

CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held virtually via Zoom on 3rd June 2020 at 7.00pm

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 K Small

Cllr T Smith

Cllr S Thompson

Cllr J Yeowell

Officers	Andy Reeves	(Parish Clerk)
	Hannah Morgan	(Deputy Clerk)
	Andrew Briggs	(Estates Manager)
	Aaron Webb	(Youth Worker)
	Aaron Cripps	(Libraries Manager)
	Hakan Armagan	(Allotments Officer)

Public None

1 Election of Chair for 2020/21

Self Nominations for the role of Chair were received from Cllrs J Ballman and S Henderson.

An online poll vote took place.

46% voted in favour of Cllr J Ballman, 54% voted in favour of Cllr S Henderson.

RESOLVED that Cllr S Henderson be elected Chair for the 2020/21 municipal year.

2 Election of Vice-Chair for 2020/21

Self-Nominations for the role of Vice-chair were received from Cllrs S Exell, M Lucas, and S Thompson.

Cllr S Thompson stated that he wished to withdraw his nomination.

Cllr J Ballman nominated himself for the role.

An online poll vote took place.

46% voted in favour of Cllr J Ballman, 46% voted in favour of Cllr S Exell and 8% voted in favour of Cllr M Lucas.

The Parish Clerk explained that in the event of a tied vote the Chair of the Council had the casting vote. This was queried by Cllr K Small and confirmed by the Parish Clerk

Cllr S Henderson selected Cllr S Exell as Vice-chair.

RESOLVED that Cllr S Exell be elected Vice-chair for the 2020/21 municipal year.

At agenda item 24 it was agreed that a second vote should take place between Cllrs J

Ballman and S Exell.

Cllr J Ballman stated that he wished to withdraw his nomination for the role of Vice-chair.

RESOLVED that Cllr S Exell be elected Vice-chair for the 2020/21 municipal year.

3 Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The Parish Clerk explained that the Declaration of Acceptance of Office would be signed once the existing lockdown had eased further and Officers and Cllrs were able to meet in person.

4 Apologies

Cllr J Rodrigues

5 Declarations of Interest & Applications for Dispensation

6 Terms of Reference and Delegation Scheme

A draft Terms of Reference and Delegation Scheme had been circulated, a copy of which can be found as Annex A in the Minute Book.

The Parish Clerk explained that there were some highlighted areas within the document which had been changed by the Deputy Clerk.

The Deputy Clerk explained that the majority of the text highlighted within the document had been updated so it related to the new municipal year and was relevant to the newly agreed Committee Structure

Cllr J Ballman referred to Pg. 4 of the draft document and queried the wording of the first Term of Reference (ToR) for the Finance & General Purpose Committee. Cllr J Ballman suggested that the reference should indicate that the Committee advises on financial aspects of the Council rather than deals with all.

Cllr J Ballman suggested the wording of the ToR being queried be changed to 'To monitor, advise and make recommendations on all financial aspects of the Council'.

Cllr D Montaut agreed with the point made by Cllr J Ballman and commented that the Finance & General Purpose Committee didn't have the authority to spend on behalf of Full Council. He added that he felt that the amount the Committee were able to spend under delegated authority was too high and needed to be reviewed.

Cllr K Small commented that a sum of money committees could spend had always existed, although amounts had changed. He added that the committees had operated in this way effectively previously.

It was said that how effective committees had worked previously was a matter of opinion.

Cllr S Henderson informed Council that the principal, mechanism, and spending limits for each Committee had already been discussed and agreed.

The process of how Committees can spend up to their delegated limits and make recommendations for spend above those limits were discussed.

Cllr S Exell commented that from previous discussions held there was a duty for Cllrs to think more strategically when deciding which projects to approve. It was added that the social and recreational needs of the parish needed to be thought about and balanced.

Cllrs M Lucas and D Patey agreed that the wording of the first ToR for the Finance & General Purpose Committee should be amended.

