



Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on:

Monday 7th November 2022

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

Present: Cllr Bacon, Bates, Curtis (Chair), Hawkes, Kay, May, Ricketts, Roy, Sandle, Walker, Wichall

Also in attendance: Laura Evans (Clerk)

Cllr Curtis opened the meeting with a statement confirming the sad passing of Cllr Derek Benfield on 26th October with a short tribute to him. A minutes silence was held as a sign of respect and for quiet reflection to remember him.

1. Consider Co-option of a Parish Councillor

Resolved: Co-option of Cllr May, proposed by Cllr Kay, Cllr Bates seconded the proposal which was unanimously agreed. Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed and received.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Khan (unavailable)

3. 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.

4. Minutes of previous meeting

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd October 2022 were approved and signed as a true record.

5. Matters arising from the previous minutes

Covingham Park extension of lease – no progress.

Speed Indicator Device – Three new quotes requested, one outstanding. Working towards full information to be available for the December meeting to be able to make a decision.

How Healthy is your Parish initiative – Ongoing. Update received from the Church this morning re the provision of warm spaces during the cold months. Current activities to be publicised as access for warm space.

Firecrest wooded area and the play area – Identified works to make sure area is more accessible and visible to be started mid – November. Results from the recent ROSPA annual safety inspection about the play area has been shared with the Ward Councillor. No response received. The question re trees continues to be ignored.

Redrow Estate and HGV's – SBC Highways responded with a request for the Parish Council to request a licence to instal objects on a highway which is not in line with the support confirmed by Councillor Parry. Request refused, awaiting response. Latest incidences of lorries trying to access Dorcan Trading Estate have been in the evenings or overnight. The meeting agreed the best way to proceed

is to use the advertising route as banners are allowed to be placed on railings with only the Parish Council's permission and not SBC's.

Resolved: Cllr Ricketts to source the appropriate signage for the approximate cost of £100.

Wanborough Allotments - next meeting to be held on 14th November. Cllr Curtis and Sandle to attend.

Crescent, Covingham Square – successful tidy up session held on 8th October.

Annual review walk around – Cllrs Bacon and Ricketts accompanied the Contractor on 25th October. Some areas for further works were identified, awaiting quote.

Footpath to play area – all material sourced. Holidays, illness and the weather have prevented it being completed, to date. It is high on the priority list for action.

6. Public forum

No questions or comments received from members of the public, as none were present at the meeting.

7. Police Matters

A meeting was held with 2 of the Neighbourhood Police team and Cllr Curtis last week. Cllr Curtis reported back from the meeting.

Concerns were raised about the continued lack of engagement/involvement from the residents. They are aware of the drug issues in the area, but the offenders disappear when they appear in uniform. No reports from the public are being made or intelligence being received which would help to identify who and when the activities are taking place.

The intention is to hold a pop-up Community Engagement event in Covingham Square before Christmas.

Anti-social behaviour in Covingham Park – specifically graffiti. A suggestion has been made to hold a graffiti art competition on the bases of the skateboard equipment and have asked for the Parish Council's thoughts. **Resolved:** The meeting agreed for Cllr Curtis respond to the PCSO asking for more information/research to be obtained before a decision is made. **Action - Cllr Curtis**

A speed check was carried out in Covingham Drive on Saturday 29th October. No speeding tickets were issued, several advisory conversations took place. Planned traffic operations on Kingfisher Drive and St Pauls Drive will be taking place in mid-November.

8. Chairs Verbal Update

Grass verges, Piccadilly roundabout- Email sent asking when the grass verges will be finished- no response. Will resend to the Cabinet Member responsible for the strategic roadworks.

Heroncroft, missing tree – Residents have suggested that they may be happy to pay for a replacement tree after the previous tree was removed by SBC, and would like the Parish Council to consider paying for the material needed to plant it. The suggested tree would be the same as was planted in the Crescent, which does not grow very quickly or require maintenance.

Resolved: The meeting agreed it would consider paying for the materials needed for the tree to be planted should the residents wish to proceed with the purchase.

Commemorative bench – Cllr Derek Benfield's Son and Daughter have spoken about purchasing a bench in memory of their Dad, possibly to be installed by the Parish Council, by the Memorial Area.

Resolved: Cllr Bacon proposed that the Parish Council install the bench and to face it towards the Memorial Area. Cllr Hawkes seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.

