cllr S Henderson
Cllr M Lucas
Cllr D Patey
Cllr J Rodrigues
Cllr K Small
Cllr T Smith
Cllr S Thompson
Cllr J Yeowell

Officers Andy Reeves (Parish Clerk)
Hannah Morgan (Deputy Clerk)
Andrew Briggs (Estates Manager)
Gladys Barr (Grants Manager)

Public 2 members of the public and 1 member of press present.

Public Session 1 member of the public, Josie Lewis (JL), referred to the Minute of the Public Session held at the Full Council meeting held on 15th January 2020 and suggested the Minute should be altered.
Cllr S Thompson confirmed that none of the Holly Bushes referred to in the Minute concerned were missing.

422 **Apologies**
Cllr S Exell
Cllr D Montaut

Cllr J Ballman gave best wishes to both absent members on behalf of the Council.

Cllr J Ballman explained that the public and press would be asked to leave for agenda items 8a, 8b and 9 due to their confidential nature and staffing matters involved.

The Parish Clerk informed the Council that Cllr S Exell would be joining the meeting via telephone to enable her to listen in to the meeting proceedings, but she would not be able to vote or speak to the meeting.

423 **Declarations of Interest & Applications for Dispensation**
None.

Cllr J Ballman asked that Cllrs make any declarations of interest at the time should they arise during the meeting.

Cllr S Exell joined the meeting via telephone.

Cllr K Small declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 9 as he is an employee of Wiltshire Football Association.

424 **Parish Council PCC Precept Consultation**
Cllr J Ballman welcomed and introduced the PCC, Angus Macpherson (AM).

AM presented further information and background information around the PCC Precept Consultation which took place in January & February 2020 and the resulting increase of 83p per month for a Band E property.

AM explained that, due to the general election held in December 2019, at the time of the PCC Precept Consultation the amount of funding to be provided by the government was unknown. For this reason, the general public were asked if there would be happy with an increase of £1 per month for policing, happy to pay more than £1 for an enhanced service or prefer to pay less than £1 for a reduced service.

84% of the consultation responses received were in favour of paying £1 or more per month for policing.

AM gave details of the number of police officers recruited in the 2019/20 financial year and the timeline for training new officers. He went on to explain how officers recruited in the future will be trained under a new regime, similar to modern day apprenticeships, which would result in officers obtaining a degree in policing upon completion of 3 years training.

AM went on to speak of the loss of youth and other services which impacted on the need for policing.

The Council were informed that the set-up of the Cyber Crime Unit promised previously was in progress but would take time as the skill set of staff needed to be built up.

It was confirmed that Community Policing Teams were being rebuilt and Community Support Officers (PCSOs) would remain and would focus on Communities and preventing crime.

Cllr S Henderson mentioned the gap between officers leaving and the time it took to train new officers. It was mentioned that policing was stressful and led to staff retention issues. AM agreed with the comments made.

It was confirmed that apprentices had the power to arrest.

AM encouraged members present to question upcoming candidates for the Commissioner Role.

The Parish Clerk spoke of the relationship with PCSOs which worked on a tactical level. He mentioned a problem with the retention and movement of PCSOs into other areas. It was asked if there was a view to recruit PCSOs to move on to become officers. AM confirmed that PCSOs were not recruited for the purpose of becoming officers and this was down to personal preferences.

AM asked how Parish Councils kept in touch with and informed by the Police. The Parish Clerk responded and spoke of the Tactical Working Group who focused on local issues and how organisations can work together to resolve them, rather than looking at statistics.

AM left the meeting at 7.45pm.

425 Minutes of the previous meetings

Cllr K Small moved that the Minutes of the meeting held 15 January 2020 be approved as a true and accurate record, seconded by Cllr J Rodrigues. All agreed.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 15 January 2020 be approved as a correct record.

Cllr K Small moved that the Minutes of the meeting held 30 January 2020 be approved as a true and accurate record, seconded by Cllr J Rodrigues. All agreed.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 30 January 2020 be approved as a correct record.

426 **Finance & Staffing Committee**

Cllr J Rodrigues moved that the Minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee meeting held 30 January 2020 be approved as a true and accurate record, seconded by Cllr M Lucas. All agreed.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee meeting held on 30 January 2020 be approved as a correct record.