Cllr K Small proposed the wording of the ToR being discussed be amended to read 'To consider all financial aspects of the council and to make decisions within its delegated powers'. Seconded by Cllr D Patey.

Cllr D Montaut stated that the ground rules for the Parish Council were clear within the constitution.

The Parish Clerk gave some context to the suggested amendment to the ToR. It was explained that there were two areas of control; the budget and Full Council.

The proposed wording for the ToR was repeated. All agreed that the wording of the ToR should be amended as suggested.

RESOLVED that the first Term of Reference for the Finance & General Purpose Committee be amended to 'To consider all financial aspects of the council and to make decisions within its delegated powers'.

7 Appointment of Committees 2020/21

The Parish Clerk confirmed that the new Committee Structure previously agreed was to be acknowledged. He went on to refer to the membership numbers as per the 2020/21 Self Nomination Matrix circulated and noted concerns over the low membership of the Environment & Planning Committee.

Cllr S Thomson nominated himself to sit on the Environment & Planning Committee.

Cllr P Exell nominated himself to sit on the Finance & General Purpose Committee.

Cllr M Lucas commented on the lack of leads of the Working Groups.

8 Election of Chair and Vice-Chair of Finance & General Purpose Committee

Chair

Nomination received for Cllr K Small.

Cllr K Small was proposed and seconded.

RESOLVED that Cllr K Small be elected Chair of the Finance & General Purpose Committee for the 2020/21 municipal year.

Vice-chair

Nomination received for Cllr S Exell.

Cllr S Exell commented that it would be appropriate for another member to nominate themselves for the role of Vice-chair of the Finance & General Purpose Committee rather than the Vice-chair of the Council.

Cllr M Lucas nominated himself for the role Vice-chair. Cllr S Exell withdrew her nomination.

Cllr M Lucas was proposed and seconded.

RESOLVED that Cllr M Lucas be elected Vice-chair of the Finance & General Purpose Committee for the 2020/21 municipal year.

9 Election of Chair and Vice-Chair of Environment & Planning Committee

Chair

Nomination received for Cllr P Exell.

Cllr P Exell was proposed and seconded.

RESOLVED that Cllr P Exell be elected Chair of Environment & Planning Committee for the 2020/21 municipal year.

Vice-chair

Nomination received for Cllr J D Patey.

Cllr D Patey was proposed and seconded.

RESOLVED that Cllr D Patey be elected Vice-chair of Environment & Planning Committee for the 2020/21 municipal year.

10 Election of Chair and Vice-chair of Community Wellbeing Committee

Chair

Nominations received for Cllrs S Exell and S Henderson.

Cllr S Henderson withdrew his nomination.

Cllr S Exell stated that she would be happy to withdraw her nomination if another member wanted to nominate themselves for the role. No other nominations were received.

Cllr S Exell was proposed and seconded.

RESOLVED that Cllr S Exell be elected Chair of Environment & Planning Committee for the 2020/21 municipal year.

Vice-chair

Nominations received for Cllrs S Henderson and Cllr J Yeowell.

Cllr S Henderson withdrew his nomination.

Cllr J Yeowell was proposed and seconded.

RESOLVED that Cllr J Yeowell be elected Vice-chair of Community Wellbeing Committee for the 2020/21 municipal year.

11 Election of Chair and Vice-chair of Leisure & Recreation Committee

Chair

Nominations received for Cllr M Lucas and Cllr S Thompson.

A poll vote took place.

75% voted in favour of Cllr M Lucas, 25% voted in favour of Cllr S Thompson

RESOLVED that Cllr M Lucas be elected Chair of Leisure & Recreation Committee for the 2020/21 municipal year.

Vice-chair

No nominations were received.

Cllr S Thompson nominated himself for the role of Vice-chair.

Cllr S Thompson was proposed and seconded.

RESOLVED that Cllr S Thompson be elected Vice-chair of Leisure & Recreation Committee for the 2020/21 municipal year.

12 Appointment of Lead Members for the CSNL<

The Parish Clerk stated that membership of the Libraries & Leisure Trust had already been decided and was written into the constitution of the Trust.

