

WEST SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **WEST SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL** on **MONDAY 28 October 2019 at 7.00 pm** at **WEST SWINDON LIBRARY**

Present:

Cllr Umar Ali
Cllr Steph Exell
Cllr Nigel Gibbons - Chair
Cllr Suresh Gattapur
Cllr Geoff Gould
Cllr Prakash Khaitan
Cllr Timothy Makofu
Cllr Nick Martin – Vice Chair
Cllr Mary Martin
Cllr Trish Philpot
Cllr Caryl Sydney Smith

Officers:

Paula Harrison (Parish Manager)
Leanne Curtis (Assistant Clerk)

Public: Nine

Public Session:

A resident asked if Parish Councillors were aware of anti social behaviour problems outside the One Stop premises at Toothill Village Centre and to the rear entrance of Asda. Cllr Philpot reported that these incidents had been reported to the local police. The Chair indicated that the issues were noted.

A resident asked if Councillors would review the road surface in Eastleaze along Whitehill Way, the subsidence needs repairing. The Chair noted the comments and advised it would be taken up with Swindon Borough Council.

A resident asked if any site visits had been undertaken to Jersey Park to review lost fencing and parking. Cllr Williams and Cllr Gibbons agreed to visit in the near future.

A resident asked for it to be noted that the work was progressing very positively. Westlea school had recently borrowed litter picking kit for a school-led litter pick and volunteer planting at Westlea park and work on the pond had really made a difference.

Meeting start 7.35 pm

191. Apologies

Apologies received from and Cllr Simon Firth, Cllr Keith Williams, and Cllr Tim Swinyard due to work commitments, Cllr Mike Burtenshaw due to illness.

RESOLVED that the apologies are accepted and approved.

192. Declarations of Interest & Applications for Dispensation

Cllr Steph Exell declared a personal interest in scouting in relation to item 12 as her partner is a Scout Leader.

193. Minutes of the previous meetings

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 23 September and Monday 21 October 2019 be confirmed and adopted.

194. Minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on Wednesday 02 October 2019 be approved and adopted.

195. Minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee meeting held on Wednesday 02 October 2019 be approved and adopted.

196. Minutes of the Leisure & Amenities Committee

RESOLVED that Recommendation (Minute 186) that a phase of youth work is funded for traded services from Swindon Borough Council at £1770.00 be approved.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Leisure & Amenities Committee held on Monday 07 October 2019 be approved and adopted.

197. Update from Swindon Borough Councillors

The Chair reported that numerous discussions regarding the performance and future of the Streetsmart contract had been undertaken. The Chair had engaged with a number of concerns raised by local residents mostly in regard to litter picking and wildflower meadow perimeters. The feedback from residents is invaluable.

198. Update from Swindon Borough Councillors

Cllr Mary Martin reported that following issues arising from waste collection services, the Swindon Borough Council website would post updates on any issues arising so that residents can be informed of any issues.

199. Reports from Parish Council Representatives

Cllr Nick Martin made a general point that the redevelopment of play areas had been noted and enjoyed by residents.

Cllr Suresh Gattapur reported that volunteers had planted over 500 daffodils in Westlea park. Cllr Gattapur thanked all those that participated.

Cllr Geoff Gould noted that the roadside sweeper had been out in Freshbrook.

200. Internal Auditors Interim Report September 2019

Councillors received an Interim Report from Auditing Solutions, the Parish Council's internal auditors, a copy of which appears as **Appendix A** in the Minute Book. No recommendations for action at the current time.

RESOLVED that all Councillors noted the report.

201. Library Staffing Hours Grant Update

Councillors received a communication from Swindon Library Service setting out costs for a continuation of the provision of 16 hours staffed time in the West Swindon Library, a copy of which appears as **Appendix B** in the Minute Book. The costs accommodated an annual increase in salary costs.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council notes the ongoing cost for additional staffed hours in the West Swindon library and will consider alongside future budget considerations.

202. Grants Report

Following on from the previous Full Council discussion, the Parish Councillors received a report setting out the potential framework and considerations for a grants scheme for the Parish. Councillors considered the framework.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council should establish criteria for its grants programme and consider a scheme that sets out a minimum of two dates per annum for the collation and receipt of grants and that this be brought back to a future meeting for further consideration.

Cllr Nick Martin asked for it to be noted that he was a member of Peatmoor Woodland Group who had been a recipient of a Parish Council grant this year.

203. Grant Applications

The Parish Manager introduced this item with reference to a grant report on legislation supporting the grant applications, a copy of which appears as **Appendix C** in the Minute Book.

Councillors considered a grant application from Toothill Scouts for a new roof and guttering to the existing scout hut at Toothill Farmhouse site, a copy of which appears as **Appendix D** in the Minute Book. Councillors noted support for the Toothill Scout organisation. Concern was raised as to the sustainable condition of the building.

RESOLVED that the grant application is approved providing that the following are met:

- lease of tenure is confirmed
- At least 2 formal quotes are provided
- preferred contractor provides a method statement and indication of guarantees for the work

Councillors received a grant application from Freshbrook Church for internal improvements to the building, a copy of which appears as **Appendix E** in the Minute Book. Councillors considered the extent of wider community use of the facility and were generally satisfied by the level of community use. The application is made in the name of Freshbrook Church, a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO).

RESOLVED that the Committee support and approve the grant in principle subject to clarification on the ownership of the building. If there are issues arising from ownership, that this be referred back to Finance & Staffing Committee.

204. Admission of the public and press

The public were advised that 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 be instructed to withdraw'.
Reason: Commercial sensitivity and Budget decisions

Standing orders suspended 7.45 pm. Standing orders resumed 7.49 pm.

205. Swindon Independent Remuneration Panel Recommendations

The Committee received recommendations for the allocation and agreement of Councillors allowances as set out by the Swindon Independent Remuneration Panel, a copy of which appears as **Appendix F** in the Minute Book. Councillors debated the level of expenses to set. It was noted that the allowance had not been changed since its adoption in 2017.

RESOLVED that

- a) The Parish Manager seeks clarification as to the exact calculation formulating the % of SBC allowance column.
- b) The Parish allowance for 2020/21 is set at £750 per annum for Councillors and £1500 per annum for the Chair.

206. Play area Tenders

Councillors received a report summarising the tender evaluation process and the results of the scoring panel. A private and confidential copy appears as **Appendix G** in the Minute Book. Councillors reviewed the information.

RESOLVED that the company Wicksteed be appointed as a single Contractor for all seven sites: Shelfinch, The Chesters, Nine Elms, The Holbeins, Tumpy Field, Bloomsbury Park and Uxbridge Road. Combined budget £216,000 plus £19,075 additional resurfacing at Shelfinch, Total expenditure agreed: £235,075.00.

207. Precept Budget Setting

The Parish Manager circulated a draft budget agreed by Finance and Staffing Committee members. Councillors considered proposed expenditure for next year. It was noted that future expenditure on youth services may exceed the current budget of £5,000 and a new figure of £10,000 was set. Councillors agreed that there was no current provision for the costs of creating new allotment sites and a development fund should be introduced.

RESOLVED that the budget be revised to include these provisions.

Date of next meeting: Monday 25th November , 7.00 pm, West Swindon Library.

The meeting closed at 8.44 pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Council