427 **Planning & Environment Committee**

Cllr D Patey moved that the Minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held 5 February 2020 be approved as a true and accurate record, seconded by Cllr J Yeowell. All agreed.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 30 January 2020 be approved as a correct record.

428 **Leisure & Amenities Committee**

Cllr K Small spoke of the Committee structure which had been in place since the Parish Council was created. It was said that it may be advantageous to look at past experiences and amendments needed.

Cllr K Small commented on the number of items included on the agenda for the Leisure & Amenities Committee and the general finance tasks that are presented to the Finance & Staffing Committee.

Cllr M Lucas agreed with the comments made and commented on the length of the Leisure & Amenities meetings.

Cllr J Ballman noted the comments made by Cllrs K Small & M Lucas.

Cllr J Rodrigues proposed that the Minutes of the Leisure & Amenities Committee meeting held 5 February 2020 be approved as a true and accurate record. All agreed.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Leisure & Amenities Committee meeting held on 5 February 2020 be approved as a correct record.

429 **Exclusion of Public and Press**

RESOLVED that in accordance with Standing Order 3 (d) that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted that the public and press be excluded, and they be instructed to withdraw from the meeting.

430 **32 The Circle – the next phase**

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

Cllr S Thompson commented on access for hiring the facility out.

The Parish Clerk gave details of an amendment to the report present and the recommendation. He referred to the funding provided to the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) in the current financial year and the increased usage.

Members were reminded that funding was provided to CAB on the basis that they worked with the Parish Councils Grants Manager to obtain funding to continue to provide a service in the future.

The Parish Clerk stated that he had been advised that CAB wished to ask the Parish Council for funding for 2020/21.

CAB were currently unsure whether any funding would be received from Thames Water.

Members were informed that CAB currently ran on a Monday & Wednesday morning and that both sessions were oversubscribed.

Cllrs were asked to consider whether funding should be provided by the Parish Council. It was confirmed that no further funding had been budgeted for in the 2020/21 budget.

It was suggested that a community space be created at 32 The Circle which CAB could use going forward and would be cheaper than renting the office space currently occupied within Pinetrees Community Centre.

If vacated, the office space currently rented by CAB could become the Parish Office space which could be integrated with the reception area at Pinetrees Community Centre and would keep Officers within Pinetrees Community Centre working alongside other staff retained at Pinetrees Community Centre.

Cllr J Ballman thanked the Parish Clerk for the update and summary provided. He commented that if the office space upstairs at Pinetrees Community Centre, currently utilised by the Parish Council, could be rented out the proposed project could pay for itself. It was added that CAB were once based in Pinehurst People Centre and had once been located in a cabin on Linden Avenue.

The level of privacy and security needed by CAB for its service users could be provided at 32 The Circle and would mean that the CAB would be retained in Pinehurst.

The Estates Manager commented that a meeting room space could still be made available to hire at 32 The Circle if CAB were located to the premises.

Cllr D Patey queried whether a private area would be available for the Parish Council if they were relocated to the current CAB office space. The Parish Clerk responded that one of the existing interview areas within the CAB space could be retained for confidential conversations. Further comments on the benefits of integrating the office space with the reception area were made.

Cllr K Small confirmed that he would not be willing to make any decisions without being provided figures for both refurbishes; of 32 The Circle and creation of a new Parish Council office space. He agreed that the current location of the Parish Council office was not ideal and would be content with the principle of moving the Parish Office downstairs at Pinetrees Community Centre as this would be more accessible to the public.

Cllr K Small stated that he would not be happy with CAB to be based at 32 The Circle, as this wouldn't achieve what was originally wanted for the building.

Cllr K Small agreed with the earlier comments made by Cllr S Thompson re: access and

suggested 2 office spaces are made at 32 The Circle and the existing corridor retained.

Cllr K Small voiced concerns that CAB were asking for funding again when this hadn't been budgeted for. It was added that it was made clear previously that funding from the Parish Council would not be ongoing. Cllr K Small confirmed that he was not opposed to the work of CAB or its importance, but the Parish Council had not been made aware and discussions had not taken place recently re: future funding.

Cllr K Small concluded that further debate was needed.