13 Appointment of Lead Membership for Working Parties

Nominations received for Working Parties Lead were as follows:

Allotments – Cllr M Lucas

Neighbourhood – Cllr S Thompson

Libraries – None, the Parish Clerk suggested this be revisited in the future.

Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr P Exell

Internal Audit and Control – pre-determined as per the agreed Committee Structure

CIL/S106 – Cllr J Ballman

RESOLVED that Cllrs M Lucas, S Thompson, P Exell and J Ballman become the leads of the Allotments, Neighbourhood, Neighbourhood Plan and CIL/S106 Working Parties, respectively.

14 Confirm membership of Finance & General Purpose Committee

The Parish Clerk suggested membership as per the Matrix be agreed. All agreed.

RESOLVED that Cllr P Baker, J Ballman, R Ballman, P Exell and S Exell serve on the Finance and General Purpose Committee in the 2020/21 municipal year.

15 Confirm membership of Environment & Planning Committee

The Parish Clerk suggested membership as per the Matrix be agreed. All agreed.

RESOLVED that Cllrs P Baker, S Thompson, and J Yeowell serve on the Environment & Planning Committee in the 2020/21 municipal year.

16 Confirm membership of Community Wellbeing Committee

The Parish Clerk suggested membership as per the Matrix be agreed. All agreed.

RESOLVED that Cllrs J Ballman, R Ballman, P Exell and D Patey serve on the Community Wellbeing Committee in the 2020/21 municipal year.

17 Confirm membership of Leisure & Recreation Committee

The Parish Clerk suggested membership as per the Matrix be agreed. All agreed.

RESOLVED that Cllrs P Baker, J Ballman, R Ballman, D Patey and J Yeowell serve on the Leisure & Recreation Committee in the 2020/21 municipal year.

18 Confirm membership for Working Parties

The Parish Clerk suggested membership as per the Matrix be agreed. All agreed.

RESOLVED that

- 1) Cllr J Yeowell sits on the Allotments Working Party
- 2) Cllrs P Baker and J Yeowell sit on the Neighbourhood Working Party
- 3) Cllrs J Ballman, S Henderson and J Yeowell sit on the Libraries

Working Party

19 Membership of Other Bodies

Cllrs John Ballman, R Ballman, S Exell and K Small confirmed that they were Swindon Borough Cllrs.

Cllrs J Ballman and S Thompson stated that they were members of the Hreod Burna Urban Forest.

Cllr S Exell informed members that she was a Parish Cllrs for West Swindon.

20 Representatives on Outside Bodies

It was confirmed that Cllrs J Ballman, S Henderson and J Yeowell sat on the Libraries and Leisure Trust.

21 Councillor Allowances

The Parish Clerk shared his screen and explained that a debate on Councillors remuneration had been held previously.

Cllr K Small commented that he had been under the impression that it had been decided at a budget meeting that the allowances would be amended to £1,000 per annum for Cllrs and £2,000 for the Chair. He added that these increases had been budgeted for and it had been agreed that the final figures were to be decided upon by the newly elected Council. Cllr M Lucas stated that Cllrs K Smalls recollection was correct.

Cllr S Henderson asked whether Cllrs were able to refuse payments of an allowance.

Cllrs M Lucas proposed Cllrs allowance increase to £1,000 and the Chairs to £2,000, seconded by Cllr J Ballman.

A vote took place.

10 voted in favour of the increase, 3 voted against.

RESOLVED that Cllrs Allowances increase to £1,000 and the allowance for the Chair increases to £2,000.

Cllrs were advised to contact the Deputy Clerk with any personal matters regarding the Cllrs Allowance payments.

22 General Power of Competence

RESOLVED that the General Power of Competence be adopted for the 2020/21 municipal year.

23 Appointment of Internal Auditor

The Parish Clerk confirmed that Lightatouch would be completing the audit of the 2019/20 AGAR remotely and they would report to the newly created Internal Audit & Control Working Party in future.

