



Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on;

**Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

At 7pm in the Small Hall at St Paul's Church and Community Centre, Covingham

**Present:** Cllr Bacon, Benfield, Curtis (Chair), Hawkes, Kay, Ricketts, Roy, Sandle, Waywell, Wichall

**Also in attendance:** Laura Evans (Clerk), one member of the Neighbourhood Policing Team.

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr Bates (unavailable) and Cllr Khan (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 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021 were approved and signed as a true record.

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

Covingham Park extension of lease – no action from SBC

Firecrest play area – no action from SBC.

Gateway on Kingfisher Drive – No change made to the construction and no updates received from SBC re the questions asked about the missing coping stones from the gate at the other end of Kingfisher Drive.

Speed Indicator Device – licence to install objects on a highway application still being progressed by Swindon Borough Council

Memorial Area – The tree was planted on November 23rd. Special thanks to Cllr David Waywell for all of his work with this.

Dorcan Brook Bank, St Pauls Drive – Still outstanding.

Thermofisher – An email was sent with details of the items discussed at the meeting on 8th November. To date no action or response has been received from Thermofisher or SBC on the commitments made at the meeting.

SBC Youth Offer – Next meeting to be held on December 10th.

Community Speedwatch – Cllr Gareth Hawkes circulated an email to all Councillors regarding the recent contact with the County Lead Coordinator for the new Community Speed Watch scheme. Under the new scheme a Community Speed Watch can only be set up if there is evidence that there is excessive speeding within the area, so proceeding with the Speed Indicator Devices would provide

the evidence required. The working party proposed that the Parish Council proceed with the Speed indicator device before making an application to create a Community Speed Watch group in Covingham. Cllr Benfield seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.

Community Governance Review – SBC has made the decision not to hold a review at this moment in time.

Covingham Square Crescent – The Facebook post was published inviting any residents to remove any of the healthy plants from the area. The Contractor has confirmed that some plants have been removed and he is now comfortable to clear the area which will be undertaken this week, beginning 6th December.

Street sweeping – Monday 5th December and Tuesday 6th December – excellent results so far.

#### **5. Public forum**

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

#### **6. Police Matters**

The Neighbourhood Policing Team member gave an update on recent activity in the area and confirmed that those who have been causing problems in the Skatepark have been identified. Cllr Curtis raised concerns that the skate ramp had been set alight and this had been reported to the Police and a log number raised. Increased patrols are still continuing in the area.

The Neighbourhood Policing Team explained that there had been another recent report of racial abuse, similar to the incident that took place in Covingham, in the Nythe area and that anyone who witnesses any form of racial abuse is to report this to the Police via 101.

Parking issues - Parking tickets are still being issued to anyone who is parking illegally. Flyers have been produced with support from Thermofisher and these have been placed on any cars that are parked inconsiderately.

#### **7. Chairs Verbal Update**

Swindon Local Councils Forum meeting 18th November 2021 - General concerns were raised by all about the time taken for responses to be received from Swindon Borough Council to contacts made by the Parishes in attendance. Highways was specifically mentioned as it was impossible to monitor any requests on My Account as they were moved to a different system. One of the Chairs highlighted the results of the recent Residents survey that had been discussed at a Cabinet meeting. Parish Councils were not mentioned at all even though they were wholly responsible for some of the functions that were included or mentioned in the responses, leading to the assumption that Swindon Borough Council was the body delivering the service, which is totally incorrect and misleading.

Chairs and Clerks Engagement – Meeting to take place on Tuesday 7th December. Items to be discussed include the SLCF Draft Protocol and results from the waste audit.

#### **8. Clerks Verbal Update**

No update given.

#### **9. Parish Maintenance Engineers**

- **Monthly Reports** – Another busy month, with 2 incidents reported to the Police, 182 drain gully's being cleared of leaves, carrying out remedial actions from the ROSPA report and installing 3 flower boxes. Cllr Curtis thanked Cllr Ricketts and the Maintenance Engineers for the fantastic job that was done laying the slabs to create a footpath into the play area.

- **ROSPA Play Equipment Inspection** – Cllr Ricketts explained that there is a lot of cosmetic issues on the report and the risk levels on the report were low. Cllr Ricketts recommended the bench in Firecrest Park be removed as it is in bad condition, and is where a lot of the anti-social behaviour takes place.

