

SOUTH SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL
(CENTRAL SWINDON SOUTH PARISH COUNCIL)

COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 25 August 2020 at 7.15pm
at a VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING

Present

Cllr C Watts	Chair
Cllr J Howarth	Vice-Chair
Cllr S Ahmed	
Cllr J Ali	
Cllr S Allsopp	
Cllr V Ayris	
Cllr J Firmin	
Cllr M Gladman	
Cllr D Griffiths	
Cllr A Hamid	
Cllr E Heavens	
Cllr P Herring	
Cllr J Miah	
Cllr N Hopkins	
Cllr W Horley	
Cllr S James	
Cllr L Kasmaty	
Cllr N Watts	

Officers

Rob Core	Clerk
Jake Mee	Deputy Clerk and RFO
Matt Bradley	Communications and Events Manager
Theresa Gordon	Agenda Clerk
Oliver Saunders	Projects Officer

Public

Five

Public Session

A member of the public asked if the staff transfer date is still taking place on the 2nd of November 2020. The Clerk said yes it is still taking place on the 2nd November 2020.

A member of the public asked if the Parish could loan some of the new equipment to existing Swindon Borough Council staff as their existing equipment is not in a good condition. The Clerk said no as it is not feasible.

A member of the public had seen a new looking mechanical sweeper working in Euclid Street. on the 20th August but could not see how new it was and if it had a Parish logo on it, the member of the public said that they assumed all new vehicles will carry the Parish logo from Day One. The Clerk said that new vehicles will have the parish logo, the sweeper that was seen was not owned by the parish.

1160

Apologies.

Cllr M J Miah
Cllr J Milner-Barry
Cllr S Pajak
Cllr T Philpot
Cllr M Strinkovsky

1161

Declarations of Interest & Applications for Dispensation

None

1162 Chairs Report**VJ Day Memorial**

I would like to thank all Parish Councillors, Officers and residents who attended and supported the formal opening of the Parish Council's new WW2 Memorial on the 75th Anniversary of VJ Day. This event was attended by:

- The Mayor of the Borough of Swindon, Cllr Gary Perkins
- The Deputy Lieutenant of Wiltshire, Shirley Ludford
- The Police and Crime Commissioner for Wiltshire, Angus MacPherson
- Members of the Royal British Legion
- The Royal Signals
- Members of the Royal Wessex Yeomanry based at Swindon's Army Reserve Centre
- Members of the Nepalese Association of Wiltshire
- Representatives of the Hazrat Shahjalal Mosque
- Representatives of the Thamesdown Islamic Association
- Representatives of the Wiltshire Turkish Community
- Representatives of the Swindon Hindu Temple
- Representatives of the Goan Swindon association
- Farther Toby Boutle of the Swindon New Town
- And the Chair of the Swindon Old Town Partnership of Churches, Daniel Pitt

It was great to see representatives of so many different community groups inside the Parish at this event.

The memorial unveiling was preceded by the mural painting at the Bat House in Queens Park, delivered by local arts company No Added Sugar. Similarly, to the memorial unveiling this painting brought the community together with up to 60 people, mostly school children, taking part in the mural painting.

We also have the Wartime posters presented in our parks currently which has sparked interest among visitors of our parks. They are due to remain up until the end of August. For anybody who has not already seen them I would encourage you to do so.

Projects

While a significant legacy project for the Parish Council, the VJ Day Memorial is one of many projects the Parish Council is pursuing.

Since the last Parish Council Meeting the Cavendish Green landscaping project has completed- tidying up a great open space in Park South. Now our attention has turned to improvements to the County Ground open space and the Shaftesbury Lake wildlife area- both projects scheduled to take place in the Autumn.

The Cambria Bridge Play Area Refurb has completed. And we have on tonight's agenda plans for our next full-scale Play Area refurb in East Wichel.

The Swindon Summer Bowl's cultural events in Town Gardens have continued throughout July and August. They have received very positive feedback from the local community.

And the Town Gardens Gates project is progressing with the potential of the Quarry Road gates being restored by the end of next month.