Cllr J Ballman commented that CAB only opened for 4 hours each week so a space at 32 The Circle would not be in constant use but would mean the organisation would have a permanent address.

Cllr R Ballman referred to a conversation had with the Deputy Clerk re: the dividing the staff between 2 buildings. She stated a preference for creating a Parish Office within the space currently used by CAB at Pinetrees Community Centre. It was added that the space currently rented was not utilised properly by CAB.

It was confirmed that if the same amount of funding was to be provided to CAB, they would have been in receipt of £30,000 in total from the Parish Council. Cllr J Ballman commented that £10,000 of funding had been returned to the Parish Council through rental costs for the office space at Pinetrees Community Centre.

The Parish Clerk reiterated that desire and need of CAB for private space to allow difficult conversations to be had with clients. It was believed that the Parish Council could make somewhere suitable and downsize CAB.

Cllr R Ballman suggested conversations should be had with CAB to find out what their need is. Cllr J Rodrigues agreed and added that refurbishing the existing CAB office for the Parish Council made sense and the solution shouldn't be compromised for CAB. Cllr J Rodrigues went on to ask why CAB required funding again when they existed approx. 2 miles away. It was suggested that a space be provided but no further funding. He added that CAB needed protecting as they provided a good social service, but they could continue to exist outside of the Parish and should not become a Council responsibility.

Cllr P Exell agreed that conversations need to be had with CAB but commented that there was not a need for the Parish Council to embed CAB and any refurbishment should not be made around CAB.

Cllr J Ballman commented on the history of CAB and existence within Pinehurst.

The Grants Manager comments that the Parish Council should be focusing on the beneficiaries of CAB and not the organisation. Cllr S Henderson agreed and commented that the Parish Council should want to provide access to such a service

Cllr K Small reiterated that he agreed with keeping Parish staff together and would be happy to see the Parish Council based in the bottom office of Pinetrees Community Centres. He added that there was an opportunity for a small meeting room to be created at 32 The Circle which could be used by an organisation with a need for a confidential area.

The Parish Clerk suggested the item be deferred to the Finance & Staffing Committee to be discussed once conversations had been had with CAB. Cllrs J Ballman & K Small agreed.

Cllr K Small referred to the drawings provided of proposed ramps to be installed. The Estates Manager confirmed that 2 of the plans were almost identical.

Cllr J Ballman queried a space under a proposed ramp. Cllr K Small suggested the space be boarded up.

The Parish Clerk displayed images of the options being discussed.

Cllr S Henderson queried the lifespan of the ramps being discussed and ongoing maintenance required. The Estates Manager confirmed that all ramps had long warranties and very little maintenance would be required.

It was confirmed that any gates would be self-closing and there would be no barriers in place for wheelchair access.

The Parish Clerk confirmed that funding from Swindon Borough Council (SBC) had already been agreed.

Cllr S Henderson asked if a Disability Impact Assessment (DIA) would be completed at 32 The Circle. The Parish Clerk responded that a DIA would be positive for 32 The Circle. He added that the DDA Act came in some time ago and SBC should've acted in previous years. The Parish Clerk was confident that the Parish Council would be compliant in all projects.

Cllr K Small voiced a personal preference for option 2.

It was confirmed that the existing steps would remain if option 2 was installed.

Cllr K Small stated that he would not be happy for the existing steps to remain and would prefer ATS option 3.

Cllr K Small proposed that the Parish Council proceed with installing a ramp as per ATS option 3 presented, seconded by M Lucas. All agreed.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council proceed with the installation of a ramp at 32 The Circle as per About Time Solutions quote for option 3 for a modular ramp for £14,100 + VAT.

431 **32 The Circle – Renaming**

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

Cllr R Ballman commented that the building was originally named The Labour Hall.

Cllr S Thompson retaining the name '32 The Circle' and suggested if the name was changed to the Pinehurst Reading Room, visitors would still need to be directed to a numbered address.

Cllr J Rodrigues reminded Cllrs to be mindful that the Parish Council wanted to hire out the space so the name would need to be appealing. He added that his preferred choice would be for the space to be renamed Parish Council Chambers of Des Moffatt Room in memorial.

Cllr K Small stated that the name needed to reflect a building of status. He suggested that naming something in the Western Ward would be preferred for a memorial for Cllr Des Moffatt. He expressed a keenness on keeping history and using a previous name; either the Pinehurst Common Room or Reading Room.

