

Minutes of the SWINDON PARISH ANNUAL MEETING
held on 18th May 2022 at Swindon Village Hall

Present:

Councillor James Cornish (Chairman of the Parish Council)
Shaun Cullimore (Clerk to the Parish Council)
9 members of the public

Apologies:

Parish Councillors Alison Berry and Lisa Whitaker.
Borough Councillor Flo Clucas.

Minutes of Previous Annual Parish Meeting:

The minutes of 4th May 2021 were accepted as a true record.

Report by Parish Councillor James Cornish (Chairman of Swindon Parish Council)

See attachment 1.

Report by Shaun Cullimore (Clerk to Swindon Parish Council)

See attachment 2.

Report by Parish Councillor Helen Wells on Elms Park, Local Green Space, etc.

See attachment 3.

Report by Borough Councillor Flo Clucas

See attachment 4.

Any Other Business

A point was made that the electricity supply to the parish may need to be improved with the provision of new housing and electric vehicle charging points. This may be a suitable target for CIL money.

There was some discussion of the situation with the Village Hall car park. The Borough Council wish to either sell the car park or dramatically increase the rent. Suggestions to help with the financing included crowdfunding and getting support from local businesses.

A resident stated that there were relatively few dropped kerbs in the area, presenting difficulties to travellers with pushchairs and wheelchairs. It was agreed that a map highlighting the key crossing points might be a useful tool in dealing with Gloucestershire Highways.

The meeting closed at 9:20pm.

Shaun Cullimore
Clerk to Swindon Parish Council

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ATTACHMENT 1

Chairman's Report to the Swindon Parish Annual Meeting 2021-2022

As Swindon Parish Council Chair, I am pleased to welcome you to your Annual Parish Meeting. As this is our first annual meeting since 2019 due to the COVID 19 pandemic I'd like to reflect on the challenges, progress, and achievements of the 2 ½ years

We've welcomed four new parish councillors: Lisa Whitaker, Natalie Blankley, Sharon Collicutt, and Alison Berry. All bring a new different skill sets and perspectives to the council, and we are delighted that they have stepped up to server their community. As well as welcoming new parish councillors we have had several councillors decide to step down. I'd like to thank Yolande Booyse and Stuart Deakin for their contributions over the past years. Peter Allen has served this community for over 20 years, firstly as a parish councillor and later as chairmen. His has contributed to many projects and campaigns over the years, spanning from the for runner to our local green space, to spending countless hours reviewing planning applications. To put it simply, our community would not be where it is today without Peter. He will be missed.

The Elms Park development planning consent continues to provide a steady workstream for the Parish Council. During COVID, the application for Phase 1A was submitted, with various revisions since. The Parish Council has reviewed every revision, providing detailed technical responses that total over 100,00 words. Helen will be presenting on the latest status of the development; however, I would like to state that our objectives is to ensure that Elms Park represents the best in sustainable development and enhances the offering to the community.

Very much linked to the Elms Park development, plans for M5 Junction 10 upgrade are gaining momentum. Two public consultations have been so far undertaken as part of the consent process. The Parish Council has provided detailed responses to both consultations, and we are delighted that many of our comments have been incorporated into the scheme. This includes the provision for greater active transport corridors, the segregation of local access from the dual carriageway and the abandonment of removing right turns at the Aldi / Sainsbury's junction. We are currently planning to step-up engagement with the project team as the DCO application approaches.

Of course, the defining "event" of the past several years has been the COVID-19 pandemic. The Parish Council has played its part in supporting the local community with our Here To Help scheme. Over twenty-five volunteers from across the Parish assisted vulnerable persons with their shopping, medicine collections and transportation. In total we were able to help over ten households through the Parish,

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with several support packages lasting for over 6 months. I'd also like to extend my thanks to Flo Claus, our Cheltenham Borough Councillor, for all her work since the beginning of the pandemic in support of residents. I'm delighted to say that when asked, our community stepped up to support our most vulnerable and some great friendships have been forged.

Being a Parish Council is a very re-wording experience. COVID showed us the impact a small group of dedicated people can have. As a Parish Council, you can give as little or as much time as you have. If you'd like to find out more about how you can get involved, please to speak to once of councillors here tonight.

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ATTACHMENT 2

Clerk's Report to the Swindon Parish Annual Meeting 2021-2022

The accounts for the year ending 31st March 2022 have been prepared and are on the website (and below).

Our annual internal audit has been completed with no major observations.

Our main source of income is the precept collected via council tax. We also receive rental income from the allotments and advertising income from the Village News (though the latter has diminished greatly since Covid). Last year we received a £2,000 grant, so the last year's income is down on 2020-2021 by approximately £3,000.

Our main items of expenditure are my salary, publishing the Village News and subscriptions to relevant organisations.

In the year we still generated a surplus of £2,246.15. Projects on which we budgeted to spend money have not yet come to fruition.

One project was to complete a footpath across the front of the gym to allow pedestrians to transit between Swindon Road and Wymans Lane without having to cross multiple roads. Sadly, there are services in the grass verge that prevent this from happening. Hopefully a pelican crossing will be installed, not our first choice solution but safer than the status quo.

We have completed a project to restore and refurbish the war memorial.

We have yet to deal with the two chestnut trees in the Amenity Area or to decide what to do about the sundial mosaic.

Overall our reserves stand at £31,895.57. On that basis we chose to keep our precept the same. The increased tax base (though new homes) means that the bill for the parish portion of council tax has slightly reduced for residents.

