

WEST SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the online meeting of the
WEST SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL held on
Monday 26 July 2021 at 7.00 pm

Present:

Cllr Steph Exell (v)
Cllr Suresh Gattapur (Vice Chair)
Cllr Geoff Gould
Cllr Prakash Khaitan
Cllr Nick Martin
Cllr Mary Martin
Cllr Tim Swinyard
Cllr Caryl Sydney Smith
Cllr Keith Williams (v)

SBC Councillors: None

Officers: Paula Harrison (Parish Manager)

Public: Three (v)

Public Questions:

Resident asked for clarity on a proposal discussed at the Planning & Environment Committee that referred to significant reduction of hedges and shrubs. Concern raised regarding the impact security, privacy, natural habitats. Resident queried whether the Parish Council was at fault for purchasing machinery not fit for purpose. Cllr Gould clarified that the proposal relating to a small number of sites in West Swindon where the height of shrubs or hedges had not been addressed as part of the annual Winter maintenance and as a result had reached heights in excess of 5 metres. The Parish side arm can reach heights up to 5 metres however this can cause greater problems in controlling the fall of vegetation and balance of the machine. The Planning & Environment Committee had resolved that where there are problematic heights, that residents would be advised on the necessary cause of action as determined by the Parish team however this would be 4-6 weeks in advance of work being undertaken. This would be for only a few sites as the majority of shrub and hedge beds are within an accessible reach for either hand work or side arm reach.

Resident asked if the Parish Council was intending to tackle the issue of repeat apologies being served thus allowing long term absences by individual Parish Councillors. Resident was advised that this would be considered at a future meeting.

Resident highlighted that the spring clean with MP Robert Buckland had gone well. Issue of plastic gloves at Asda petrol station is ongoing. Resident updated on dialogue with Bessie Bell on behalf of Asda.

Councillor Swinyard noted that with the prospect of Martins newsagents closing, West Swindon District Centre had been contacted to advise on a contingency for retaining a Post Office provision within the Centre.

Councillor Gattapur advised that there would be a free yoga workshop happening at Lydiard Park on Saturday 07 August 10 am to 12.00.

Meeting start 7.16 pm

78. Apologies

Apologies received from
Cllr Mike Burtenshaw, Cllr Nigel Gibbons (Chair) due to summer commitments
Cllr Tim Makofu
Cllr Trish Philpot due to sickness absence.

RESOLVED that all apologies received were approved.

NOTED receipt of resignation of Cllr Simon Firth on 26 July 2021. Notice of a Casual Vacancy for Middleleaze & Ramleaze Parish Ward to be initiated.

79. Declarations of Interest & Applications for Dispensation

To receive any Declarations of Interest required by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council on 24th May 2021.

None.

80. Minutes of the previous meetings

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday 28 June 2021 be confirmed and approved.

81. Minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee held on 12 July 2021 were confirmed and approved

82. Minutes of the Finance and Staffing Committee

RESOLVED that Recommendation (Minute 67) that expenditure for July 21 of 48 payments totalling **£48,350.17** be approved

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance and Staffing Committee meeting held on Monday 12 July 2021 be adopted and approved

83. Minutes of the Leisure & Amenities Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Leisure & Amenities Committee held on Wednesday 14 July be adopted and approved.

84. Update from Swindon Borough Councillors

Cllr Swinyard reported that his Cabinet commitments included support for the impact of Covid. Sessions to help local people and families with budgeting were planned in the Central Library – public announcements would follow.

Cllr M Martin highlighted recent communications regarding temporary cessation of doorstep recycling for cardboard, paper, glass and metal/tin. There was a national pressure on suitable drivers, alongside the increase in isolation measures. Green and

regular household waste had been prioritised but should be a short term measure and resume normal service by end of August.

Cllr Williams reported that the Park Run at Lydiard Park had been reinstated after a 70 week break due to Covid restrictions. 9.00 am every Saturday with Childrens Park Run on Sunday mornings.

85. Updates from Parish Council Representatives

Cllr Gould advised that a problem with alleged misuse of West Swindon District Centre public toilets had been highlighted to the Police and local security.

86. Future Meeting Arrangements

The Parish Manager advised Councillors that temporary legislation allowing virtual meetings to take place had ended on 19 July 2021, and Councils were expected to return to meeting in person. For regular meetings, the depot meeting room could accommodate Councillors and small numbers of members of the public without social distancing. This could be offered alongside virtual/online access. Councillors' eligibility to vote would still require being present in person.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council resumes to in person meetings at the Parish depot however online access would still be offered as long as this is practicable.

87. Community Safety Issues

The Parish Manager advised that following the last Leisure & Amenities Committee meeting, a follow up conversation had been undertaken with Sgt Andy Poole. This had stimulated a review of priorities over the summer period as set out in a report, a copy of which appears as **Appendix A** in the Minute Book.

Crimestoppers had confirmed that a community safety event was planned for West Swindon District Centre in September.

RESOLVED that

- a) The Parish Manager liaises with Crimestoppers to promote Crimestoppers and Fearless.org messages to be distributed across local play areas and village centres in West Swindon
- b) That the pre-approved Crimestoppers grant be requested to fund the costs of banners.

88. Motor Insurance Renewal

The Council received a copy of the Renewal schedule for annual insurance of the motor vehicles and machines a copy of which appears as **Appendix B** in the Minute Book. Councillors considered the policy.

RESOLVED that

- a) Renewal Premium of £6,331.00 + IPT (12%) = £7,090.72 be noted and approved
- b) Noted that the Parish Manager to check the level of cover for any damage to the depot property if damage from the vehicles or machinery were to occur. If a small rise in the Premium would significant boost the level of cover, this be approved in advance and be resolved in consultation with the Chair of the Council.

89. Youth Council Update

The Parish Manager circulated a report, a copy of which appears as **Appendix C** in the Minute Book. The report highlighted the progress to date to initiate a pilot Youth Council scheme with Hazelwood Academy. The pilot framework would link Toothill Parish Ward councillors to school youth council committees. The Parish Council Chair would support links to the work of the Parish Council. Toothill Councillors spoke highly of the hard work from the school to create this initiative.

RESOLVED that

- a) the Youth Council pilot is approved and supported to go ahead in September 2021
- b) the school have the option to register with the Clean and Green fund to support future activities and apply for a Parish grant in the future
- c) Toothill ward Councillors and the Chair form a working group to review and evaluate the pilot

90. One Year On

The Parish Manager asked Councillors for ideas on how best to mark the anniversary of the Parish Council taking services in-house and the team being directly employed by the Parish Council.

RESOLVED that a team BBQ is organised to mark the occasion.

Date of next meeting: Monday 23 August 2021 7.00 pm

Meeting closed 8.27 pm

Signed:

Date:

Chair, West Swindon Parish Council