

SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 11th DECEMBER 2023 AT 7:30PM
IN SWINDON VILLAGE HALL

Parish Councillors Present:

James Cornish (Chair)

Lisa Whitaker (Vice Chair)

Lynne Allen

Alison Berry

Natalie Blankley

Sharon Collicutt

Also Present:

Shaun Cullimore (Clerk), Borough Councillor Flo Clucas.

23/180 APOLOGIES

Helen Wells.

23/181 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

23/182 REPORT FROM CLLR. CLUCAS

Cllr. Clucas had come directly from a Cheltenham Borough Council meeting that had discussed the successor to the Joint Core Strategy (JCS). Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC), Gloucester City Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council intend to produce a Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Strategic and Local Plan (SLP). This will cover the planning strategy for the area as expressed in the JCS and also local planning rules currently in the Cheltenham Local Plan.

Cllr. Clucas stated that we would probably need to prepare a case in defence of the Local Green Space again. The evidence would need to go Cheltenham Borough Council in the first instance, then to the committee of the three councils overseeing the development of the new plan.

Consultation will start soon on the process by which the new plan will be developed in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 regulation 18.

Cllr. Clucas agreed to help set up a meeting with CBC planning to discuss the SLP.

Cllr. Clucas left the meeting.

23/183 ADJOURNMENT FOR THE PUBLIC SESSION

Chaz Pearce, volunteer allotment manager, was present. Mr. Pearce outlined the need for more allotments. There are approximately ten people on the waiting list for our allotments. The National Allotment Society recommends a ratio of 15 allotments per 1000 homes and the number of homes in the area is increasing dramatically. Mr. Pearce made the case for part of the Local Green Space being used for allotments.

Members agreed with Mr. Pearce in principle but stated that, at present, the future ownership and use of the Local Green Space has not yet been decided.

Mr. Pearce left the meeting.

23/184 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Council **RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of 13th November 2023 as a true

record.

23/185 MATTERS ARISING

ACTION 23/91/2 – Cllr. Collicutt to contact Spirax Sarco with a view to them getting involved in the Amenity Area project. The Clerk had forwarded Spirax Sarco contact details. Action continues.

ACTION 23/120/1 – The Clerk to obtain three quotes for the cutting back of the hedge along Stantons Drive. The Clerk had obtained two quotes. Cllr. Wells was also going to ask the local farmer to quote. However, the hedge had been cut. On the filed side the cutting had been done by Chris Arnold Trees on behalf of Bloor Homes. It was unclear who had cut the allotments side. Cllr. Wells had again asked if the purchase of a brush cutter could be considered. Members felt that concerns about safety, liability and storage outweighed other considerations. Action discontinued.

ACTION 23/149/1 – Cllr. Cornish to approach Bishops Cleeve, Uckington and Elmstone Hardwicke Parish Councils to consider a joint plan to the use of CIL/Section 106 monies. Action continues.

ACTION 23/155/1 – Matters arising from the Internal Audit to be progressed. Action continues.

ACTION 23/163/1 – Cllr. Cornish to enquire regarding the terms for renting the cricket pavilion. Cllr. Cornish had emailed CBC and was awaiting a reply. Action continues.

ACTION 23/171/1 – The Clerk to produce a revised budget and projects list. This had been done and would be discussed later in the meeting. Action complete.

ACTION 23/172/1 - Cllr. Collicutt agreed to ask the Manor Farm developer to put down some gravel to restore the footpath. The developer had put down some wood chippings. Action complete.

ACTION 23/173/1 – Cllr. Wells offered to ask the farmer if he would like to quote for cutting the allotments hedge. Action discontinued (see action 23/120/1 above).

ACTION 23/174/1 – The Clerk to communicate the Council's commitment to 20mph speed limits to the appropriate parties. Action complete.

23/186 ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Members **RESOLVED** to make the payments identified in Appendix 1.

23/187 CLERK'S SALARY

A pay settlement had been reached for Local Government employees. The Clerk's contract of employment states his initial salary grade and how that will change. The Clerk's current salary point is SCP12, the maximum allowed in his current contract of employment. His monthly pay is currently £471.08, the 2022-2023 agreed amount. With the recently agreed Local Government pay settlement for 2023-2024 the monthly pay increases to £508.10. The settlement applies to April 2023 through to March 2024.