Cllr Curtis explained that despite Firecrest park being in a safe condition, only half of the original play equipment remains due to the rest being damaged and removed. The trees by the park are causing a big issue with the deterioration of the area and there are some bushes that block the view from the street. Cllr Curtis to see if there is funding available to move and upgrade the play area. Permission will need to be sought from SBC as to date the asset has not been transferred to the Parish Council.

**Action - Cllr Curtis**

- **Grounds Maintenance Matters**

Additional works identified during annual walk around

As the Contractor was unable to complete the last grass cut, it was recommended that the additional works that had been identified be completed in lieu of the cut.

**Resolved:** Cllr Bacon proposed the additional works be completed in lieu of the cut, Cllr Hawkes seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.

**Action - Clerk**

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

- **Environment Working Party**

Cllr Benfield explained that along with Cllr Sandle and Cllr Waywell, Daffodils and Bluebell Bulbs have been planted at each end of the Gateway. Cllr Waywell explained that next year the Memorial Tree will require more regular watering.

- **Data Protection & Governance**

Review of all Data Protection and Governance Policies is still ongoing.

- **Planning Working Party**

NEV Liaison Meeting 18th November 2021

**Symmetry Park.** - Still awaiting supreme court outcome, but looking at an alternative solution

**South Marston and Rowborough** - Dealing with minor matters

**Great Stalls East** - Outline permission granted dealing with minor matters

**Redlands** - Dealing with reserved matters

**Inlands Farm** - Decision expected by end of month

**Foxbridge South** – Amended reports received, resulting in further consultation

**Foxbridge North** - No movement

**Lotmead and Lower Lotmead** - Reserved matters application

**Former Toys R Us** - Speculation that site might be taken over by a retailer who will not use as a food outlet. This will remove Highways objections relating to the entrance from the A419 slip road

**Thames Water Pumping Station** - Unilateral undertaking expected soon

**Thames Water** - Working on supplying connections, but require the pumping station

**Health Issues** - Provision of health facilities now progressing

**Southern Connector Road** - Contractors onsite, conditions discharged

**Swindon Local Plan** - To be submitted early December

**Great Stalls Bridge** - Still in Local Plan for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport only.

**Land North of Redlands** – Cllrs Curtis and Hawkes attended the Stakeholder engagement exhibition detailing the proposal for a new development north of Redlands. The plan being proposed included a piece of land outside of the area designated for the NEV. This would suggest that there is potential for it to be used as the required 'open space' resulting in more properties being built in the NEV than currently planned. Careful consideration needs to be given to the formal plans during the planning consultation phase.

## 11. Planning Matters:

### a) To consider any planning applications

**Application:** S/OUT/20/0160 (1<sup>st</sup> December)

**Location:** Land At Foxbridge Village, New Eastern Villages, Wanborough Road, Wanborough.

**Proposal:** Outline application for mixed use development comprising up to 358 dwellings and a mixed use hub of up to 1,550sqm (use classes A1/A2/A3/A4/A5 and D1) with associated works. Details of the access from the Southern Connector Road to be determined with all other matters reserved (Revised details).

**Resolved:** The following comment was submitted:

Covingham Parish Council respectfully request that this response is attributed to Covingham Parish Council on the Planning Portal, not Parish Council as previous responses are showing.

Covingham Parish Council objects to the above-mentioned planning application because of the following reasons:

- a) The application is for the South Foxbridge development and it is inappropriate to view the South plans without the North plans.
- b) The application does not demonstrate that the development will not increase the flood risk to Covingham
- c) Noise management is to be performed by construction techniques. There is no application for a noise barrier. If granted the permission must refuse (as it has not been requested) a noise barrier, or if one has to be constructed, it must absorb the noise, not reflect the noise towards Covingham.

Previous objections submitted, as detailed further below, still stand.

Following the latest submissions by the developers, further objections now apply. Specifically, we strongly reject the Hydrology Reports. The modelling used bears little resemblance to the flood plains of the Foxbridge area. The statement: 2.6 states that the nearest gauge, Cole at Inglesham non-modular flows with some of the highest flows being out of bank according to the National River Flow Archive (NFRA) and therefore not used in the analysis. We interpret this as the River Cole regularly floods downstream and therefore the report chooses to ignore this fact. The fact is that the Cole and its tributaries (Liden Brook and Dorcan Brook) regularly flow out of bank (i.e., FLOOD). The gauges closer to the Liden Brook were also ignored. The Cole at Lower Stratton signals a Flood Alert every time there is heavy rain, which does not suit the modelling. Dorcan Brook at Kestrel Drive was also ignored even though 40% of Wanborough South is drained into and can be flooded by Dorcan Brook. This whole report is constructed using data that suits the application. We implore the Environment Agency and the LLFA (Swindon Borough Council) to reject this report and insist on a proper analysis.

