



Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on:

Monday 3rd February 2025

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, Sandle and Wichall.

Also in attendance: Laura Evans (Clerk).

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Walker (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 6th January 2025 were approved and signed as a true record.

4. Matters arising from the previous minutes

Dorcan Brook Bank- no update

Naming of the footpath – no update

Creation of a natural flood alleviation area in Covingham park – Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, in partnership with Swindon Borough Council, has a Forest Meadows project which aims to create, restore, enhance and better manage habitats across the Borough. As Covingham was built on old water meadows, Covingham Park may be a good fit for the project criteria and help with alleviating the problem areas. Cllr Curtis to make contact with the Senior Conservation Officer at the Wildlife Trust and invite him to attend the April meeting. **Action- Cllr Curtis**

Wanborough Allotments – The proposed Terms of Reference (ToR's) document for Wanborough Allotment Society (WAS) was circulated. The WAS membership to consist of one Parish Councillor from Wanborough PC, one Parish Councillor from Covingham PC and six paid up allotment holders. As Wanborough Parish Council has already agreed the contents, once Covingham Parish Council also agrees a meeting will be called to set up the Allotment Society Committee. The first task will be to agree the finer details of the roles and responsibilities as per the ToR's.

Councillor Kay declared an interest as an allotment holder.

Resolved: Cllr Hawkes proposed accepting the WAS ToR's. Cllr May seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.

Resolved: Cllr Wichall proposed that Cllr Hawkes be the Parish Council representative. Cllr May seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.

Thermofisher hoardings – no progress

Adult Exercise equipment – Caloo carried out the Operational Service/ Inspection on Wednesday 29th January 2025. Some further remedial works were identified during the visit. A quotation has been provided at a cost of £958.68 including VAT for parts and labour.

Resolved: Cllr Hawkes proposed acceptance of the quotation. Cllr May seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed. Clerk to complete the order form and return. **Action- Clerk**

Basketball Court- no progress to date

Tree's for climate project – The Facebook post and information displayed on the noticeboards and website resulted in lots of positive comments. The Grounds Maintenance Contractor is now in direct contact with the Project Lead, with the aim to have all the trees in the ground by the end of the planting season(end of March). A total of 59 trees have been purchased with 8 different species with varying flowering seasons to provide some interest over several months. A new phase of the Trees for Climate project may be introduced in the next financial year looking at replacing individual trees that have been lost in recent years. Covingham will be included if the phase does go ahead.

5. Public forum

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

6. Police Matters

No Police personnel were present at the meeting so no update provided.

7. Chairs Verbal Update

Nothing to report.

8. Clerks Verbal Update

The damaged wall between the carpark in Covingham Square and the footpath in Larksfield has been reported to SBC.

9. Parish Maintenance Engineers

- **Monthly Reports** – Another busy month.
- **Grounds Maintenance Matters**
The street sweeping has been completed, as well as the second round of hedgecutting. The additional works identified during the annual review walkaround are underway.

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

- **Data Protection & Governance**
Nothing to report

11. Planning Matters:

a) To consider any planning applications:

The meeting noted that no applications had been received.

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

Application: S/OUT/23/1514 (16th January 2025)

Location: Redlands Phase 2, Redlands Farm, Wanborough Road, Swindon SN4 0AA

Proposal: Outline application for the erection of up to 80 dwellings and open space with all matters reserved other than means of access

The following comment was submitted;

Covingham Parish Council formally objects to this proposal due to the Southern Connector Road not being in use. Assurances were given and it was always understood that in any later applications it would be a condition of the approval that the Southern Connector Road be stipulated as the route for construction traffic. Until such time as the Southern Connector Road is open for use, all applications should be refused.

c) To note any decisions:

Application: S/HOU/24/1375

Location: 17 Linnetsdene, Covingham, SN3 5AG

Proposal: Erection of two storey side and rear extensions- 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 Wichall seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.

b) To receive the monthly accounts reconciliation

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

13. Speed Indicator Devices

Review of Speed Indicator Device (SID) provision.

The battery charge for the Speed Indicator Devices has declined to the point that the latest charge lasted for 22 hours, compared to 7 or 8 days when the signs were first installed. The number of vehicles passing the sign in that 22 hour period was 5,453. It was agreed that the batteries had come to the end of their useful lives and needed to be replaced. Solar power is not an alternative option due to the weight and the need for the signs to be moved on a regular basis.

Cllr May provided two quotations for the batteries needed; one from Elan City and one from a local supplier.

Resolved: Cllr Ricketts proposed that eight new batteries at a cost of £320 + VAT be purchased from the local supplier. Cllr Wichall seconded the proposal and was unanimously agreed.

The meeting agreed that both Speed Indicator Devices should be placed on Merlin Way due to the issues being experienced currently with the lorries from the building sites as the Southern Connector Road was not deemed fit for purpose.

Cllr Sandle requested that if the batteries needed replacing every two years an item needs to be added to the budget.

14. Midcounties Co-operative Local Good Causes

An email had been received from the Manager of the local Store as there is a small fund available to support local causes that Cllrs that are Members of the Co-op could apply for. The meeting agreed that the two noticeboards within the Parish need to be replaced and a contribution towards the cost of the one in Covingham Square could be requested.

Resolved: Cllr Kay was asked to approach the Store Manager, on behalf of the Parish Council, for a contribution towards a new noticeboard in Covingham Square. **Action- Cllr Kay**

15. The Handy Mag

The meeting agreed that the following should be included in the article;

- Traffic on Merlin Way
- Trees for climate
- Adult exercise equipment- service and remedial repairs

16. Matters for consideration

Cllr Kay raised concerns over a large bush on private property in Pheasant Close by Firecrest View. The bush has grown out over half of the footpath and due to the deciduous nature it is hard to see the branches in the poor light which has resulted in an injury. As this is on private property, the Parish Council has no right to address the issue. If the property owner fails to take any action, Cllr Ricketts suggested that as this could be deemed a Health and Safety risk, the Maintenance Engineers may be able to cut the bush back.

The meeting closed at 8:26pm

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