We are working with the Village Hall and the Borough Council to seek a resolution to the issue of the Village Hall car park. The Borough Council wish to dramatically increase the rent or to sell the car park. It is expected that our reserves might have a significant role to play in resolving this issue and protecting this vital community asset for the future.

At the recent election Peter Allen, Chair of the council who has served the community for many years, decided not to seek re-election. We also lost Yolande Booyse. Alison Berry has joined us. we now have six councillors (one man and five women, bucking the national trend). We still have three vacancies.

Shaun Cullimore
Clerk to Swindon Parish Council

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INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019
INCOME				
Precept	£12,175.58	£12,218.28	£11,862.41	£11,516.90
Other income				
Allotment rents	£1,271.00	£1,193.00	£1,271.00	£1,166.00
Village News adverts	£72.00	£387.00	£630.00	£444.50
Misc (see note 1)	£37.42	£260.23	£20.23	£20.23
Interest	£0.36	£1.00	£1.92	£1.94
Growing Our Communities grant	£0.00	£2,000.00	£0.00	£0.00
"Being a Better Councillor" course (see note 3)	£0.00	£550.00	£0.00	£0.00
Support grant	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£340.00
Total income	<u>£13,556.36</u>	<u>£16,609.51</u>	<u>£13,785.56</u>	<u>£13,489.57</u>
EXPENDITURE				
Staff costs	£5,637.76	£5,588.20	£5,406.16	£5,247.13
Other costs				
Administration	£1,201.41	£2,189.82	£1,217.22	£1,601.40
Communications (see note 2)	£2,645.48	£2,432.82	£1,758.92	£1,754.50
Ground works	£112.36	£462.08	£0.00	£555.00
Allotments	£0.00	£17.29	£17.83	£0.00
Meeting room costs	£240.00	£0.00	£240.00	£240.00
Grant to Royal British Legion	£90.00	£90.00	£80.00	£188.84
Special projects	£1,383.20	£580.87	£1,426.16	£1,356.00
Total expenditure	<u>£11,310.21</u>	<u>£11,361.08</u>	<u>£10,146.29</u>	<u>£10,942.87</u>
Surplus (deficit) for year	£2,246.15	£5,248.43	£3,639.27	£2,546.70
Retained surplus b/f	<u>£29,649.42</u>	<u>£24,400.99</u>	<u>£20,761.72</u>	<u>£18,215.02</u>
General fund c/f	<u>£31,895.57</u>	<u>£29,649.42</u>	<u>£24,400.99</u>	<u>£20,761.72</u>
REPRESENTED BY				
Cash at bank	£34,072.59	£31,831.57	£25,414.16	£21,383.45
Debtors including reclaimable VAT	£259.83	£240.77	£2.10	£450.58
Pre-paid expenses	£10.38	£22.37	£11.65	£0.00
Creditors	-£2,447.23	-£2,445.29	-£873.92	-£928.31
Pre-paid income	£0.00	£0.00	-£153.00	-£144.00
	<u>£31,895.57</u>	<u>£29,649.42</u>	<u>£24,400.99</u>	<u>£20,761.72</u>

Note 1 – Includes waiving of room hire fees by Village Hall in 2019-2020

Note 2 – Cost of Village News and web site

Note 3 – Swindon Parish paid £450 to GAPTC for putting on the course and collected £550 from attendees from other parishes

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ATTACHMENT 3

Report from Parish Councillor Helen Wells to the Swindon Parish Annual Meeting 2021-2022

Helen Wells gave an overview of the present situation with Elms Park and Swindon Farm planning applications and also an update on the Cyber Park.

A copy of Helen's presentation is available at:

https://swindonparish.org.uk/sites/default/files/other/2022-05-18_joint_core_strategy_and_local_green_space_update.pdf

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ATTACHMENT 4

Report from Borough Councillor Flo Clucas to the Swindon Parish Annual Meeting 2021-2022

(read by James Cornish in Flo's absence)

I have been working with the Parish Council and the Borough Council to secure the future of the Village Hall Car Park.

In Windyridge Gardens the pathway to the rear of houses is to be cleared of overgrown trees. Works order has been raised.

In Church Road the County Council has confirmed H markings will be reinstated following a complaint.

In Linwell Close safety issues in relation to parking have been reported. Also reported exit issues for vehicles coming down the main road or seeking to exit from side roads onto the main road.

In Stanwick Crescent the road surface has been reported for repair.

In Limber Hill Ubico has been asked about problems in relation to pathways. Hopefully this will be sorted shortly and weeds will also be removed.

In Yeend Close rubbish has been reported for removal.

In Swindon Lane (Woodlands Park to Guestriss Cottages) the uneven pavement has been reported for repair to the County Council. An examination has been done but no report has been received yet as to what work is to be done.

In Drayton Close no objections have been raised to the planned street party.

In Hayden Road a water leak has been caused by the use of inadequately sized piping following a repair. The work is likely to have to be redone.

In New Barn Lane and Evesham Road safety issues have been reported to the County Council in relation particularly to the speed of traffic and cyclists.

There will be a meeting at the Jockey club next week in relation to post race issues raised following the Cheltenham Festival. In particular the issue of urination in streets and on hedges and on verges by those leaving the race meetings has been a major problem.

A range of matters have been raised with planning authorities in relation to Elms Park and Swindon Farm. These have been reported to the parish council and we will chase them up in meetings with officers over the next few months. Both of the applications must follow the agreements reached in relation to NW Cheltenham and cannot simply ignore them.

That includes:

- energy, no fitting of gas boilers;

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- road safety issues;
- cycling safety and new roads being properly designed;
- housing should be provided with vehicle charging points for electric vehicles so that when new residents move in they are in place and ready for use.