Cllr M Lucas agreed that he would prefer to see a memorial for the late Des Moffatt in the Western Ward and would be happy for the building to be referred to by an old name.

Cllr D Patey confirmed that he would be happy for the number 32 to be removed as he felt it wasn't needed.

Cllr P Exell suggested that, although the building was in Pinehurst; it wasn't a good idea to link the building to one area within the Parish. Cllr K Small agreed and suggested renaming the building The Reading Rooms.

Cllr K Small moved that 32 The Circle be renamed 'Central Swindon North Parish Council Reading Rooms, The Circle', seconded by Cllr R Ballman. All agreed.

RESOLVED that 32 The Circle be renamed Central Swindon North Parish Council Reading Rooms, The Circle.

Cllr J Ballman referred to the comments made re: a memorial to Cllr D Moffatt and suggested the Western Community Centre be renamed. He proposed that discussions be opened with Western Community Centre and the family of Cllr D Moffatt re: renaming Western Community Centre after Cllr D Moffatt, seconded by Cllr M Lucas. All agreed.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council open discussions with Western Community Centre and Cllr D Moffatt re: renaming Western Community Centre in memory of Des Moffatt.

Cllr J Yeowell mentioned that he had discussions with the current manager of Western Community Centre who had ideas re: creating a memorial at Western Community Centre.

432 Football Foundation & FA Pitch Improvement Grant

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

Cllr J Rodrigues left the meeting at 8.56pm.

Cllr J Ballman queried the reduction in the need to maintain the pitches following an initial investment.

It was confirmed that the only 1 pitch would be included at the Southbrook Recreation Ground as the other is used exclusively by an American Football Team.

Cllr K Small referred to the agreed budget for 2020/21 and the amounts agreed to invest in the next and future financial years. He confirmed that this was a front loading project.

The Estates Manager confirmed that the grass cutting, and line marking couldn't be included in the Pitch Improvement Grant.

Cllr M Lucas proposed the recommendation of the report, seconded by Cllr T Smith. All agreed.

RESOLVED to allow the Estates Manager to work with the Saturday & Sunday League secretaries and support their application for FA & Football Foundation funding for grass pitch improvements.

433 Even Swindon Flooring

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

The matters raised in the report were discussed.

Cllr K Small suggested 50% of the outstanding balance be offered on the basis that the matter is dropped and the bill be considered as settled. Cllr J Ballman agreed with the proposal.

Cllr K Small moved that 50% of the outstanding balance be offered on the basis that the matter is dropped and the bill be considered as settled, seconded by Cllr R Ballman. All agreed.

RESOLVED that 50% of the outstanding balance be offered on the basis that the matter is dropped and the bill be considered as settled.

434 Moredon Sports Hub

The Parish Clerk displayed a spreadsheet and explained that the figures kept changing.

It was confirmed that the sinking fund would be real money which would have to be put aside for future repairs.

Cllr K Small queried the suggested closing of the facility at 7pm on Sundays and informed Members that Sunday games are played in the evening.

The Parish Clerk was urged to obtain as much space as possible. Cllr J Ballman referred to the space provided for a pavilion and stated that work needed to be done to see this increased. It was asked if the Parish Council could find money for a bigger build. Cllr K Small stated that funds available would need to be looked into for an expansion. Cllrs agreed that money could be borrowed to extend the pavilion.

The Parish Clerk displayed the current design of the Hub and spoke of the legalities of borrowing against property which were being discussed currently.

Cllr P Exell voiced concerns over the large commitment which would need to be decided upon in March 2020 and the large proportion of the precept to be committed to in the long term.

The Parish Clerk agreed and reminded Cllrs to ensure that they would get what they wanted out of the Hub for the Parish, not for the elite sport users. He added that the Parish Council needed to be clear on its objectives and whether the Hub would achieve these.

It was confirmed that funding would be available for an early years provision but not for property or buildings.

Cllr R Ballman commented on the suggested closing times and suggested these were too early for the firing of facilities for functions.

Cllr D Patey voiced concerns over the suggested commitment but also over other actions Swindon Borough Council could take.

The meeting closed at 10.00pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Vice-chair of the Council