

# **CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH PARISH COUNCIL**

## **FULL COUNCIL MEETING**

Minutes of the meeting held virtually via Zoom on 18 November 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 Montaut  
Cllr J Rodrigues  
Cllr K Small  
Cllr T Smith  
Cllr S Thompson  
Cllr J Yeowell

**Officers** A Reeves (Clerk/RFO)  
M Bradley (Press and Marketing Officer)  
A Briggs (Estates Manager)  
A Cripps (Libraries Manager)  
J Smart (Head of Finance & Governance)  
A Webb (Youth Worker)

**Public** There was one member of the public in attendance who made no representations.

### **285 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr K Parker. No apologies were received from Cllr P Baker nor Cllr D Patey.

### **286 Declarations of Interest & Applications for Dispensation**

Declarations of non-pecuniary interests were received from Cllr S Thompson in respect of his membership of the Hreod Burna Urban Forest.

Declarations of non-pecuniary interests were received from Cllr J Ballman in respect of his membership of the Hreod Burna Urban Forest and RSPB.

### **287 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Full Council meeting held virtually on 21 October 2020 be approved as a true and correct record, with an amendment at Minute 240 to state that Cllr J Ballman requested to be included within the meeting to discuss the decision making process.

### **288 Finance & General Purposes Committee**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held virtually on 6 October 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

The progress of St Marks Car Park was raised, as it is not on the agenda. It was stated that the decision will be confirmed by the end of the month.

There was some discussion about whether a Member had to be present at a meeting to vote on the approval of Minutes. It was confirmed that Members were not approving accuracy of Committee meetings, rather confirming receipt of them.

### **289 Planning & Environment Committee**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Environment & Planning Committee meetings held virtually on 7 October 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

**290**     **Community Wellbeing Committee**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Community & Wellbeing Committee meeting held 2 September 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

**291**     **Leisure & Recreation Committee**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Leisure & Recreation Committee meeting held 20 October 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

Concern over the decision to increase the allotment fees was raised. The Chair of the Leisure and Recreation Committee reported that a letter had been sent to all allotment holders informing them that Council are considering the recommended increase and requesting feedback from them.

**292**     **Amendment to the Council Committee Structure May 2020**

The Clerk gave a verbal report stating that the Community Wellbeing and Leisure and Recreation Committees were both very busy and that their respective Chairs had proposed to change the frequency to monthly (from bi-monthly).

The Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee requested that at this point the Chair of the Council be added to the F&GP Committee, in accordance with the Committee terms of reference.

There was discussion regarding the schedule of meetings and how Minutes presented at Full Council are not current. Cllr J Ballman requested an amendment to the proposal to include a timeframe for producing and accepting Minutes at Full Council.

**RESOLVED** due to the community impact of CV19; to amend the committee structure to enable the Community Wellbeing Committee and the Leisure & Recreation Committee to meet monthly from bi-monthly. Commencing December 2020.

The Council Also agrees:

1. That the Chair of the Council be made a member of the F&GP Committee.
2. That the minutes of any meeting shall be presented to the Full Council in the same month as the meeting took place, unless that meeting is less than 7 days before the Full Council meeting is to take place.

**293**     **Festive Lighting**

Members **NOTED** the verbal update of the Clerk. The Clerk informed Members that festive lights in Rodbourne were being put up today or tomorrow. Lights usually placed in Gladys Plumley Gardens and the Church could not go up due to Covid-19 restrictions, so will be placed around Pinetrees Community Centre.

There was some discussion around extending the festive lights. The Clerk responded that this would be a project to look at for next year, as the Covid-19 restrictions have hampered progress for the current year.

**294**     **Capital Spend Programme**

Members **NOTED** the report of the Head of Finance & Governance, including the recommendation of the F&GP Committee, regarding the capital spend programme. A copy of which appears as Appendix A in the Minute Book.

The Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee) provided further information on the background for the recommended capital budgets.

