

WEST SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the online meeting of the
WEST SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL
held on **Monday 18th May 2020** at **7.00pm**

Present:

Cllr Mike Burtenshaw
Cllr Steph Exell
Cllr Suresh Gattapur
Cllr Nigel Gibbons (Chair)
Cllr Geoff Gould
Cllr Prakash Khaitan
Cllr Tim Makofu
Cllr Nick Martin (Vice Chair)
Cllr Mary Martin
Cllr Trish Philpot
Cllr Tim Swinyard
Cllr Caryl Sydney Smith
Cllr Keith Williams

Officers:

Paula Harrison (Parish Manager)
Leanne Curtis (Assistant Clerk)

Public: Two

Public Question time:

None

386. Apologies

Apologies for absence due to other commitments were submitted by Cllr Umar Ali

RESOLVED that the apologies submitted are approved.

387. Declarations of Interest & Applications for Dispensation

None.

388. Minutes of the previous meetings

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 27th April 2020 are approved and adopted.

389. Minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on Monday 06 May are approved and adopted.

390. Minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee meeting held on Monday 06 May 2020 are approved and adopted.

391. Update from the Parish Council Chair

The Chair, Cllr Nigel Gibbons reported that there appeared to be a profusion of graffiti particularly in Eastleaze and Shaw. Incidents of households reducing or removing trees without consultation or permission from Swindon Borough Council appear to be increasing. The Chair also indicated that the progress of transferring staff was slow and a revised date for transfer of 31 July 2020 was proposed.

392. Updates from Parish Councillors

Cllr Gould reported that important information regarding burning rubbish was available on the Council website under environmental problems and would benefit wider circulation. Cllr Gattapur reported that since the reopening of KFC, traffic was much heavier with people queuing and parking for the drive-through. Litter had increased hugely. Councillors agreed that heavier footfall generally was resulting in higher levels of littering. Cllr Mary Martin agreed that litter was less visible in the longer grass and was being thrown up by mowers, their own regular litter picking once a week was helping.

393. Update from Swindon Borough Councillors

Cllr Williams advised that the household recycling centre would be opening on 20 May by appointment only. Opening times 10.00 am to 4.00 pm. Residents would need to take confirmation of the appointment plus proof of address. Appointment availability would increase gradually.

Cllr Swinyard reported that Swindon Womens Aid had experienced an increase in demand. They are operating on a reduced income so Cllr Swinyard has been supporting their grant application. Any other assistance with funding would be very welcome.

Cllr Mary Martin reported that the car park at Lydiard Park and Gardens had reopened. Visitor parking season tickets will be extended by three months.

Cllr Philpot asked if there was an update on the status of Hop, Skip and Jump in Shaw. Cllr Mary Martin advised that it was currently closed due to Covid-19 but Swindon Borough Council were funding the project for three months. A Cabinet Member Decision Note will review the situation. Councillors agreed it is an important facility. Work is underway to see what can be done.

Cllr Sydney Smith reported that the bins were proving to be a problem in the park with people choosing to leave litter rather than take it with them.

Cllr Philpot asked if there was any progress on the installation of pedestrian safety changes to Hay Lane as frequent chasing was not generating a response. Councillors agreed that there was no current available update.

Cllr Gattapur queried the availability of advice and information for parents/carers about options to send children back to school. Cllr Sydney Smith confirmed that schools would lead communication with parents.

394. Grant Application – Swindon Scrapstore

The Parish Manager advised that Swindon Scrapstore were seeking grants from parish council's proportionate to the numbers using the service. A copy of the grant application appears in the Minute Book as **Appendix A**. The organisation's income has fallen significantly due to lockdown measures however, they were re-orientating to ensure that they could support socially isolated people with food parcels and craft parcels. The amount requested from West Swindon Parish Council was £480.00. Councillors considered the information provided and agreed that more accurate information on use/membership by West Swindon residents would be necessary to support any future applications for funding.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council approves a grant of £480.00 to Swindon Scrapstore

395. Covid 19 Report Update

The Parish Manager referred to a report setting out a summary of the Government's Recovery Strategy. A copy of the report appears in the Minute Book as **Appendix B**. Ball courts were now allowed to be reopened however play areas remain closed. The Parish Manager indicated that despite frequent attempts to keep play areas out of use, the barriers are repeatedly removed.

RESOLVED that ball courts are reopened in line with Government Guidance, new signage is installed promoting social distancing, play area barriers are replaced.

396. Service Transfer – Update from Services Working Party

The Parish Manager circulated a report on behalf of the members of the Services Working Party. This set out a summary of progress to date in preparing for the transfer of grounds maintenance services. A copy of the report appears in the Minute Book as **Appendix C**. Councillors reviewed the detail of grass cutting machinery options.

RESOLVED that the Services Working Party provide specific recommendations on number/type of machinery required and costs of purchase to a future meeting.

397. Admission of Public and Press

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, the members of the public present were instructed to withdraw'. Reason: Staffing matters

398. Staffing Update

Councillors reviewed the process for the transfer of staff. Swindon Borough Council had not released any employee information. The transfer date has now moved to 1 August to allow time for the transfer to be completed on other parishes. The Parish Council's legal advisor is on standby.

Meeting closed 8.02 pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Council

DRAFT