



Minutes of the meeting of Covingham Parish Council on:

**Monday 7th September 2020**

At 7pm via Zoom Conference Call

**Present:** Cllr Bates, Bacon, Benfield, Bennett, Curtis (Chair), Hawkes, Ricketts, Sandle, Wichall

**Also in attendance:** Laura Evans (Clerk)

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr Mills (unavailable), Cllr Waywell (unavailable)

**2. Declaration of Interests**

Cllr Curtis reminded Members that they should declare any known interests in any matter to be considered at the beginning of the meeting and during the meeting if it becomes apparent that they have an interest in the matters being discussed.

**3. Minutes of previous meeting**

**Resolved:** The minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2020 were approved, and are to be signed at a later date due to the current Covid-19 social distancing regulations

**4. Matters arising from the previous minutes**

**Hedge Cutting** – The hedge cutting has been finished and a vast improvement has been made.

**Kerbside Weedkilling** – appears to have not been completed by SBC. No further information available.

**Thermofisher** - Awaiting date for site visit.

**Flowerbox for St Katherines Green** - due to the amount of work allocated to the Maintenance Engineers this is still to be completed.

**Trees** - Cllr Curtis spoke to the Tree Officer from SBC who confirmed that they are happy to help with requests that are beyond the capability of the Parish Council Maintenance Team, i.e. anything that cannot be completed from the ground using hand tools only. The Tree officer also confirmed that if there is a tree, branch or log that requires the use of a chainsaw that the Parish Council is not permitted to do the work.

**Tree Survey** – Arboriculturists appear to be in high demand. As soon as one becomes available the tree survey will be carried out.

**5. Public Forum**

No questions or comments were received from members of the public.

**6. Chairs Verbal Update**

Cllr Curtis had spent a morning with one of the Maintenance Team for first-hand experience of what they had to deal with. It was disappointing that so many of the litter bins were being used for the disposal of domestic waste, which included unwrapped soiled nappies, wine bottles, as well as a half

eaten takeaways. The final count was 14 bags of litter being removed on the day. A summary of the day would be put in the Handy Mag. And on Facebook. **Action - Cllr Curtis**

#### 7. Clerks Verbal Update

No update given.

#### 8. Parish Maintenance Engineers

- **Monthly Reports** – The Maintenance Engineers have had another very busy month. All agreed that they were doing an excellent job.
- **Grounds Maintenance Matters**  
**Hedge to the side of Cole Close Minimart** To decide if the area should be cleared completely and turfed or replanted with appropriate hedging plants  
**Resolved:** Cllr Ricketts proposed the area be cleared completely and grass seed to be laid. Cllr Hawkes seconded the proposal and it was unanimously agreed.

**Smitanbrook Park** - Cllr Curtis proposed that the three seats that were removed from the basketball area in Smitanbrook to be replaced with the seats from the junior playpark once it is upgraded, which was unanimously agreed. The bench on the footpath to be removed and stored.

#### 9. Reports from Parish Council Working Parties and Committee's

- **Environment Working Party**  
Cllr Benfield explained that the flowerbox on one end of Kingfisher Drive has been replanted with geraniums and both flowerboxes on Covingham Drive have also been replanted. A general tidy up of the crescent in Covingham Square had also been completed.
- **Data Protection & Governance**  
Cllr Hawkes confirmed that the Notice of Public Rights ends on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2020.
- **Planning Working Party**  
The meeting noted that a response for Foxbridge North planning consultation has been submitted. The full response to be placed on the website with a post on Facebook linking to it.

#### 10. Planning Matters:

##### a) To consider any planning applications

**Application:** S/HOU/20/0930 (10<sup>th</sup> September)

**Location:** 4 Larksfield, Covingham Swindon SN3 5AD

**Proposal:** Erection of a single storey rear extension

**Resolved:** The meeting agreed that there is no objection to this proposal.

**Application:** S/HOU/20/1037 (22<sup>nd</sup> September)

**Location:** 5 Blackmore Close, Covingham, Swindon, SN3 5DF

**Proposal:** Erection of a single storey side/rear extension and conversion of garage into habitable space

**Resolved:** The meeting agreed that there is no objection to this proposal.

##### b) To note any comments from the Planning Working Party submitted between meetings

The meeting noted that no comments had been submitted.

##### c) To note any decisions

The meeting noted that no decisions had been received.

**11. Financial Matters**

- a) To approve Finance Statement and payments approval list  
**Resolved:** Cllr Benfield proposed approval of the Finance Statement and payments approval list. Cllr Hawkes seconded the proposal and it was unanimously agreed.
- b) To receive Monthly accounts reconciliation  
**Resolved:** The meeting agreed that the accounts were in good order and in a healthy position.

**12. IRPP Recommendations for Parish Allowances 2020-21**

To discuss and consider the recommendations from the Swindon Independent Remuneration Panel on Parish Allowances for the 2021/2022 Municipal Year

**Resolved:** Cllr Hawkes proposed that the Cllrs forego the Parish Allowances recommended by the Swindon Independent Remuneration Panel. Cllr Benfield seconded the proposal which was unanimously agreed as the Parish Councillors believed that any money paid by the residents should be used for the benefit of the residents.

All Councillors are required to email the Clerk to formally confirm that they wish to forego their allowances.

**Action - All**

**13. Correspondence**

The meeting noted that no correspondence had been received.

**14. Matters for consideration**

Cllr Wichall commented on how lovely the hedges look since the cut.

Cllr Bennett asked if the Neighbourhood Watch scheme was restarting, Cllr Curtis explained that there was no interest from residents to join the scheme when it was re-launched. The Facebook page is regularly used for residents to post suspicious activity experienced in the area.

Cllr Curtis asked the Councillors how they felt in regard to returning to face to face meetings. All agreed to hold the next meeting face to face as long as social distancing could be adhered to and facemasks worn.

Dorcan Church to be approached to see if they can accommodate the request. **Action - Cllr Curtis**

The meeting closed at 8:30pm

Signed..... Date.....