

SOUTH SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL
(CENTRAL SWINDON SOUTH PARISH COUNCIL)

COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2021 at 6.30pm
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 D Griffiths
Cllr E Heavens
Cllr P Herring
Cllr N Hopkins
Cllr S James
Cllr J Miah
Cllr M J Miah
Cllr J Milner-Barry
Cllr S Pajak
Cllr T Philpot
Cllr M Strinkovsky
Cllr N Watts
- Officers** Rob Core Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Jake Mee Chief Finance Officer (CFO)
Matt Bradley Communications and Events Manager (CEM)
Oliver Saunders Projects Officer
Theresa Gordon Planning & Agenda Clerk
- Public** One
- Public Session** Public questions relating to the delivery, tracking and use of new parish vehicles were put to the Clerk in writing. The Clerk confirmed that all new parish vehicles had now been delivered, and that where vehicles had been delayed the vehicle supplier had loaned the parish vehicles without a parish logo in the interim. All parish vehicles are fitted with trackers that can be monitored and no parish vehicles are used for personal use although the vehicles do travel outside of the parish on various work-related journeys.
- 1356** **Apologies**
Cllr M Gladman
Cllr A Hamid
Cllr W Horley
Cllr L Kasmaty
- 1357** **Declarations of Interest & Applications for Dispensation**
None
- 1358** **Chair's Report**
On the 9th April we received the sad news of the death of Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh. After his death I posted an announcement on behalf of the Parish Council expressing our condolences to The Queen and the Royal Family. As a mark of respect to Prince Phillip I would ask all Parish Councillors, Officers and members of the public hold a minute's silence.

The Parish Council continues to be operating at a fast pace and we are currently progressing a variety of projects including some that we will be discussing in tonight's meeting. I thought I would mention a couple of highlight projects for discussion.

Play Area Refurbishments

The Parish Council continues to build on its strong track record on Play Area refurbishments, completing our 12th Play Area refurbishment since being established in 2017, vastly more refurbishments than any other Parish Council in Swindon over the same time period. The most recent refurbishment is at Westcott Rec Play Area where we have installed a new zipwire and play equipment. Prior to this work the Parish Council also installed a new zipwire and basket swing at Savernake Street Play Area.

The improvements we have made to our play areas has made a meaningful difference to children within our Parish and something all Parish Councillors should be proud of.

Town Gardens Café

Since our last meeting there have been a number of positive stories from the café. Firstly, Parish Councillors will remember agreeing to the Old Town Rotary Club using the café for a fundraiser opportunity over the Easter Weekend. I am pleased to say that this raised £3,000 for Swindon's Brighter Futures charity. Particular thanks should go to all of the volunteers at the café who helped raise this money and I would like to mention special thanks to Cllr Neil Hopkins who dedicated a lot of time to making this happen.

Since the fundraiser, the Parish Council has commissioned repair work to the café kiosk. Work has just completed, and I would encourage all Parish Councillors to visit the café and see how much it has improved. Thank you to our contractors and Parish Officers for a job well done.

Also at our last meeting, we agreed to new tenants for the café. Fran and Marie will be moving into the café this weekend. They both have a background in catering and community events, and we hope they will grasp the café's full potential in the coming months and years. We wish them good luck.

Allotments Improvements

I know Parish Councillors are very proud of the investment we have made in our allotments. In our last meeting I reported improvements to our larger allotments, and allotment track improvements has now extended to our smaller sites including at Burghley Close, Monkton Close, Hatton Grove and Cranmore Avenue. With one of the lowest allotment charges in Swindon we continue to deliver excellent value for money for our allotment holders and are now looking at how more allotment sites can be secured inside our Parish so more of our parishioners can benefit from our excellent allotment service.

Grass Cutting

As I reported in my last Chair's report most of our services team have moved on to grass cutting and we have received many compliments from residents on the service we are providing. This gives justification to the Parish Council's decision to buy new mowers and together with a dedicated workforce, it is paying dividends.

