

WEST SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the
WEST SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL on
MONDAY 27 JANUARY 2020 at 7.00 pm at
WEST SWINDON LIBRARY

Present:

Cllr Simon Firth
Cllr Nigel Gibbons - Chair
Cllr Geoff Gould
Cllr Prakash Khaitan
Cllr Tim Makofu
Cllr Nick Martin – Vice Chair
Cllr Mary Martin
Cllr Trish Philpot
Cllr Caryl Sydney Smith
Cllr Tim Swinyard
Cllr Keith Williams

Officers:

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

Public: Six

Public Session:

Resident asked for progress to stop illegal parking on the cyclepath in Eastleaze. Chair advised it was work in progress.

Resident asked for an update on the BMX track. The Parish Manager indicated that progress was slow as it was proving difficult to get designs and costings from contractors.

Resident reported that problems in Jersey Park with roadside household waste collection and recycling was persisting. Cllr Keith Williams offered to investigate it further.

Resident asked Council to consider the cyber crime item and potential costs associated with it.

Resident asked if it would be possible to improve the ground surface around benches that were often muddy or flooded in winter on Shaw Ridge. Shingle or hardstanding was proposed. The Chair advised this would be reviewed.

Resident advised that continued use of the side arm for hedge cutting still resulted in debris and mess being distributed. The Chair noted the comments.

Presentation from Mr Angus Macpherson, Police & Crime Commissioner

Mr Angus Macpherson introduced his role as Police & Crime Commissioner as the voice of the people to hold the Chief Constable to account. Last year the Commissioner asked for an increase to the policing element of the precept. As a result, 41 extra officers will be joining the force in April 2020. This year, a cap of 83 pence increase has been set and is proposed to be applied for 2020. The increase is required in order to maintain the current level of staffing in Swindon and Wiltshire.

Questions:

- Mr Macpherson was asked to note that the £1 increase previously proposed actually represented a 20% increase for households but was not being expressed in that way to the public
 - Mr Macpherson was asked to confirm the future use of the West police point. Mr Macpherson indicated it was part of current police operations.
 - Mr Macpherson was asked to comment on what action was being taken to protect children from county lines. Mr Macpherson advised that more Police Community Support Officers would be going in to local schools.
 - Mr Macpherson was asked to comment on the current black and minority ethnic backgrounds represented in police staffing. Mr Macpherson indicated that numbers were low and work was underway to recruit staff to reflect the local communities.
 - Mr Macpherson was asked to comment on the current large numbers of youths on bikes in public places, and riding on footpaths and roads. Mr Macpherson indicated that youths should be allowed to gather but shouldn't act in ways that intimidate others.
 - Mr Macpherson was asked to explain why the proposed increase was not given in percentage terms when this is most commonly used by other organisations when talking about increases to the Council tax. Mr Macpherson advised that professional advice was to refer to the increase in terms that people could relate to such as pounds and pence or relative to price of a cup of coffee. This was discussed further with comments that people can understand percentage increases and should be offered both.
- The Chair thanked Mr Macpherson for his time and information.

Meeting start 7.36 pm

285. Apologies

Apologies received from Cllr Umar Ali and Cllr Suresh Gattapur due to work, Cllr Mike Burtenshaw and Cllr Steph Exell due to illness.

RESOLVED that the apologies are accepted and approved.

286. Declarations of Interest & Applications for Dispensation

Cllr Caryl Sydney Smith declared an interest in Toothill Big Local Hub as a member.

287. Minutes of the previous meetings

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 16 December 2019 be confirmed and adopted.

288. Minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee

Cllr Nick Martin did not participate in the consideration of the Planning Applications.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on Wednesday 15 January 2020 be approved and adopted.

289. Minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee

RESOLVED that Recommendation (Minute 275) that 8 Payments totalling **£44,654.39** be approved.

RESOLVED that Recommendation (Minute 278) that KMC Consultancy be commissioned to further advise the Parish Council on future steps for service provision/tendering be approved.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee meeting held on Wednesday 15 January 2020 be approved and adopted.

290. Minutes of the Leisure & Amenities Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Leisure & Amenities Committee held on Thursday 16 January 2020 be approved and adopted.

291. Update from the Parish Chair

Cllr Gibbons reported that there had been a number of liaison meetings with the Parish Chairs which included discussion on health and safety, and adoption of new developments. The Chair felt it was encouraging that Swindon Borough Council is promoting a partnership ethos. There have also been meetings with other Parishes to review their street cleaning and grounds maintenance delivery.

The Chair gave a big thank you to all the volunteers who work with the Parish Council to keep West Swindon clean and green.

292. Update from Parish Councillors

Cllr Gould reported that the Services Working Party had visited Haydon Wick Parish Council to gain insight into the way that grounds and cleansing services are delivered. They had a split policy on contracting and in house.

Cllr Makofu noted public disappointment at the two new street lights installed on Stokesay Drive with only one in operation since installation.

293. Update from Borough Council Representatives

Cllr Williams reported that the Toothill Watchers sculpture replacement has been progressing. Originally sponsored by a cement manufacture, it is showing signs of wear but plans are underway for its repair/replacement.

Cllr Williams reported that visitors to Peatmoor School can drop off and pick up from the Chinese Experience car park opposite the school. This should alleviate parking problems on Tower Road and Pepperbox Hill. The school will be sending a letter out to parents and families.

Cllr Swinyard reported that the Local Plan Review remained open until 31 January 2020 and encouraged members of the public to make their comments.

Cllr Swinyard reported that there was no update at present on work on Hay Lane.

Cllr Gould asked if Swindon Borough Councillors could address the installation of tin fencing at Colchester Close.

Cllr Nick Martin reported that work had progressed with volunteers at Peatmoor woodland with the repair of walkways.

294. Date of the Annual Parish Meeting

The Parish Manager circulated a report setting out dates for future meetings, a copy of which appears as **Appendix A** in the Minute Book.

Councillors discussed the dates proposed.

RESOLVED that the Annual Parish Council meeting takes place on Tuesday 19th May 2020.

RESOLVED that the Parish Office takes into account likely attendance and holiday commitments and therefore does not schedule any Committee meetings in the month of August.

295. Insurance Consideration – Cyber Crime Cover

Councillors received information regarding Cyber Crime Cover, a copy of which appears as **Appendix B** in the Minute Book.

It was noted that a risk assessment was required to better understand the Parish Council's current situation and relevant risks, and, that Councillors Mary Martin and Suresh Gattapur would be able to advise on the matters. It was noted that a future report would be submitted to the Finance & Staffing Committee.

296. Admission of the Public and Press

RESOLVED that the public and press be temporarily excluded to allow for a Council discussion on staffing and contracting matters.

297. Future Staffing and Contracting Matters

Councillors considered key issues arising relating to Swindon Borough Council's Cabinet report regarding the potential withdrawal of providing Streetsmart services to Parishes.

It was noted that a decision had not yet been made and that the Parish Council should continue to look at options for future delivery. KMC Consultancy would assist with the process and the Services Working Party will continue to take the matters forward.

Date of next meeting: Monday 24th February 2020, 7.00 pm, West Swindon Library.

The meeting closed at 8.21 pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Council