The Clerk advised Members that they should include community intelligence and evidence within any capital spend proposal. The Clerk also advised that projects which resulted in a

long-term revenue outlay would be more difficult to progress.

**RESOLVED** to approve the recommendation of the F&GP Committee as follows:

a) That the total reserves figure be split as follows:

£450,000.00	General Reserve
£50,000.00	Capital Reserve (Contingency)
£40,000.00	Election Reserve (£30,000.00 for 2021 election costs, £10,000.00 to cover any by-elections with a £10,000.00 annual contribution to the reserve).
£25,000.00	Insurance Reserve
£65,000.00	Play Areas Reserve
£184,363.39	Available for Members and Committees to bid on for Capital Projects.

b) That the F&GP Committee recommends to Full Council that members, through Committees, bring forward (before Christmas) ideas for a capital programme for 2021-22.

**295** **RAG Resolution Checklist**

Members **NOTED** the RAG resolution checklist as presented by the Head of Finance & Governance a copy of which, appears as Appendix B in the Minute Book.

Members agreed that, in future the checklist will be circulated with the Full Council agenda pack with only amber and red rated items to be discussed at the meetings.

**296** **Budget Working Group**

Members **NOTED** the report of the Head of Finance & Governance regarding forming a Budget Working Group, a copy of which appears as Appendix C in the Minute Book.

There was some discussion around the purpose of the Working Group, whether it was excluding members who were not Chairs or Vice Chairs of Committees and that the budget setting had been the responsibility of the F&GP Committee to date.

The Chair of Finance & General Purposes Committee expressed concern that the Chair was expressing no confidence in him or the Finance & General Purposes Committee to perform the budget setting. The Chair apologised for leaving Cllr Small with that feeling and stated that those were not the motives behind this proposal.

There was also discussion around the way budgets were allocated to committees and how that decision-making process had occurred for the Community Wellbeing Committee which was not in existence at budget setting last year.

The process for budget setting and how some Members had felt excluded previously was also discussed. The Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee stated that all Members are welcome to be present at any budget setting meeting, that the new role of Head of Finance & Governance had only been in existence since October 2020 and that she would be having budget discussions with all Committees.

**RESOLVED** that the document proposing the formation of a Budget Working Group (Appendix C) be withdrawn and that Council acknowledge that it is the role and function of the F&GP Committee to draw up the budget and present it to Full Council.

**297** **Exclusion of Press and Public**

**RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public from the debate on this item, in accordance with Standing Order 3(d) that 'Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be

transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.' Reasons: **Commercial Confidentiality & Staffing Matters.**

*The member of the public left the meeting.*

**298 Internal Audit Appointment**

Members **NOTED** the report of the Head of Finance & Governance, including the recommendation of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, regarding the appointment of an Internal Auditor, a copy of which appears as Appendix D in the Minute Book.

**RESOLVED** that Darkin-Miller Ltd be appointed as Internal Auditor for financial year 2020/21.

**299 Appointment of Grounds & Maintenance Officer**

Members **NOTED** the report of the Clerk regarding the appointment of a Grounds & Maintenance Officer, including the recommendation of the Finance & General Purposes Committee. A copy of which appears as Appendix E in the Minute Book.

**RESOLVED** to approve the recommendation of the Finance & General Purposes Committee; to approve the appointment of a Grounds and Handyperson to Full Council as per the job description and person specification, with the following amendments:  
Change job title from Manager to Officer, reduce salary banding to £24,313-£26,999, remove street cleaning/litter picking from the job description, include RHS qualification or working toward as essential in the person specification.

**300 Staffing arrangements- Covid Impact**

Members **NOTED** the report of the Head of Finance & General Purposes Committee (presented by the Clerk) regarding staffing arrangements and the Covid-19 financial impact on the Council. A copy of which appears as Appendix F in the Minute Book.

**RESOLVED** to approve the furlough of three members of staff until 31 March 2021.

Cllr J Ballman congratulated the Clerk and Chair of the F&GP Committee for their excellent stewardship of the finances over the past few months.

The meeting closed at 9.12pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Council