

SOUTH SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL
(CENTRAL SWINDON SOUTH PARISH COUNCIL)

COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2018 at 7.15pm
in Lounge, Broadgreen Community Centre

Present Cllr C Watts (Chair)
Cllr J Howarth (Vice-Chair)
Cllr J Ali
Cllr S Allsopp
Cllr N Burns-Howell
Cllr P Dixon
Cllr J Firmin
Cllr A Hawkins
Cllr P Herring
Cllr J Miah
Cllr M J Miah
Cllr J Milner-Barry
Cllr S Pajak
Cllr T Philpot
Cllr T Robson
Cllr J Short
Cllr B Thompson
Cllr N Watts

Officers Jake Mee (Deputy Parish Clerk)

Public Five

Public Session There were no questions or comments from the public.

427 **Apologies**
Cllr M Gladman
Cllr N Hopkins
Cllr D Pajak
Cllr I Shaikh

428 **Declaration of Interest & Applications for Dispensation**
None.

429 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 13 November 2018 be approved as a correct record.

430 **Finance & Staffing Committee**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee held on 20 November 2018 be confirmed and adopted.

431 Planning & Environment Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee held on 27 November 2018 be confirmed and adopted.

432 Leisure & Amenities Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Leisure & Amenities Committee held on 11 December 2018 be confirmed and adopted.

433 Planning & Environment Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee held on 11 December 2018 be confirmed and adopted.

434 Information from Borough Councillors

There were no reports from Borough Councillors.

435 Parish Council Representatives' Reports

There were no reports.

436 Chair's Report

The Chair opened by thanking all Councillors for their support during the first round of consultation on the SHELAA process which delivered a great sense of community and drew a great number of quality responses.

The Chair said he was very happy with the provisional agreement from Swindon Borough Council to transfer the Oldlands Walk and Lakeside Sites to the Parish Council and disappointed that the same agreement had not been reached with the Marlborough Road site, The Parish Council were to maintain their position and continue to request a lease on this site.

The Chair reported that he had met with Wroughton Parish Council regarding the future maintenance of the lakes and open spaces in East and Middle Wichel. Wroughton Parish Council were still unwilling to maintain these pieces of land whilst no precept was being received for the unbuilt housing at Middle Wichel and suggested handing the land back to Swindon Borough Council.

The Parish Council were currently providing stop-gap funding to maintain these sites until 31 March 2019. The Chair said that he would not wish to see a precedent set where the Parish Council maintained land within other parishes. He recommended this be brought to a future meeting to discuss.

437 Resignation of Councillor

The Clerk submitted a report, a copy of which appears as Appendix A in the Minute Book.

The report contained details of the co-option process to appoint a new Councillor and informed Councillors that as there were less than six months to the next election the vacancy could be left unfilled.

Cllr Firmin advised that as the elections were so close that it was not recommended to co-opt at this time.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council does not co-opt a new member and leave the position vacant until the next election.

438 Election Expenses (Min.366 – 13.11.18)

The Clerk submitted a report from the Senior Electoral Services Officer at Swindon Borough Council and a briefing note from NALC regarding election costs, copies of which appear as Appendix B in the Minute Book.

The report from Swindon Borough Council contained details of the estimated costs for the May 2019 elections and the briefing note from NALC contained details of a survey they had carried out regarding the charges for election costs paid by Town & Parish Councils.

The report and briefing note were noted.

439 Calendar of Meetings 2019/20

The Clerk submitted a draft calendar of meetings for 2019/20, a copy of which appears as Appendix C in the minute book.

RESOLVED that the schedule of meetings for 2019/20 be adopted.

440 Grounds Maintenance Contract 2019/20

The Clerk submitted a report regarding the Grounds Maintenance Contract with Swindon Borough Council for 2019/20, a copy of which appears as Appendix D in the Minute Book.

The report detailed a proposed increase by Swindon Borough Council relating to management costs on the contract, but the information had not been received in time to be incorporated into the budget. A 2.5% inflation increase had already been provided for.

The report stated that the Parish Council could take on services within the contract such as Allotment Maintenance and Play Area Major Maintenance in order to reduce the impact of the increase.

RESOLVED

- a) that the Parish Council take on the additional work of complete allotment site maintenance and major play area maintenance;
- b) that the StreetSmart contract be renewed for 1 year in order to assess the new delivery model;
- c) that the StreetSmart contract be renewed at the contract figure of £934,810;
- d) that the Services Working Party work with StreetSmart to attempt to find a solution to cover the proposed additional management costs of £44,800.

441 Assets Working Party

The Clerk submitted a report, a copy of which appears as Appendix E in the Minute Book.

The report contained information that Swindon Borough Council had now agreed to lease the entire sites at Town Gardens and Queens Park.

These two sites along with GWR Park would form the initial focus of transfers for the Parish Council followed by leases for the whole of the Broadgreen site and then the whole Savernake Street site.

442 Budget and Precept 2019/20

The Clerk submitted a report containing the draft budget and precept request for 2019/20, a copy of which appears as Appendix F in the Minute Book.

The report contained a draft budget that had been drawn up by the Clerk and Deputy Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council and following the

direction given at the Finance and Staffing Committee Meeting on 20 November 2018.

Cllr N Burns-Howell proposed a 1% decrease on the Precept to save parishioners approximately £21k, this worked out to be £1.14 per household per year. Cllr Hawkins and Cllr Short both supported the motion.

Cllr Allsopp and Cllr Pajak both stated that the Council was in uncertain times and did not yet deliver a full model of services, so the Council should be prudent with its budget.

Cllr Firmin said that budget changes should be brought to finance meetings held prior to the Full Council meeting where possible and that the reserves still needed to be built up.

Cllr Howarth said that the decrease was a token gesture and it was not wise for the Parish Council to reduce the Precept and then have to have the increase in the following year.

Cllr Hawkins enquired about the level of reserves and what the recommended levels were. The Deputy Clerk stated that the advice due to be published from NALC on General Reserves was to hold a minimum of three months Precept/net revenue expenditure and that the parish Council was currently short of this figure by over £300k.

Cllr Herring suggested that to in order to achieve a 1% decrease on the budget then Councillors would need to identify where those savings could be made in the budget.

Cllr C Watts requested that the Council adopt a reserve policy at a future meeting as it was not known what services could be passed down to the Council in future.

Cllr N Burns-Howell proposed an amended budget with a decrease of 1% to reduce the precept and save parishioners £1.14 per household per year, the motion was seconded but not carried.

RESOLVED

- a) that the budget for 2019/20 that appears in Appendix F be approved;
- b) that the Precept for 2019/20 be set at £2,112,554.

The meeting closed at 7.25 pm

Signed.....
 Date.....
 Chair of the Council