

SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8th DECEMBER 2020 AT 7:30PM

Due to the COVID-19 virus pandemic this meeting was conducted as an audio/video conference in accordance with the provisions of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Parish Councillors Present:

Peter Allen (Chairman)
James Cornish

Yvonne Pirso
Helen Wells

Also Present:

Borough Councillor Cllr. Clucas, Borough and County Councillor Cllr. Fisher and Shaun Cullimore (Clerk).

20/205 APOLOGIES

Cllr. Lisa Whitaker.

20/206 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

20/207 ADJOURNMENT FOR THE PUBLIC SESSION

No members of the public present.

20/208 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Council **RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of 10th November 2020 as a true record.

20/209 MATTERS ARISING

ACTION 19/106/1 – The Clerk to approach other local councils to firm up the requirement for evening training places. Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils (GAPTC) can run their “Being a Better Councillor” course via Zoom in the evening. It would require two evenings (two hours each). The cost would be £450. The maximum number of participants would be 15. Cllrs. Cornish and Pirso would prefer a Monday or Tuesday evening (subject to adequate notice). **Action continues.**

ACTION 19/169/1 – Cllr. Pirso to approach the school head teacher with a view to the school being represented at a meeting on the parking situation. Cllr. Pirso had spoken to Mr. Mills, head teacher. Cllr. Pirso had been advised by the local PCSOs that they would be willing to monitor the situation. At the moment the school is using a staggered start which reduces the problem. The Head had stated that both he and the school caretaker had received abuse when remonstrating with parents. It was suggested that the PCSOs be asked to do an article for the Village News. **Action continues.**

ACTION 19/195/1 – Cllr. Cornish to set up an informal meeting between the Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee. Cllr. Cornish felt it would be too difficult to get everyone together and would draft a letter to GRCC asking on what basis they had advised the Village Hall Committee that they own the Village Hall. **Action continues.**

ACTION 19/210/1 – Clerk to send a summary of the County Council issues outstanding

to the GCC Chief Executive. The main issue had been traffic calming. The Clerk was now trying to progress this through Cheltenham Borough Council and the Elms Park planning discussions. Action discontinued.

ACTION 20/78/1 – All to consider how our working methods could be improved. A working meeting had been held. See agenda item below. **Action complete.**

ACTION 20/115/1 – Clerk to share our thoughts on Elms Park traffic issues with Chris Mead (County Council) with a view to getting some Section 106 money invested in mitigation. Mr. Mead is no longer engaged with the County Council. The Clerk wrote to Craig Hemphill (CBC). A reply is awaited. **Action complete.**

ACTION 20/183/1 – Clerk to investigate the provision of a path near the gym. The Clerk and Cllr. Fisher had met with Danny Taylor (Local Area Highways Manager, Gloucestershire Highways). Mr. Taylor is checking that the verge is in the ownership of Highways. **Action continues.**

ACTION 20/195/1 – Clerk to mention in the Village News that support continues to be available to those who need it during the pandemic. **Action complete.**

ACTION 20/197/1 – Clerk to write to GAPTC to ask for advice regarding Village Hall ownership. The Clerk had approached GAPTC, who had recommended a solicitor specialising in trusts. The Clerk had been in touch with the solicitor. This is detailed under the agenda item. **Action complete.**

ACTION 20/203/1 – Clerk to write to the charities operating the donation banks at Sainsbury's. **Action continues.**

ACTION 20/204/1 – Clerk to liaise with the Manor Farm developer regarding the trees, the manhole covers and the fence. The Clerk had met with the site manager. The manhole covers are where the site drains join the main rainwater drain. Nothing has been disturbed beyond where the drains join. SUDS has been implemented on the site and the outflow of water will be regulated. The fence adjacent to each property will be maintained by the home owner. Fences not associated with a particular property will be maintained by the home owners collectively. The roads within the development will be unadopted and will be maintained in a similar manner. **Action complete.**

ACTION 20/204/2 – Clerk to contact the owner of Swindon Lodge regarding the dangerous wall. **Action continues.**

20/210 ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

The Council **RESOLVED** to make the payments shown in appendix 1.

20/211 PLANNING AND LICENSING

- 20/02079/FUL – Creation of a laundry room at Orchard Leigh, Hayden Road. The Council **RESOLVED** to raise no objection.

There were no licensing applications to be considered.

20/212 COUNCIL RESPONSE TO CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

For the time being our support phase is at an end. Cllr. Cornish is owed £214.62. One

person who has received support from the Parish Council is in financial difficulties. The debt outstanding is £580.87. The Clerk had consulted GAPTC regarding the matter. GAPTC advised that, given the exceptional circumstances, it would be appropriate to write off the debt using the power to spend provided by Local Government Act 1972 section 137. The Council **RESOLVED** to write off the debt.

Cllr. Clucas reported on the initiatives set up by the Borough Council to alleviate the effects of the pandemic.

