

CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH PARISH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held virtually via Zoom on 16th September 2020 at 7.00pm

Present Cllr S Henderson (Chair)
Cllr J Ballman
Cllr R Ballman
Cllr M Lucas
Cllr D Montaut
Cllr D Patey
Cllr J Rodrigues
Cllr S Thompson
Cllr J Yeowell

Officers Andy Reeves (Parish Clerk)
Andrew Briggs (Estates Manager)
Jodie Smart (Head of Finance & Governance)
Matt Bradley

Public None

Cllr S Henderson asked representatives from external organisations present at the meeting to introduce themselves; Lisa Hall, Chief Legal Officer and Monitoring Officer at Swindon Borough Council (SBC)), Helena Robinson, Service Lead for Community Health & Wellbeing which sits within Public Health at SBC, and Sue Wald (Corporate Director for Adult Social Services, House & Housing at SBC).

Cllr S Henderson when on to ask Matt Bradley to introduce himself and give details of the work he would be completing for the Parish Council.

Matt Bradley informed members that he had been contracted to support the Parish with Press and Marketing of services & facilities, to promote the Parish Council and the work it completes.

Cllr R Ballman asked if Matt Bradley was politically restricted. Cllr S Henderson responded that this point would be answered later in the meeting, under agenda item 7.

181 **Apologies**
Cllr S Exell (Vice-chair)
Cllr P Exell
Cllr K Small

182 **Declarations of Interest**
Cllrs J Ballman & S Thompson declared a non-pecuniary interest in Hreod Burna Urban Forest.

Cllr J Ballman asked if the Swindon Borough Council solicitor could confirm if interests are to be declared during Public Sessions if Cllrs are to respond to any questions received.

Cllr D Montaut declared an interest as Matt Bradley worked as his political assistant whilst fulfilling the role of Labour Leader at SBC.

Cllrs J & R Ballman declared an interest on the 'Whitworth Road Closure' item as Swindon Borough Councillors.

183 Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Full Council meeting held virtually on 15 July 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

Cllr D Montaut reminded members that he had previously requested hard copies of meeting papers ahead of meetings. Officers agreed that hard copies of papers would be posted to those that requested them in future.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Full Council meeting held virtually on 26 August 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

184 Planning & Environment Committee

In the absence of the Chair of the Environment & Planning Committee, Cllr D Patey presented the Minutes of the Environment & Planning Committee meetings held previously.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Environment & Planning Committee meetings presented be approved as a true and correct record.

185 Finance & General Purposes Committee

In the absence of the Chair of the Committee Cllr M Lucas presented the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held 7th July 2020.

Cllr J Ballman queried the decision around the recruitment of a Communications Officer. He stated that at a previous meeting it was agreed that the appointment of a Communications Officer would be discussed and decided at a future meeting. However, a Communications Officer had been appointed on a temporary contract.

Cllr S Henderson responded that the Communications Officer had been appointed by the Community Wellbeing Committee.

The Estates Manager explained how the process by which the Communications Officer had been appointed as a contractor, not as an employee of the Parish Council.

The Parish Clerk confirmed that the decision made at a previous Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting related to the ongoing employment of a Press Officer. The Community & Wellbeing Committee felt there was a need to bridge the arrangement of the employment of a press officer due to the reduced usage of and resulting income from the Community Centres.

It was confirmed that the contracted Communications Officer was self-employed and there was a cap on the total amount that could be spent on taking up their services.

The Parish Clerk confirmed that the decision made by the Finance & General Purposes Committee around the employment of a Communications Officer still stood.

Cllr J Ballman queried the work to be completed by the contracted Communications Officer and commented on the timing of the employment.

Cllr S Henderson stated that the Communications Officer had been tasked with increasing the Parishes profile via social media.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held 7th July 2020 presented be approved as a true and correct record.

Cllr M Lucas presented the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held 4th August 2020.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting

held 4th August 2020 presented be approved as a true and correct record.

It was confirmed that the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 1st September 2020 were to be presented at the next Council meeting as requested by the Committee Chair.

186 Leisure & Recreation Committee

Cllr M Lucas presented the Minutes of the Leisure & Recreation Committee meeting held 21st July 2020.

Cllr S Thompson asked whether the Ecology Report was in the public domain and whether it could be shared. The Parish Clerk confirmed there was no reason why the Report could not be shared externally. Cllr J Ballman agreed that the report could be shared.