Swindon Half Marathon

Also, next month we have the Swindon Half Marathon which has announced it will be taking place in a Covid-safe way. While the government has their "eat out to help out" scheme, we have our own £10 discount scheme but with more significant public health benefits. I am speaking of course of the £10 discount South Swindon Parishioners receive for entering the Swindon Half Marathon.

The Swindon Half is an important event for the town which attracts people into Swindon and gives the more active members of the borough's community a running goal to work towards. Due to Covid, the future of this great community event has been put in jeopardy and we are proud to be supporting it and encouraging our parishioners to put their running shoes on.

Old Town Library

Since our last meeting Old Town Library has reopened in a limited way. As you will be aware, prior to Covid Old Town Library was the fastest growing library in Swindon and even during Lockdown our librarians were proactive in displaying resources online for library members, even setting up a youtube channel with Read Aloud stories for children.

Since Old Town Library's reopening they have continued with their pioneering approach, setting up a Home Delivery service for their more vulnerable library members, the only library in Swindon to do so. My continued thanks must go to Deborah at the library for making it such a thriving community facility.

Quarry Road Tennis Courts

I am delighted to report that we have had overwhelmingly positive feedback regarding our request to Swindon Council to transfer the Quarry Road tennis courts and recreational area on a long-term lease to the Parish Council. Residents have said we have done such a good job with the Town Gardens it makes sense to transfer a rundown site to the Parish. The Council has said they will be looking into this transfer in the Autumn and I am pleased the relevant Cabinet Member at Swindon Council has already said this transfer makes sense.

Broadgreen Safer Neighbourhood Project

I mentioned in my last Chair's report our continued close relationship with Local Police Teams inside the Parish and the partnership we have formed regarding a Community Safety project in the Broadgreen area. This project is set to go live next month with communications put out jointly by the Police and the Parish explaining to residents what the Community Safety scheme is and why it is of benefit to Broadgreen residents.

Parish Council Depot

I am speaking to you today from the Parish Council Offices but in the coming months most Parish staff will be based in our Parish Depot. Vehicles are now arriving in preparation for TUPE transfer in November and thanks to the efforts of Parish Officers the depot has been transformed in to a purpose-built, 21st century, grounds maintenance facility. Another Parish Council in Swindon has even contacted the Parish to ask if they could show their Councillors the type of depot facility they need to look for.

Concluding Remarks

In my Chair's reports it is becoming common place that I run through a multitude of Parish projects we have completed, and the success stories for South Swindon we have delivered. It has become easy for Councillors and parishioners to think the scale and number of projects we are delivering is normal for a such a recently formed Parish Council. I can say with certainty it is not.

Parish Councillors can be proud we are a forward-thinking Council with Parish Officers skilled in delivering local government services, with facilities and assets that give them the tools to offer the best service to our residents. As we start self-delivering services and collectively grow in experience our ability to make our Parish the very best it can be.

1163

Planning Applications delegated to the Chair and Vice Chair

The Deputy Clerk submitted a report containing the delegated responses of the Chair and Vice-Chair, a copy of which appears as Appendix A in the Minute Book.

RESOLVED that the responses of the Chair and Vice Chair approved.

1164 Planning Decisions

The Deputy Clerk submitted for information a report containing the decisions made by Swindon Borough Council, a copy of which appears as Appendix B in the Minute Book.

NOTED

1165 Electric Bikes

The Events and Communications Manager, Matt Bradley submitted a report regarding the purchase of two electric bikes for the use of Police Officers working within the South Swindon Parish area, a copy of which appears as Appendix C in the Minute Book

Matt Bradley said that the police had contacted the Parish regarding electric bikes in their policing role. Matt had approached a local business Mitchell Cycles, who had offered a discount of £750.00. Matt confirmed that there is an agreement which the police have agreed to sign if approval to purchase is given.