The Clerk suggested that he continue to be paid at the 2022-2023 rate to the end of December, a period of 9 months. For that period he would be owed back pay of £333.15. From January the monthly salary would be changed to £508.10 per month. The January payment would also include the one off back pay payment on £333.15.

Members **RESOLVED** to accept this change to the Clerk's salary.

23/188 BUDGET FOR 2024-2025

In the "Background information" worksheet the incorrect year was referenced.

Members agreed to include a budget of £1,000 under the heading of "Improvement of Play Area and Park".

No other changes were identified.

NEW ACTION 23/188/1 – The Clerk to produce the final budget.

NEW ACTION 23/188/2 – Cllr. Cornish to produce an article for the Village News discussing the budget.

23/189 PLANNING AND LICENSING

Two planning applications were due for consideration.

- 23/01957/FUL – Single storey extension and installation of solar panels 17 Riverview Way
- 23/02076/ADV – 5 illuminated signs (Cafe Nero) Unit C Tewkesbury Road Cheltenham

Members **RESOLVED** to raise no objections to either application.

There were no licensing applications to be considered.

23/190 AMENITY AREA

Work had been undertaken on the chestnut trees on 7th December. The dying tree had been felled but Cllr. Collicutt queried whether work had been done on the other one.

NEW ACTION 23/190/1 – The Clerk agreed to take a look at the chestnut trees to ascertain whether the agreed work had been completed.

The Manor Farm site developer had stated that the footpath between Manor Road and the stream was in the ownership of Cheltenham Borough Council. The Clerk had looked through the archives and found that the Parish Council did not own the land as he had thought. In the course of his investigation the Clerk had found that the Parish Council's land (from the bridge over the stream to Manor Road) had been registered with the Land Registry. This was a task he had thought was outstanding.

Three quotes had been received for the remaining tree works in the Amenity Area. Members decided to accept the Chris Arnold quote. However, it was unclear whether all of the intended works were included. Members **RESOLVED** to give the Clerk discretion to clarify the quote subject to a maximum cost of £1,500 excluding VAT.

The Clerk had asked the CBC tree officer to visit the Amenity Area to discuss the proposed works prior to the submission of a planning application (the trees are in a Conservation Area).

Members wished to get a sign for the Amenity Area. The Clerk thought that there had been one that had become dilapidated and removed to storage at CBC.

NEW ACTION 23/189/1 – Cllr. Cornish to decide on a process by which we would come up with a new and better name for the Amenity Area.

23/191 ALLOTMENTS HEDGE

The matter had been addressed under action 23/120/1 above.

23/192 CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

Item deferred.

23/193 VILLAGE HALL CAR PARK

The Clerk is still awaiting a response from Tayntons.

NEW ACTION 23/193/1 – Clerk to chase solicitor regarding the Village Hall car park.

23/194 PARISHES NETWORKING MEETING

Representatives of the five Cheltenham parishes had met on 18th November. Members who had attended felt that the meeting was useful. Martyn Hansen of Prestbury Parish Council will be taking on the chairmanship of C5 and intends to use the networking meeting outputs.

It was noted that Helen Down (CBC) had been sending emails to personal email addresses.

NEW ACTION 23/194/1 – Clerk to write to Helen Down asking that formal Parish Council email addresses be used for all members.

23/195 REPORTS

Cllr. Whitaker had attended the inaugural Police Liaison Meeting and found it useful. The Council had been given a contact in the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. An offer had been made of quarterly police attendance at parish Council meetings. Cllr. Whitaker did not think this would be necessary.

There were hopes that the police organisation was becoming more stable which should reduce the constant changes in personnel that we had been seeing.

The liaison meetings would continue quarterly.

The meeting closed at 9:15pm.

Signed:	Date:
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APPENDIX 1 – APPROVED PAYMENTS

Description	Amount
Perpetua printing December/January edition of the Village New (ref 2324-057)	£269.00
Chris Arnold tree works on chestnut trees in Amenity Area (ref 2324-044)	£1,080.00
Clerk salary and expenses (ref 2324-055, 056, 058)	£523.46
Swindon Village Hall hire on 10 th January for allotments AGM (ref 2324-053)	£20.00

The Clerk had set up the payments to be made by bank transfer. Cllrs. Wells and Whitaker were delegated to approve the payments.