It must also be a condition that traffic management must be implemented as currently planned stated.

Part Application

It is not possible to approve this application because there is no indication as to how the two segments of the development will interact.

Whilst we accept that there are two developers involved in this area, it is considered to be one development and should be treated as such. It should be mandated that the two applications be submitted simultaneously to allow a joined-up approach with regards to considering the impact one has on the other, and subsequently on surrounding areas. It is impossible to second guess and provide an informed response. For this reason we formally object to this application.

#### Increased Flood Risk to Covingham

The documents talk about the Western Drainage being restricted by a culvert with a capacity of 16.6 l/sec. Flood risk reduction is apparently achieved by limiting the flow at Discharge Point A to 9.3 l/sec. However, this is drainage from the proposed Southern development. The total drainage from Foxbridge (North and South) is supposed to be limited to 9.3 l/sec. The flood risk to Covingham is not a factor of the culvert alone. Section 6.34, of the Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Management Strategy (ES Chapter 7.1 Flood Risk Assessment of this application) Flow Exceedance Routes, takes flood water to the Southern Connector Road (SCR). As drainage from south of the SCR flows west, there will be drainage under the SCR in a South to North direction. This water will flow downhill, which is in a northerly direction and into the Dorcan Stream Flood Storage Area and Wanborough Road Bridge. The restriction at the Wanborough Road is known to have caused actual house flooding on three occasions. Thus, the flow exceedance routes will increase the flood risk to Covingham. Also, the strategies are based on managing a rainfall of 5mm. During the past three months, many days have seen at least 10mm of rainfall on a daily basis.

It is noted that existing drainage within the Foxbridge site has been poorly maintained and leads to local flooding. Local flooding within a flood plain is what happens in a flood plain. If the drainage is altered, then the local flooding will initially be held within Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS), and quickly discharged into the areas of Covingham vulnerable to flooding.

The proposal quotes the Swindon Local Plan as a feasible guidance document. We believe that the information provided in respect of the Foxbridge development is technically flawed and also does not honour the statements in Local Plan Policy DM36.

The drainage from the SuDS in the Northern development known as Foxbridge is routed under the A419 and along a channel that joins Dorcan Stream above the Kestrel Road Bridge. The aforementioned channel, and Dorcan Stream were the major contributors to the floods of 2007, floods before this date and near flood events after this date.

The land is noted as a functional Flood Plain, which does not give up its water after 6 hours.

There is a high risk of surface water flooding within the site.

It is stated that the site is outside of the region expected to see ground water flooding. We do not believe that this is the case.

The document states that there has been flooding in the vicinity. As it appears that Swindon Borough Council DO NOT actually know what happens during flood events in this area, the statement is regarded as understated.

This development contravenes Policy DM 36, part 2. This will not result in a net reduction of the flood risk in Covingham.

The development cannot be done without a net loss in Flood Storage Capacity within the development boundary which would increase the risk of flooding to Covingham.

In the draft Swindon Local Plan that has recently been the subject of a consultation, Foxbridge is included as a strategic site. The additional emphasis that has been included (Part 6), states all development should not adversely affect flood routing and thereby increase flood risk elsewhere. Opportunities should be sought within the site design to make space for water and therefore reduce flood risk elsewhere. This is an appropriate course of action that needs to be applied in this application.

The existing Swindon Local Plan EN6: Flood risk states: ensuring that development does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere including on adjoining and surrounding land. We do not believe that this has been actioned in respect of the Foxbridge development.

The water storage and movement across the flood plain of Foxbridge will be done in such a way that it attempts to reduce the flood risk to Foxbridge. The land where houses will be built currently retain rainwater, with very little actual drainage. The SuDS will hold back a few hours of rainwater, before discharging into Dorcan Stream, and further filling the Flood Storage Area. This is completely inappropriate in the current climate, considering the rainfall patterns for the last few months. The building of the site, within the constraints of the Swindon Plan will increase the flood risk to Covingham.