There is a balance to be struck with grass cutting and the Parish Council is committed to rewilding parts of the Parish. Our In Bloom Working Party have agreed to safeguard from grass cutting 8 areas of the Parish including at:

Buckhurst Field	Marlborough Lane	Pipers Way	Shaftesbury Lake
The Magic Roundabout	Scotby Avenue	Savernake Street	Sixth Field

Thanks

As I do with all my Chair's Reports, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Chief Executive Officer, Chief Finance Officer, and wider Parish Team for their dedication in delivering the very best service for our parishioners.

Cllr S Allsopp left the meeting during this item

- 1359** **Minutes of the Finance & Staffing Meeting – 23 March 2021**
RESOLVED That the minutes of the Finance and Staffing meeting held on 23 March 2021 be approved as a correct record.
- 1360** **Minutes of the Full Council Meeting – 23 March 2021**
RESOLVED That the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 23 March 2021 be approved as a true record.
Cllr S James joined the meeting during this item.
- 1361** **Minutes of the Planning and Environment Extraordinary Meeting – 6 April 2021**
RESOLVED That the minutes of the Planning and Environment Extraordinary meeting held on 6 April 2021 be approved as a correct record.
- 1362** **Planning Applications delegated to the Chair & Vice-Chair**
The Chair 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 be approved.
- 1363** **Planning Decisions**
The Chief Finance Officer 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
- 1364** **Emergency Delegated Decisions**
The Chief Finance Officer submitted a copy of decisions made by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Parish Council to be noted, a copy of which appears as Appendix C in the Minute Book.
NOTED
- 1365** **Remedial Works at Cambria Bridge Play Area**
The Projects Officer submitted a report regarding various landscape improvements to Cambria Bridge Play Area, a copy of which appears as Appendix D in the Minute Book.
The Projects Officer said that the play area had been renovated a year ago, but remedial work was required to the ground surfaces. The trees had been in-situ for 25 years and been pollarded recently to control the canopies, however the tree roots had affected the tarmac surfaces and it is proposed to rectify the issues with raised shrub beds created over areas of tree root damage, various areas of tarmac to be replaced, and a raised bank next to the play area will be enclosed with railway sleepers with a tarmac path between the raised beds. Play area planting will be done at a later date.
- | Contractor | Price + VAT |
|------------|---------------------------|
| 1. | £31,295 |
| 2. | £29,700 amended to 29,695 |
| 3. | £31,505 |
- Recommendation**
That Contractor 2 carry out the works.
- Cllr J Miah Joined the meeting during this item.
Cllr M Strinkovsky left the meeting due to technical issues during this item.
- RESOLVED** that recommendation 2 as amended to £29,695 and funded by the open spaces reserve be approved.

1366 Works at East Wichel

The Projects Officer submitted a report regarding the second Phase of Landscape Improvements to East Wichel Park, a copy of which appears as Appendix E in the Minute Book.

The Projects Officer said that the second phase of works to the play area would address low lying areas with topsoil followed by laying grass seed, finished with a binding course which would become a compacted surface. Some play area paths would be widened, and improvements made to existing contours and drains. Work will take a week to 10 days to complete, and parts of the play area should be accessible for part of that time. The CEO said that the stone boulders would not be concreted into place which would create a natural habitat.

Contractor	Price + Vat
1.	£8,480
2.	£12,500
3.	£15,520

Recommendation

That Contractor 1 carry out the work.

Cllr S Allsopp re-joined the meeting during this item.

RESOLVED that quote 1 of £8,480. funded by the open spaces reserve be approved.

1367 Green Corridor Footpath Improvement

The Chief Executive Officer submitted a report regarding the second phase of groundworks to Improve the surface of the Green Corridor footpath, a copy of which appears as Appendix F in the Minute Book.

The CEO said that the second phase of groundworks to improve the surface of the Green Corridor footpath is to revisit ground surfaces which had dried out and were heavily damaged in places. The proposal is to lay 400 tonnes of imported stone and compact it to create a durable surface however the path would require monitoring going forward and the Parish hoped to launch a website alongside QR coded maps with a launch anticipated in early June. A second section of a third path leading to the river Ray will be created with an all-weather route between Broome Manor and Nightingale farm with Swindon Borough agreement. The Projects Officer gave information on how the pathway would be created and rendered usable he said that it would be a slower process but take approximately three weeks to complete.

