

**SOUTH SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL**  
(CENTRAL SWINDON SOUTH PARISH COUNCIL)

**FINANCE & STAFFING COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2020 at 7.15pm  
in the Council Chamber, Parish Council Offices Gladstone Street

<b>Present</b>	Cllr C Watts	Chair
	Cllr T Philpot	Sub Cllr J Howarth
	Cllr S Allsopp	
	Cllr J Firmin	
	Cllr D Griffiths	
	Cllr N Hopkins	
	Cllr W Horley	
	Cllr J Milner-Barry	
	Cllr N Watts	
		Cllr P Herring

	Cllr S James	Not Committee Member
	Cllr M Strinkovsky	Not Committee Member

<b>Officers</b>	Rob Core	Clerk
	Jake Mee	Deputy Clerk

**Public** Four

**Public Session** A member of the public noted that in the annual budget the street cleaning and ground maintenance is included and that £500,000 for salaries includes all of the workforce, but it does not appear to tally with the pricing of vehicles, the member of the public asked if the parish are taking on vehicles that had been continually used from Swindon Borough Council or having new vehicles as the budget showed it to be over £150,000 for two new vehicles. The Clerk said that the cost of two new vehicles will be spread over a number of years, but they will be purchased by the Parish Council who will not be inheriting any of Swindon Borough Council road vehicles but may look at some of the agricultural equipment.

A member of the public said that in the annual budget the bandstand concerts had been budgeted at £1,000 but the actual cost had been £2,321 and asked why there was a difference. The Deputy Clerk said that when the budget was set for 2019/2020 the parish did not know how much the bandstand concerts would cost as the parish did not manage the Town Gardens at that time. It was discovered in-year that it would cost £2,500 - £3,000 and the parish council resolved to fund the monies from the general reserves.

A member of the public said that in the annual budget the toilets in the Town Gardens had a budget of £10,000 but the actual showed as £2,621 and asked what the reason for the difference is. The Deputy Clerk said that the parish council did not yet know how much it would cost to operate the toilets, and the budget had been maintained for next year because the toilets will be refurbished and the money will be required for the works.

**1030**

**Apologies**

Cllr J Ali	
Cllr J Howarth	Sub Cllr T Philpot

**Not Present**

Cllr S Pajak

**1031 Declarations of Interest and Applications for Dispensation**

None

**1032 Draft Budget**

The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) submitted a draft budget a copy of which appears as Appendix A in the Minute Book.

The Chair gave a verbal report which highlighted the achievement of the Parish in a short period of time that included improving ground maintenance and grass cutting, protecting existing staff, investing in neglected allotments and run down playgrounds whilst saving two libraries, the Town Gardens and Queens Park from closure and also supporting two at risk community centres. The Chair also reminded the Council of the many community groups that had benefitted from Parish grants.

The chair stated that this budget was a watershed for the Parish, marking the final stages of devolving from the Borough Council and taking full control of the services that the Parish are committed to providing.

It was noted that it was the Parish's intention to transfer street cleaning and grounds maintenance staff from the Borough in a staged and controlled method. The chair reiterated his disappointment with the Borough Councils communications and regrets that the Parish only understood the Borough's intentions when cabinet papers were released. The chair was pleased to report that the officers had prepared for this eventuality.

The Chair thanked the Deputy Clerk for producing the amended budget in an extremely short timescale and reminded Councillors that the increase is the first in four years averaging 2.5% per annum in the first 4 years in line with inflation.

The Chair informed Councillors that this first increase equates to 3p per day per household or 1.6p per day per electorate.

The Chair noted that the initial precept and agreement with SBC was based on staffing levels and plant and machinery leasing from SBC and did not include depot premises or management structure

It was noted that this budget corrects the position, including provision for a depot, new vehicles, plant, machinery, tool, PPE etc.

The Chair informed the Council that the budget will also allow the parish to increase resources to pre-austerity levels, improving services across the Parish. The chair reiterated the Parish commitment to ensuring an exciting work program that includes renovation of the Old Town Bowl, regeneration of Broadgreen Community Centre, regeneration of Eastcott Community Centre, continued support of Parks and Old Town Libraries, investment in Town Gardens and Queens Park, working towards Britain in Bloom Gold Award status, completion of the Shaftesbury Lake to Kingshill Nature Corridor, delivering youth service and supporting local community groups through grants.

The Chair concluded that this budget sets the template for the next three years, will improve service and provide value for money and the Chair commended the budget to the Council.

Cllr D Griffiths submitted an amendment to the budget a copy of which appears as Appendix B in the Minute Book.

**RESOLVED** that the budget with amendment be recommended for approval at the next Full Council Meeting.

**1033 Payment Schedule – January 2020**

The Deputy Clerk submitted the Payment Schedule for January 2020, a copy of which appears as Appendix C in the Minute Book.

**RESOLVED** that the January Payment Schedule 2020 be approved.

**1034 Accounts December 2019**

The Deputy Clerk submitted the Accounts for December for 2019, a copy of which appears as Appendix D in the Minute Book.

**RESOLVED** that the December 2019 Accounts be approved.

**1035 Assets Working Party**

The Chair of the Assets Working Party said that there was nothing to report.

**1036 Broadgreen Working Party**

The Chair of the Broadgreen Working Party said that there was nothing to report.

**1037 Grants Working Party**

The Chair of the Grants Working Party said that there was nothing to report.

**1038 Recruitment/Staffing Working Party**

The Chair of the Recruitment and Staffing Working Party said that that minor amendments had been made to the staffing plan and asked that the Deputy Clerk update and circulate the report for information. There is a clear plan up to April 2020 and beyond but there are no plans to meet as a working party until then.

**1039 Services Working Party**

The Chair of the Services Working Party said that there was nothing to report.

**1040 Youth Working Party**

The Chair of the Youth Working Party presented a summary of a questionnaire.

The questionnaire had been handed out to college students and school children aged 7-12. There had been a total of 102 responses which had, in general been positive and had given the working party something to build on going forward and a meeting will be held at the end of January 2020.

**NOTED**

**1041 Admission of Public and Press**

To resolve in accordance with Standing Order 3 (d) that ‘in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded, and they be instructed to withdraw’. Reason Staffing.

All Non Committee Members left the meeting.

**1042** The Chair provided a written report a copy of which appears in the Confidential Minute Book.

The report provided information including two recommendations concerning the Head Librarian of Old Town Library. The Committee reviewed and discussed the recommendations.

**RESOLVED** that both recommendations be approved.

The meeting closed at: 08.05pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Council