In Covingham Parish Council's opinion, the way to mitigate the perceived increase in flood risk to Covingham is to increase the capacity of the Dorcan Stream culvert under the Wanborough Road. The proposed Foxbridge development is upstream of this culvert. The discharge from the site (when the SuDS are full) will add volume to the water held in the Dorcan Flood Storage Area, the release of which is restricted by the culvert. When the culvert has reached capacity in the past, the water has been held back and parts of Covingham have been flooded.

We feel that the developers have not considered Covingham in the production of this application.

#### Traffic Management.

The Southern Connector Road as it runs through Foxbridge will be subject to a 30mph speed limit and there will be two signalled crossings connecting the northern and southern parts of this development. The prohibition of traffic turning right into Foxbridge from the Wanborough Road, having come through Covingham must be rigorously policed. Also traffic from Foxbridge must not be allowed to travel directly into Covingham. This is essential so that 'White Hart', Merlin Way, Southern Connector Road, Common Head does not become a valid route when the A419 becomes congested.

#### Noise Reduction

Noise management is to be performed by construction techniques. Unexpectedly, there is no application for a noise barrier. If permission for one is granted it should be so constructed to absorb noise, not reflect the noise towards Covingham.

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

The meeting noted that no comments were submitted.

**c) To note any decisions**

**Application:** S/21/1479

**Location:** Patheon Building, Kingfisher Drive Covingham, SN3 5BZ

**Proposal:** Installation of 2no. liquid CO2 tanks, ductwork, replacement escape staircase and provision of 3no. replacement car parking spaces – Granted.

**Application:** S/PHOU/21/1412

**Location:** 6 Cole Close, Covingham, SN3 5BU

**Proposal:** Prior Approval Notification for the erection of a single storey rear extension measuring 6.0m (from original rear wall), 2.65m (maximum height) and 2.45m (height to eaves)- Prior approval is not required

**Application:** S/LDP/21/1074/JP

**Location:** 5 Robinsgreen, Covingham, SN3 5AY

**Proposal:** Certificate of Lawfulness (proposed) for the erection of a single storey rear extension and a rear roof dormer- Granted

**12. Financial Matters**

a) To approve Finance Statement and payments approval list

**Resolved:** Cllr Sandle proposed approval of the Finance Statement and payment approval list. Cllr Benfield seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.

b) To receive the monthly accounts reconciliation

**Resolved:** The meeting noted that the accounts were in good order.

**13. IRPP Recommendations for Parish Allowances 2022-23**

To discuss and consider the recommendations from the Swindon Independent Remuneration Panel on Parish Allowances for the 2022/2023 Municipal Year.

**Resolved:** Cllr Benfield proposed that the Cllrs forego the Parish Allowances recommended by the Swindon Independent Remuneration Panel. Cllr Hawkes 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**

**14. Parish Deeds**

To consider if any changes are needed to the Transfer Deed.

**Resolved:** Cllr Curtis proposed that no changes be made to the Transfer Deed, Cllr Benfield seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.

**Action - Clerk**

**15. Correspondence**

Clothes Recycling Bank- A request was received about placing a clothes recycling bank at Covingham Square shops.

**Resolved:** Cllr Hawkes proposed not to proceed as the previous bins that were there encouraged fly tipping and safety issues so were removed. Cllr Sandle seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.

**Action - Clerk**

**16. Admission of Public and Press: To resolve in accordance with Standing Order 3 (c) that 'in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded, and they be instructed to withdraw'.**

*Reason: Grass cutting contract 2022/2023, Draft Budget*

**17. To receive the proposed costs for the grass cutting, hedge cutting, dog bin emptying and street cleaning contract 2022/23**

**Resolved:** Cllr Hawkes proposed acceptance of the costs for 2022/23. Cllr Bacon seconded the proposal, and it was unanimously agreed.

**18. Draft Budget**

First look at draft budget - To look at the draft budget proposal for 2022/23 - draft figures were discussed. Cllr Ricketts proposed approving the draft budget at January's meeting, Cllr Waywell seconded the proposal which was unanimously agreed.

**19. Matters for consideration**

To consider requesting a preservation order for the Memorial Tree.

The meeting closed at 8:45pm.

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