Contractor	Quote + VAT
1.	£27,000
2.	£19,180
3.	£27,550

Recommendation

That quote 2 be approved

RESOLVED that quote 2 of £19,180. funded by the open spaces reserve be approved.

1368 **Queens Park Gates**

The Chief Executive Officer submitted a report regarding work to Queens Park gates, a copy of which appears as Appendix G in the Minute Book.

The CEO said that a quote of £17,550.00 had been received for refurbishment of Queens Park gates and confirmed that he and the Service Manager had assessed the cost of the work being done in-house by Parish Service Officers. Self-delivery costs would amount to £8,589.00 of which much of the cost would be labour hours, therefore the cost to the Parish would be reduced to £2,783.00 which would be for a sandblasting service and materials. The refurbishment would be a rolling programme over the spring/summer 2021.

Recommendation

That the parish council commit to refurbishing Queens Park gates inhouse at a cost of £2,783.00 This would be over a planned five-month period, so that the parish service officers can continue to maintain the parish horticultural equipment deployed for grass maintenance. The main colour of the gates would be black with gold highlights as per the original design.

RESOLVED that the recommendation to refurbish Queens Park gates in-house be approved.

1369 **Oakfield Park**

The Chief Finance Officer gave a verbal report regarding completion of the Oakfield Park Lease, a copy of which appears as Appendix H in the Minute Book.

The CFO gave a verbal report stating that the final lease for the Oakfield site had been delayed. It had previously been resolved to take on the site, but the CFO wanted to remind councillors of the terms and sought to get a specific resolution for the Chair and Vice chair to sign the lease when it is received. The CFO gave a recap of what had been previously agreed regarding the site: To take on the open space at the Oakfield development of which he had negotiated a section 106 receipt of £139,000 for maintaining the site. Phase 1 completion date is February 2022 and would be transferred to the Parish Council two years later in February 2024, in the interim the site will be maintained by a management company who maintain the same standards as the parish and would also cover the cost of any failings of works. A tender has been made for the same company to continue the maintenance for the parish and the CFO will update the council in due course.

RESOLVED to delegate the signing of the lease to the Chair and Vice chair of the council be approved.

1370 **Photo Swindon Project**

The Communications and Events Manager submitted a report regarding the Photo Swindon Project, a copy of which appears as Appendix I in the Minute Book.

Recommendations

That Parish Councilor's agree the following:

1. Support the Photo Swindon project in Parish Council parks from July until September in 2021.
2. Support the purchase of 12 weatherproof frames from Company 1 for the Photo Swindon event and other future events, as well as the cost of transporting and installing the frames in our 3 Parish parks through the Parish Council's in-house team
3. Agree to cover the cost of photography and printing for this project.

The CEM said that the report was as tabled but wanted to let Cllrs know that if they agree to the project it will be the first of its kind in Swindon and the nature of transporting the frames across different parks will be one of the first of its kind in the country and each photographer who will be part of the exhibition has an impressive biography recognised

on a world platform, with numerous awards and exhibitions between them spanning from the Barbican, the National Portrait Gallery, New York Times and Smithsonian.

RESOLVED that all recommendations taken collectively be approved.

1371 Fidelity Insurance

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report regarding Fidelity Insurance, a copy of which appears as Appendix J in the Minute Book.

The CFO confirmed that as shown in the report the Internal Auditor had made a recommendation regarding Fidelity Insurance, the CFO said that due to the existing cover and assessment of the risk level against the control measures in place it is the opinion of the Chief Finance Officer that additional cover is not required. However, Council must be satisfied that this is the case.

3. Recommendations

3.1 The instructions of the Parish Council are sought.

RESOLVED that Fidelity Insurance with no additional cover be approved.

1372 Swindon Area Committee

Councillor D Griffiths gave a verbal update of the November 2020 Swindon Area Committee meeting, a copy of which appears as Appendix K in the Minute Book.

NOTED

1373 Admission of Public and Press

To resolve in accordance with Standing Order 3 (d) 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: Staffing.

1374 Staffing

The Chief Executive Officer submitted a written report, a copy of which appears in the Confidential Minute Book.

The report provided information regarding a job role, temporary staffing, and recommendations.

RESOLVED that recommendations be approved.

For 17 Against 2 Abstentions 0

The meeting closed at 07:36pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Council