9. Clerks Verbal Update

Nothing to report

10. Parish Maintenance Engineers

- **Monthly Reports** – Covingham Parish Council wished to formally thank Michael, one of the Maintenance Engineers, for going above and beyond by watering the Memorial area and the newly planted Covingham Square Crescent for 5 months during the Summer.
- **Rospa Play Equipment Inspection** – Cllr Ricketts explained that there was nothing in the report for cause for concern and the risk levels on the report were low.
- **Grounds Maintenance Matters**
No matters needed addressing.

11. Reports from Parish Council Working Parties and Committee's

- **Environment Working Party**
Currently maintaining the flowerboxes and will re-plant with bulbs once the current flowers go over.
- **Data Protection & Governance**
Cllr Hawkes explained that half of the Councillors email boxes were more than 50% full. If not cleared, some Councillors may stop receiving emails. Should any Councillors wish to archive emails then Cllr Hawkes is willing to help and advise on this.
- **Planning Working Party**
Foxbridge North Planning Appeal – Cllr Hawkes attended the planning enquiry and gave a brief update on the matters discussed. A decision on the enquiry will be made on 11th November 2022.

12. Planning Matters:

a) To consider any planning applications.

Application: S/22/1574 (17th November)

Location: Keypoint, Thornhill Road South Marston Swindon SN3 4RY

Proposal: Erection of a Class B8 warehouse, ancillary offices and gatehouse plus car parking and associated works.

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.

Application: S/HOU/22/1421 (28th October)

Location: 39 Merlin Way, Covingham, SN3 5AN

Proposal: Erection of a two storey/single storey rear extension.

Resolved: The following comment was submitted: Covingham Parish Council has no objections to this proposal.

Application: S/OUT/22/1415 (31st October)

Location: Land North Of Redlands Farm, Wanborough Road Swindon SN4 0AA

Proposal: A Hybrid Planning Application for a residential development, associated works, infrastructure, parking, new / retained habitats, and ancillary development to include - full details for the erection of 120 dwellings (Class C3), public open space, a LEAP, landscaping,

sustainable drainage, roads, vehicular access and pedestrian / cycle paths and an outline proposal (Means of Access not reserved) for the erection of up to 128 dwellings (Class C3), public open space, landscaping, bridge crossings, safeguarded canal corridor, sustainable drainage, roads, vehicular access and pedestrian / cycle paths.

Resolved: The following comment was submitted:

Covingham Parish Council object to this planning application for the following reasons:

1. Access to the site is from Wanborough Road via the Redlands development. This route should be for Redlands only, as traffic exiting the site would be able to travel northwards through Covingham. Access to Land North of Redlands Farm should be via the Southern Connector Road with exits from the NEV via Commonhead Roundabout or via the District Centre and the A420.
2. Part of the site is outside the New Eastern Villages Red Line. The development must be contained within the area defined for the NEV.
3. This development relies on infrastructure provided by other development areas. If Foxbridge North is allowed to go ahead in its current application form, then there will be more reliance on the primary school. This could impact on Covingham Primary School which the Parish Council find totally unacceptable.

c) To note any decisions:

Application: S/HOU/22/1197

Location: 5 Martinfield, Covingham, SN3 5BA

Proposal: Erection of a single storey rear extension- Granted.

13. 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 Wichall seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed

- b) To receive the monthly accounts reconciliation

Resolved: The meeting noted that the accounts were in a healthy position.

14. Limited Assurance Review

- a) To receive the external auditor report and certificate for the year ended 31 March 2022

Resolved: The Meeting acknowledged that the Auditors had noted that on the basis of their review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in their opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. The meeting congratulated the Clerk on achieving this result.

- b) To confirm the Notice of conclusion of audit and inspection of audited accounts period.

Resolved: The Conclusion of Audit notice was published on 30th September 2022 for a limited period of time as required. The AGAR will remain published for 5 years.

15. Correspondence

The meeting noted that no correspondence had been received.

16. Handy Mag Article

The meeting agreed to put the following into the Handy Mag article

- Tribute to Cllr Derek Benfield

16 Matters for consideration

Cllr Wichall had raised concerns over the weeds growing through and over footpaths in Smitanbrook, as no weed killing has been carried out this year by SBC. Cllr Curtis has spoken to the Contractor who advised that the best action would be to trim the footpath and then apply weed killer, trying to remove the weeds would cause more damage to the footpath.

The meeting closed at 8:44pm

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