Cllrs Firmin and Howarth supported the purchase as it would be of great benefit to the Parish. Cllr Hopkins asked who would pay the insurance for the bikes, Matt responded that the police themselves would insure the bikes but he would confirm it with them. Cllr Ayris asked if a tracker could be added using the discount offered. The RFO confirmed that there is money available in the Parish events budget which could fund the purchase of the bikes.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 To acquire two electric bikes based on the cost and specification outlined in 2.3 of the report.
- 3.2 To agree with Wiltshire Police that the bikes will be acquired based on the outline agreement in 2.4 of the report.
- 3.3 To agree to Parish Officers in consultation with the Parish Chair and Vice-Chair to choose a satisfactory design for the parish branding.

RESOLVED that recommendations 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 be approved.

1166 East Wichel Drainage

The Projects Officer submitted a report regarding drainage at East Wichel a copy of which appears as Appendix D in the Minute Book

The Projects Officer gave a verbal representation alongside a written report.

Recommendations

It is recommended that company 2 be used since they are very capable of delivering the scheme and have the lowest price.

Company 1	Company 2	Company 3
£31,370.83	£21,475.68	£25,310.05

Cllr Horley asked why this play area had been chosen out of all the other play areas. The Chair said that the play area had been put forward by Councillors as it is the worst one inherited from SBC, and that many play areas in the parish had already been refurbished.

RESOLVED that the recommendation of Company 2 funded by the Open Spaces Reserve be approved.

1167 East Wichel Play Area Equipment

The Projects Officer submitted a report regarding Play equipment at East Wichel a copy of which appears as Appendix E in the Minute Book

The Projects Officer said that the proposal had been consulted on by local people and that the recommended company had a very large play/climbing unit with attached slides

also consideration had been given to those with disabilities and the ground will be gradient.

Company 1	Company 2	Company 3
£61,937.00	£68,000.00	£60,649.00

Recommendations

It is recommended that company 1 be used since they are very capable of delivering the scheme.

Councillors discussed the quotes and Cllr Horley asked which bid had a broader age range. The Project Officer said that that all the companies had been asked for an age range of 2yrs to 13-14 yrs.

RESOLVED that recommendation 1 funded by the Play Area Reserve be approved

1168

Allotments Track Renovation

The Projects Officer submitted a report regarding renovation of allotment track a copy of which appears as Appendix F in the Minute Book

The Projects Officer said that the access tracks to Westcott, Broome Manor, Shrivenham and Glenwood allotment sites needed extensive works carried out to improve access.

Company	Site	Total Price
1	Westcott	£22,595.00
	Broome Manor	-----
	Shrivenham	£4,286.00
	Glenwood	£9,782.00
2	Westcott	£30,290.00
	Broome Manor	£4,377.00
	Shrivenham	£4,479.30
	Glenwood	£6,066.90
3	Westcott	£30,585.00
	Broome Manor	£5,200.00
	Shrivenham	£7,980.00
	Glenwood	£15,864.00

Recommendations

It is recommended to split the works between contractors 1 and 2.

RESOLVED that the recommendation of work split between companies 1 and 2 and funded by CIL be approved.

1169

Green Corridor Footpath and Interpretation/Waymarking

The Projects Officer submitted a report regarding groundworks to the green corridor footpath a copy of which appears as Appendix G in the Minute Book

The Projects Officer said that the Green Corridor footpath requires a great deal of surface improvements between the section at Nationwide head office and Broome Manor Lane including new open drainage ditches.

Company 1	Company 2	Company 3
£15,244.4	£17,796.06	£21,010.00

Recommendations

It is recommended that company 1 be approved.

RESOLVED that recommendation 1 funded by Open Spaces Reserve be approved.

1170 **Swindon Area Committee**

Councillor D Griffiths gave a verbal report following the June 2020 meeting of the Swindon Area Committee.

Councillor Griffiths reported that he had attended a SAC meeting and had circulated the minutes to Councillors, and that other Parishes had experienced the same problems with Swindon Borough Council as South Swindon Parish had and that SBC seem to ignore the parishes responses to planning applications. The next SAC meeting will be held on 17 September 2020.