24 Review of Standing Orders

The draft Standing orders were circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which can be found as Annex B in the Minute Book.

The Parish Clerk explained that the Standing Order were unchanged and were the main principle guidance document adopted in 2017.

Cllr S Thompson moved that all future ballots could not be completed in secret.

Cllr J Ballman commented on the lack of public at the meeting. Cllr K Small responded that the meeting was open, and the public were able to attend by contacting the Deputy Clerk in advance. He added that government votes were recorded, and the election of the speaker was completed by secret ballot, Wiltshire Council held secret votes for their Chair and Vice-chair.

Cllr K Small stated that he was happy for secret votes to take place and the processes used earlier in the meeting worked well.

Cllr M Lucas made a point of order; that the Standing Orders had not been followed when the vote for the Vice-chair had taken place.

The Parish Clerk confirmed the process for publishing agendas and inviting the public.

Cllr S Exell commented that if the vote on the Vice-chair of the Council was to be reviewed then all subsequent votes and roles may need to be reviewed.

Cllr S Henderson commented that earlier actions had been taken in good faith and had been transparent.

Cllr K Small informed members that he was not comfortable with the current position of Vice-chair and he believed a second ballot between Cllrs J Ballman and S Exell should take place, as per the Standing Orders.

Cllr S Thompson reiterated his earlier suggestion for amending the Standing Orders so secret ballots could not take place in the future. Cllr S Henderson responded with reasons why some individuals may wish to vote in secret.

Cllr P Exell commented that he didn't believe the Standing Orders should be so prescriptive to suggest only open public ballots could take place.

Cllr S Thompson confirmed that he was moving that the Standing Orders be amended so secret ballots cannot be taken in future. This movement was seconded by Cllr J Ballman.

The Parish Clerk suggested that Standing Orders could state that ballots are to be open unless a secret ballot is specifically requested.

Cllr R Ballman re-joined the meeting.

Cllr S Thompson moved that the Standing Orders be amended to state that all votes shall be taken by open ballot, seconded by Cllr J Ballman.

A vote took place. The majority voted against the proposed amendment.

RESOLVED that the draft Standing Orders be adopted as presented.

25 **Review of Financial Controls**

The draft Financial Regulations were circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which can be found as Annex C in the Minute Book

RESOLVED that the draft Financial Regulations be adopted.

26 **Freedom of Information**

The Parish Clerk informed Council that 6 requests had been received in the previous

year.

27 Review of Property and Assets

The Deputy Clerk shared the updated Asset Register on screen.

The Assets Register was noted.

28 Review of Insurance

The Parish Clerk confirmed that a meeting had been held with WPS, the Parishes insurance provider, and the schedule had been revised and presented previously.

29 Review of Risk Assessment

The Deputy Clerk share the Risk Assessment on screen and confirmed it had not been amended.

The Risk Assessment was noted.

30 Review of other Policies

The Parish Clerk explained that all policies remained the same except for a newly created Reserves Policy which had been shared prior to the meeting, a copy of which can be found as Annex D in the Minute Book.

Cllr K Small confirmed that he was content with the Reserves Policy.

Cllr M Lucas suggested the reserves held by the Council be looked and reduced.
Cllr J Ballman agreed.

Cllr J Ballman spoke of the lower level of reserves held by larger councils. It was asked why a Reserves Policy had not been put in place previously.

Cllr J Ballman confirmed that he agreed with the policy and suggested members be given the opportunity to review the policy and think about how the reserves held could be spent.

Cllr K Small explained how the amount of the reserves was set in the budget and gave reasons what they had been higher than expected in previous years.

Cllr S Henderson suggested the draft policy be approved and adopted and the situation regarding the reserves held be looked at in more detail in September 2020.

Cllr S Thompson left the meeting at 9.07pm.

All agreed with Cllr S Hendersons suggestion.

RESOLVED that the draft Reserves Policy be approved and adopted.

The meeting closed at 9.09pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Council