Cllr M Lucas confirmed that the Ecology Report was to be discussed at the next Leisure & Recreation Committee meeting and suggested the report be shared following the meeting.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Leisure & Recreation Committee meeting held 21st July 2020 presented be approved as a true and correct record.

It was confirmed that the Minutes of the Leisure & Recreation Committee meeting would be presented at the next meeting to give members an opportunity to review them.

187 Declarations of Interest Protocol – SBC Chief Legal Officer

Lisa Hall explained that she had been invited to speak with members about the Code of Conduct and its purpose and importance. She added that a general overview would be provided at the meeting, but specific training was available for the Council to attend. Lisa explained that the Code of Conduct is in place to ensure Standards and Public Life are established so that Councillors making decisions for the benefit of the public, act in accordance with the 7 principles the code states. She went on to give details of the importance of declaring interests and when it is appropriate to do so.

Cllr D Montaut commented on party political influences.

Cllr R Ballman raised the question regarding Matt Bradley being “politically restricted”. Lisa Hall responded that assistance and advice could be provided if further details re: the engagement of this role were provided outside of the meeting.

Cllr J Ballman queried the need to declare interests during Public Sessions. Lisa Hall confirmed the importance of declaring interests at appropriate times to ensure that everyone involved in discussions or decisions are aware of the positions of all parties.

Cllr S Henderson asked about training for Chairs. Lisa Hall suggested SBC can provide training on Chairing if required.

Cllr S Henderson thanked the Borough Chief Legal Officer for attending and for the guidance and advice provided.

188 Public Health – Wellbeing Hub & CV19 impact Swindon

Sue Wald thanked the Parish Council for their support during lockdown.

Ms Wald reported that the Live Well Hub was turned into a support service for vulnerable residents during lockdown. Over 5,000 people across Swindon accessed and were supported by the service.

The national support service ceased at the end of July and Swindon Borough Council (SBC) has ensured that residents in need continue to be supported via other services.

There has been a rising number of cases of Covid in Swindon over the past 5 weeks. SBC have plans in place in case a local lockdown is enforced.

Sue Wald confirmed that the recovery plan across health & social care was being implemented and SBC were looking to restart some services.

Helena Robinson gave details of the Covid response work completed by SBC and ongoing work of the Community Health & Wellbeing teams.

- providing support to those that tested positive for Covid.
- Hub phonelines remain open and calls received from the wellbeing teams are RAG rated to ensure everyone receives the level of support needed.
- providing a local contact tracing programme. Assisting the national programme with contacting individuals they've been unable to get hold of.
- Community Engagement Teams initially delivered letters regarding Covid-19 to SN1 and SN2 households
- Running a 'Feet on the Street' programme in local communities sharing key messages and providing advice, handing out hand sanitiser & masks.
- Providing a Black & Asian and minority reference point to ensure messages communicated are clear and understood by communities and levels of support are available as required.
- Supporting hospitals and adult social care with discharges; ensuring timely exits from hospital and making sure individuals have everything they need when they return home.
- Helping people to become more physically active than they've been in recent weeks.
- Community Navigators are completing garden gate visits and Covid safe walks

Cllr D Montaut raised concerns around vulnerable people struggling to express themselves and make contact with local services to obtain help needed.

Helena Robinson explained that GPs were carrying out work to reduce waiting times when calling surgeries. The Live Well teams were linking up with local community groups to identify individuals in need and assist with breaking down any communication barriers. Helena Robinson stated that she would feedback concerns to colleagues at the CCG.

Cllr J Rodrigues referred to the breakouts occurring at warehouses and queried how existing and newly recruited staff were being managed. It was asked what precautions were in place?

Sue Wald explained that within some warehouses where breakouts had occurred all workers were initially tested. She went on to say that testing had been challenging only those people with symptoms were now being tested. It was confirmed that staff and residents in care homes were being regularly tested.

Sue Wald informed members that nationally there was a lack of capacity for testing and people requiring testing were being prioritised accordingly.

Helena Robinson's Public Health work was taking place across the Borough to work with and support businesses and teams that were working closely with Environmental Health & Health Protection colleagues.

Cllr R Ballman commented on and thanked SBC for the fantastic work completed in supporting residents during the pandemic.

The Parish Manager asked about the provision of "Covid Marshalls" and whether these were to be funded by local authorities?

Helena Robinson responded that it had not been decided whether employing marshals was mandatory further instructions from Government were awaited. She added that Community Engagement Officers were having conversations with communities and were encouraging rather than enforcing. It was confirmed that Community Engagement

Officers could be deployed to specific areas, as needed.