NOTED

1171 The Clerk submitted a report regarding future meetings a copy of which appears as Appendix H in the Minute Book.

The Clerk reported that because of the Covid-19 pandemic the government introduced legislation which allows local councils to meet remotely. These regulations apply to parish meetings held before 7th May 2021. Meetings remain essential to the parish council and are a legal requirement. Essential changes to the legislation this year removed the need for an Annual Parish meeting along with the re-appointment of a Chairman of the Council and Committees throughout this period. This has provided stability in what is seen as a transitional year. The current format for the Planning and Environment Committee with delegated decisions being undertaken by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Planning Committee has also worked well. Allowing for a quick response that matches Swindon Brough Council Planning Teams requirements/deadlines. Previously parish planning meetings have been out of sync of the return guidelines for comment. If a major scheme or contentious application required further scrutiny, then this could be shared with the wider Planning Committee members for comment and further escalation could be achieved by convening an Extraordinary Meeting or presented to the next scheduled Full Council Meeting depending upon timing

Recommendations

3.1 That the revised calendar of Parish Council Meetings be adopted

3.2 That the current process of responding to planning application as detailed in 2.4 of the report remains in place until May 2021, be reviewed at the Annual Parish Council Meeting

Councillor Herring requested that if cllrs have any comments regarding planning applications in their area or wards to advise/contact the chair and vice chair who can take it forward.

Cllr Firmin requested that his comments be recorded:

There are a few issues that I wish to be on the record over this issue it is around planning side of things. The planning committee because we have not had an AGM remains as it was pre Covid in terms of its composition and terms of reference we can revisit that if councillors wish to do so but at the moment that is one of the things that we aren't doing one of the things that the Government could have done when we went into lock down was to allow public bodies to move into dealing with issues via email but it deliberately didn't do so and actually insisted that meetings continued and therefore authorised the virtual meetings that we have been doing so from my point of view there are three things that we have to do when we set up a meeting schedule our processes have to be democratic, they have to be transparent which means that the public can see the information on which we are going to base our decisions which is the reports that we

have seen tonight and then the key thing which was reasserted at the start of lockdown was that our meetings have to be publicly accessible when we are going to make decisions so that means that the press and the public can actually see as tonight as we make decisions. On the planning side I think the proposal doesn't meet those requirements and therefore I have been doing some research and will have a discussion with the Clerk in due course but my view is that particular proposal does not cover some basic things as well such as where we have to give a declaration of interest or we have to potentially have recordings as to meetings we have attended so I think that there are a number of issues with it and therefore as at the end of the day we all have to once a year declare whether we have actually observed our terms of reference and our guidance I won't be able to support this proposal without a planning meeting schedule.

RESOLVED that recommendation 3.1 that the revised calendar of Parish Council Meetings be adopted.

For:16 Against: 1 Abstain: 1

RESOLVED that recommendation 3.2 that the current process of responding to planning application as detailed in 2.4 of the report remains in place until May 2021, be reviewed at the Annual Parish Council Meeting be adopted

For:15 Against:1 Abstentions: 2

1172 Parish Newsletter Increase

The Events and Communication Manager submitted a report seeking approval to increase the frequency of the Parish newsletter, a copy of which appears as Appendix I in the Minute Book

Councillors discussed the increase of parish newsletters including the cost and a requirement for parishioners who do not use online sources access parish information.

The Chair said that it is important to be able to make parish information accessible to all and thanked the Communications Officer Matt Bradley for all the media work he had done to date.

RESOLVED that the Parish newsletter increase with amendment be approved.

For: 15 Against: 3 Abstentions:0

1173 Parish Videos

The Events and Communication Manager submitted a report seeking approval of videos being created for the Parish website, a copy of which appears as Appendix J in the Minute Book

Company 1 £1,800 plus £15 per hour for any additional work required	Company 2 £2,000 plus £40 per hour for any further work required.	Company 3 Would not be able to meet the work specified in 2.4 due to the flexible nature of the video projects.
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Recommendation

To agree to contract Company 1 for the videography work specified in 2.4 of the report

RESOLVED that recommendation of company 1 with amendment be approved.

For: 15 Against: 3 Abstentions:0

The meeting closed at 8.22pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Council