One person who had received support from the Parish Council had paid the Council £50.00 but had only spent £32.81.

NEW ACTION 20/212/1 – Clerk to organise a refund for the parishioner who had overpaid.

It was noted that the Borough Council is looking for volunteers to assist with the vaccination programme in non-medical roles.

20/213 EMERGENCY PLANNING

No progress.

20/214 VILLAGE HALL

The Village Hall has been rented for a wedding. In addition to the Early Years playgroup other groups will start to return to the hall.

A number of capital projects will be undertaken, including:

- New fire exit doors
- Roof insulation
- New external entrance via what is now the cupboard at the far end of the hall to enable the main hall and the bar area to be isolated and separately let

These projects will cost approximately £10k and will be financed from reserves. £14k will remain in reserve which is considered adequate.

Regarding the issue of hall ownership, the Clerk had conferred with a solicitor recommended by GAPTC who specialises in trust law. The solicitor noted that “title” and “ownership” are two different things. The hall is now a charity asset; if it were ever sold the money raised would have to be used for charitable purposes.

The Council **RESOLVED** to authorise the Clerk to progress discussions with the solicitor with a limit of liability of £2,000.

The Clerk was asked to agree the task with the solicitor then invite the Village Hall Committee to participate and/or contribute.

NEW ACTION 20/214/1 – Clerk to clarify issues around ownership of the Village Hall with the solicitor.

20/215 COUNCIL WORKING METHODS

A working group meeting had been held that had produced a set of requirements.

NEW ACTION 20/215/1 – Cllr. Cornish to write a report of the working methods meeting.

20/216 SUNDIAL MOSAIC

Cllr. Allen suggested that it might be time to construct a different, more durable edifice but retain the sundial motif. This would be discussed further in the New Year.

20/217 SPEED REDUCTION INITIATIVES

See action 20/115/1 above.

Cllr. Clucas suggested that the Parish Council put up a motion that she could take to the Borough Council/Cabinet. Cllr. Fisher could also put this forward at the County Council.

20/218 CAR PARKING AT SCHOOL

See action 19/169/1 above.

20/219 WAR MEMORIAL

No progress.

20/220 MEMBERSHIP OF GAPTC

The Council is required to notify GAPTC (Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils) by the end of December if it wishes to discontinue membership at the end of the financial year. The Clerk recommended that the Council continue in membership and the Council **RESOLVED** to do so.

20/221 PARISH COUNCIL BUDGET FOR 2021-2022

The Clerk stated that the Parish Council needed to produce a budget for 2021-2022. This would establish the Parish Council's precept requirement. The precept would need to be notified to the Borough Council in January at the latest.

The Clerk had produced a draft budget and distributed it to members. The following suggestions were made.

- Include £100 to support Facebook activities
- Increase "Special Projects" category by £2000 to include redevelopment of the sundial
- Make a provision of £2000 for legal advice associated with the Village Hall
- Increase the "Training" budget to £1000 to recognise the need to train three new councillors
- Make provision of £2000 for the purchase of a tablet

NEW ACTION 20/221/1 – Clerk to incorporate changes to the budget and publish a new draft.

20/222 ALLOTMENTS INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Ian Brown, allotments manager, had collected £1168 in rents. The Council had set the rent at £27 per plot. However, Mr. Brown had used out of date forms in error and had asked plot holders for £25. Since the rents had now been collected the Clerk

recommended that the Council not pursue further payment. The Council **RESOLVED** to accept the Clerk's recommendation.

Mr. Brown had incurred expenses of £17.29 in making a repair to the water supply and in distributing letters to plot holders.

20/223 REPORTS

Cllr. Fisher stated that the developers associated with Elms Park were concerned that a Transport Plan had still not been produced by the County Council. The consortium had planned to have built 500 houses by now. Developers could look to take advantage of the absence of a Transport Plan and the lack of a five year land supply. The County Council are now waiting for the M5 Junction 10 development to shape the Transport Plan.

The traffic speed indicator in Hyde Lane is broken again and will be replaced.

A bus shelter will be provided on Windy Ridge Road.

Cllr. Clucas stated that the police are aware of the traffic problems caused by the queue at McDonald's drive-through. Something will be done in the New Year to accommodate the queue within the curtilage of the retail park.

Cllr. Allen observed that the absence of a step on the one side of the stile in the park made access difficult.

NEW ACTION 20/223/1 – Clerk to ask for the stile in the park to be modified to allow easier passage.

The meeting closed at 10:00pm.

Signed:	Date:
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APPENDIX 1 – LIST OF PAYMENTS

Description	Amount
Clerk salary and expenses for November <i>(ref 2021-090)</i> <i>Payment by BACS</i>	£477.18
Ian Brown allotment expenses <i>(ref 2021-089)</i> <i>Payment by BACS</i>	£17.29
James Cornish reimbursement for Covid-19 support payments made to volunteers <i>(ref 2021-086)</i> <i>Payment by BACS</i>	£214.62