Sue Wald confirmed that SBC would continue to deploy teams to areas of concern.

The Parish Clerk referred to the work being completed by the Parish Councils Youth Worker and the Multi Agency Tasking group who were ensuring they were visible across the Parish and encouraging young people.

Cllr J Yeowell asked about evictions and support available to anyone who finds themselves being evicted once restrictions are lifted.

Sue responded that SBC were working with private landlords to resolve issues around rental arrears. She confirmed that Outreach Teams were in place to provide support to those that need it.

Cllr S Henderson thanked Sue and Helena for attending the meeting.

189 Kiln Lane Freehold

The Estates Manager referred to and displayed a report circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which can be found as Annex A in the Minute Book.

The Estates Manager summarised the main points of the report.

Cllr J Ballman proposed that the recommendations of the report be approved, seconded by Cllr S Thompson. All agreed.

RESOLVED to

- a) draft a formal lease and licence outlining all conditions and terms at the advised cost of £1,500.00-£2,000.00 + VAT.
- b) agree an initial lease term of 25 years in respect of the proposal and planning application.
- c) agree a rental charge for leasing the land.
- d) agree that 'Direct Windows' are to cover all costs for the build & construction works that are to be undertaken as per the conditions of the planning application, which will be completed in line with all build and construction codes. The organisation agrees to carry out necessary repairs to keep the area in good order throughout the lease. i.e. fencing, tarmac, drainage etc.
- e) to stipulate that the land be returned to its original condition or as close to, at termination of the lease agreement.
- f) agree that all monies received from the lease are ringfenced for use on improvements and development of the allotment gardens. Including the potential of locating another site for development.
- g) Present the draft Lease & Licence to Full Council for approval.

190 Councillors Allowances

The Parish Clerk gave details of decisions made previously regarding changes to the Councillors Allowances. He stated that he was asking Cllrs to confirm the decisions made previously with regards to increasing allowances to £1,000 and to increase in line with NJC increases.

Cllr J Rodrigues supported the suggestion to increase the allowances as suggested.

Cllr S Henderson proposed that the Cllrs Allowances are increased by 2.75% in line NJC suggested increases and the increase in back dated to 1st April 2020.

A vote took place. 4 voted in favour of the proposals, 1 voted against, 2 abstained.

RESOLVED that Cllrs Allowances are increased by 2.75% and the increase in back dated to 1st April 2020.

191 Ward Allowance Request

1. Cllr D Patey, £217.12 to the Olive Tree Café Charity to support replacing glazing after the criminal damage incident on 5th September 2020

The Estates Manager confirmed an amendment to the request whereby the Olive Tree Café are requesting personnel support rather than financial support to cover the cost of the repairs.

Cllrs D Patey proposed the requested assistance be approved and provided by the Parish Council, seconded by Cllr R Ballman. All agreed.

RESOLVED that personnel be provided to the Olive Tree Café to assist with cleaning up following the criminal damage incident on 5th September 2020.

2. Cllr S Henderson, £500 towards a notice board for Moredon Community Centre

Cllr S Thompson proposed that £500 of Cllr S Hendersons Ward Allowance be spent on installing a noticeboard at Moredon Community Centre, seconded by Cllr D Patey. All Agreed.

RESOLVED that £500 of Cllr S Hendersons Ward Allowance be spent on installing a noticeboard at Moredon Community Centre.

192 Whitworth Road Closure

Cllr S Henderson referred to the disruption caused by the closure of Whitworth Road the previous week. He asked Cllrs for their opinions as to whether the Parish Council could or should take any action.

Cllr J Ballman referred to historic issues with Swindon Borough Council Highways departments and road works carried out and actions taken.

Cllr J Ballman suggested the Parish Council take no action.

Discussion over the works referred to and responsibilities took place. The general consensus was to respond to any queries received from residents and direct them to SBC.

Cllr S Henderson informed members that Cllr J Rodrigues has asked to become a member of the Finance & General Purposes and Environment & Planning Committee. Cllr J Ballman confirmed that he would nominate Cllr J Rodrigues to join the Finance & General and Environment & Planning Committee.

Cllr J Ballman proposed that Cllr J Rodrigues becomes a member of the Finance & General and Environment & Planning Committees, seconded by Cllr D Patey. All agreed.

RESOLVED that Cllr J Rodrigues becomes a member of the Finance & General and Environment & Planning Committees.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Council