

CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH PARISH COUNCIL

EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held virtually via Zoom on 26th August 2020 at 7.00pm

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

Officers Andy Reeves (Parish Clerk)
Andrew Briggs (Estates Manager)
Aaron Webb (Youth Worker)
Aaron Cripps (Libraries Manager)
Hannah Morgan (Minutes)

Public None

147 **Apologies**
None

148 **Declarations of Interest & Applications for Dispensation**
Cllrs J Ballman declared a non-pecuniary interest in Hreod Burna Urban Forest.

149 **Approve 2019/20 Year End AGAR**
The 2019/20 AGAR was shared on screen.

Governance Statement

The Parish Clerk explained that the deadline for the submission of the 2019/20 AGAR had been extended due to Covid-19. It was said that the end of the financial year had been challenging but the Internal Audit had been completed and the auditors were satisfied.

The Parish Clerk ran through the Governance Statement; explained its purpose and went through the declarations.

Cllr S Henderson proposed that the Governance Statement be approved, seconded by Cllr K Small. All agreed.

RESOLVED that the 2019/20 Governance Statement be approved.

Account Statement

The Parish Clerk ran through the Accounting Statement and provided members with commentary and explanations for the figures.

It was confirmed that the figures containing within the Accounting Statement had been provided by the contracted Chartered Accountant and had been approved by Internal Audit.

The Parish Clerk explained that the Internal Audit Working Group would be tasked with reviewing the detailed information within the internal audit report and would implement

any recommendations.

Cllr S Henderson proposed that the Accounting Statement be approved, seconded by Cllr K Small. All agreed.

RESOLVED that the 2019/20 Accounting Statement be approved.

The Parish Clerk gave thanks to the contracted Chartered Accountant for the work completed.

150 **Committee Time Critical Issues**

The Parish Chair explained that he wished to achieve a timely flow of Minutes and info to be presented to Cllrs ahead of meetings. Ideally all would have at least 3 days to review any reports.

It was confirmed that the Parish Team Up calendar had been updated with all Committee and Council meeting dates.

The current timetable for issuing agendas was confirmed.

A discussion around the provision of hard copies of meeting agendas and relevant papers took place.

Cllr J Ballman spoke of the possibility of utilising the Mod Gov platform.

Cllr K Small reminded members that it had been agreed previously that the cost of providing tablets for Cllrs would be looked into. It was suggested that this be progressed once a form of normality had resumed.

Cllr S Henderson suggested the needs of Cllrs, in context of the discussions had, be confirmed in the near future. All agreed.

151 **Member Officer Protocol**

Cllr S Henderson explained that it was felt that very little guidance was available on the subject of Member Officer Protocol and the culture of the Council and such guidance could be very useful to new Cllrs.

The Parish Clerk explained that the proposed protocol was based on principals in place at Swindon Borough Council (SBC) and was devised to ensure impartiality between Officers and Members and could prevent Officers from becoming political.

It was said that the protocol would ensure relationships wouldn't become too familiar and would underline the high level principals and roles and what is to be expected from Officers and Members and what action should be taken if things go wrong.

Cllr S Henderson voiced concerns over the history of the Parish Council and Cllrs who hadn't remained in post and those that weren't engaged.

Cllr J Ballman spoke of a guidance document provided by SBC and queried why additional guidance was needed.

Cllr S Henderson explained that he wished to develop a culture within the Parish Council and didn't not want to implement anything which detracted or took anything away from the SBC guidance.

Cllr K Small agreed with comments made by Cllr J Ballman and agreed that there was a

need for greater engagement from less experienced members which the proposed protocol could help to achieve. He added that he felt the proposed protocol was restrictive.

Cllr P Exell commented that the SBC document referred to was a code of conduct whereas the protocol would be an internal document with different focusses.

Cllr S Exell shared her experience of sitting on the SBC Standards Committee where a Member/Officer protocol was often requested.

Cllr D Patey stated that if the SBC document didn't specifically govern officer/member interactions, he would be supportive of the suggested protocol.

Cllr S Henderson commented that the protocol was meant as an aid, not legislation.

Cllr M Lucas suggested that the proposed protocol be compared with the SBC Code of Conduct to identify the differences.

Cllr S Exell comments that the protocol and Code of Conduct were two separate documents. The protocol was needed to manage any issues which may arise between members and officer and safeguarded both parties.

The Parish Clerk comments that the Code of Conduct focussed on the relationship between Cllrs and electorate whereas the protocol was designed to avoid conflicts and need for any disciplinaries.

Cllrs agreed that it was a good idea to make sure all members and officers had as much support as possible.

Cllr P Exell moved that the proposed protocol be moved forward as an aid to new Cllrs. Seconded by Cllr D Patey.

A vote took place. 6 voted in favour of the proposal, 1 against, 1 abstained.

RESOLVED that the Member Officer Protocol be developed and adopted as an aid to new Cllrs.

152 **Moredon Sports Hub Update**

The Parish Clerk referred to documents provided to Cllrs prior to the meeting. The new layout was displayed, and the Parish Clerk gave details of the changes made and reasons for these.

Cllr K Small commented that he welcomed the changes to the track. It was felt that further detail was needed, and the Parish Clerk was asked to provide a report at a future Finance & General Purposes Meeting.

It was confirmed that funding would be coming from British Cycling and Swindon Borough Council (SBC).

The Parish Clerk advised members that the documents provided would be discussed in detail at a future Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting. Cllr S Henderson invited members to review the documents referred to an attend the meeting at which they will be discussed.

The meeting closed at 8.22pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Council

DRAFT