

## WEST SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the  
**FULL COUNCIL**  
held on **Monday 30 October 2023** at **6.45 pm**  
**Toothill Church, Dunwich Drive, SN5 8SX**

**Present:**

Cllr Junab Ali (Chair)  
Cllr Peter Bates  
Cllr Mustafa Dayan  
Cllr Suresh Gattapur  
Cllr Leon Grother  
Cllr Rose Llewellyn (Vice Chair)  
Cllr Graham Philpot  
Cllr Trish Philpot  
Cllr Caryl Sydney Smith  
Cllr Keith Williams

**Officers:** Paula Harrison (Parish Manager)  
Jon Harris, Head of Strategic Transport, Swindon Borough Council

**Public:** Two

**Meeting Start:** 7.00 pm

Public Questions:

A resident queried how clothes recycling is being managed by the changes to waste recycling? There does not appear to be a clear mechanism for recycling clothing. *Parish Councillors were unable to confirm these arrangements.*

A resident indicated that work undertaken by the tractor had left shrub cutting debris on top of existing litter making it more difficult to collect litter and asked whether it could be better coordinated. *The Parish Manager advised that teams should collect litter when shrub cutting. This may not be very well coordinated particularly when the tractor is cutting but is something that the Parish Team should be paying attention to.*

A resident asked why Toothill is divided between electoral ward as this doesn't help residents work together on issues or know who best to contact. The Chair advised that boundaries were determined as part of formal boundary reviews, the next one being 2026.

Resident asked if there was any information about the police presence at Westpoint. *Councillors could not confirm but believed it was temporarily out of operation.*

Resident commented on the Agenda Item 7 review of Standing Orders. Resident suggested that six months was a very long period of time to be consistently absent from attending a meeting and that there had been a history of this occurring in the past. *The Chair noted the point for the later discussion.*

Mr Jon Harris, Head of Strategic Transport gave a verbal presentation to the Council on key issues and consultations for public transport in Swindon at the current time. This included bus shelters A copy of slides is attached as **Appendix A** in the Minute Book.

**128. Welcome & Declarations of Interest/Applications for Dispensation**

Declarations of interest required by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council on 22 May 2023: Cllr Sydney Smith declared an interest as a Director of Toothill Big Local/The Hub in respect of the Grants Recommendation (Minute 118) from the Planning, Leisure & Environment Committee.

**129. Minutes of the previous meeting:**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 18 September be approved and adopted.

**130. Minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee**

**RESOLVED** that Recommendation (Minute 99) that 44 payments totalling **£114,142.60** be approved.

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes from the Finance & Staffing Committee held on Monday 18 September 2023 be approved and adopted.

**131. Minutes of the Planning, Leisure & Environment Committee**

**RESOLVED** that Recommendation (Minute 117) that the allotment fees should increase by 10% be approved.

**RESOLVED** that Recommendation (Minute 118) that the following grant awards be approved:

- *£1,000 Swindon Hardship Fund – West Swindon residents only*
- *£4,731 West Swindon Family Project*
- *£3,702 Toothill The Hub – electronic till purchase only*

Cllr Sydney Smith abstained.

**RESOLVED** that Minutes from the Planning, Leisure & Environment Committee on Monday 02 October 2023 be approved and adopted.

**132. Update from Swindon Borough Councillors**

Cllr Gattapur reported that he had followed up with the lead Cabinet Member on works to the Mead Way traffic lights, particularly in respect to the right turn into Stonehill Green. A site meeting was arranged with residents and the Environment Agency and Swindon Borough Council in relation to repeat flooding issues. It was noted that the post office should open on 10 November at the West Swindon District Centre.

Cllr Williams reported that work on the bridge through to Thames Water on the Shaw Forest cycle path had been completed. Engagement had taken place in relation to flooding concerns in The Prinnels area. Work is ongoing in relation to concerns about an abandoned property.

### 133. Update from Parish Councillors

- Cllr Grother reported that a resident had raised concern about a bench attracting litter but there was no broader evidence to support this. The Link Centre litter pick went well with 24 bags of litter being collected
- Cllr Dayan reported concerns raised by St Peters Church regarding disputes/abuse about parking – to be raised at the next Community Safety Group meeting
- Cllr Gattapur reported volunteering work to clear the waterways was going well
- Cllr Sydney Smith added that she would make further enquiries about the bench and littering issue reported by Cllr Grother
- Cllr Williams reported that coordinating litter picks had been raised. There was an outstanding request to move a bin on Shaw Ridge and issues relating to trees around the Village Inn pub
- Cllr T Philpot noted that flooding issues have been raised and asked to add extra bulb planting areas if possible
- Cllr Bates reported a complaint in relation to the Link Centre subway flooding
- Cllr G Philpot reported that there had been enquiries regarding the Community Centre noticeboard at Toothill, contact had been made with the West Swindon Library to enquire when it might re-open – this is not confirmed and the street wardens enquiries are ongoing
- Cllr Ali reported that the case for the flooding at the Shell roundabout by Shaw Road had been re-opened

### 134. Standing Orders Review

The Council noted the report circulated which set out options to review how and when apologies for absence are recorded at formal Council meetings, a copy of which appears as **Appendix A** in the Minute Book. Councillors debated whether a virtual attendance should count as a formal attendance.

**RESOLVED** that the following amendment be included in the Parish Council's Standing Orders, p8. 'y'.

Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972. : "85.— Vacation of office by failure to attend meetings. (1) ..., if a member of a local authority fails throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of his last attendance to attend any meeting of the authority, he shall, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the authority before the expiry of that period, cease to be a member of the authority."

- I. If a Councillor member of a Committee or Full Council meeting sends no apologies they will be recorded as absent.
- II. If a Councillor sends apologies, these will be recorded in the minutes as “apologies received” but will not be recorded as being approved.
- III. If the Committee or Full Council has agreed a dispensation of absence or approves the apologies this will not start of the period of absence for the Councillor and the apology will be recorded as approved.
- IV. If a councillor e-mails or leaves a voice mail with a time stamp 20 minutes or less before the commencement of the parish council meeting and this isn't presented on their behalf due to the late timing, then apologies cannot be accepted and or approved, or, recorded retrospectively as being received.
- V. The absence for six consecutive months can be reset by the Councillor attending a council meeting in person or by the council/committee approving the absence.
- VI. If a Councillor attends a meeting virtually, their virtual presence will be recorded in the Minutes as Present – Virtual but they will not formally present in accordance with Section 85 Local Government Action 1972, as detailed above.

**135. Parish Council Services Update**

The Council noted the report circulated which set out a summary of the Parish services for October, a copy of which appears as **Appendix B** in the Minute Book.

**136. Precept Planning**

Council received a summary report from the Parish Manager setting out the process and timescales for setting the precept, a copy of which appears as **Appendix C** in the Minute Book. Councillors noted the information.

**137. Swindon Borough Council Election Cycles Consultation**

Councillors received a consultation document from Swindon Borough Council, a copy appears as **Appendix C** in the Minute Book. Councillors noted the information and agreed that it would be considered again at the Parish Council meeting in November.

**RESOLVED** that

- a) the Parish Manager logs an enquiry with the National Association of Local Council's legal helpline to query whether the Borough Council has the legal power to propose these changes
- b) Matter deferred to November Full Council

**138. External Auditors Report**

Councillors received a final report from PKF Littlejohn, a copy appears as **Appendix D** in the Minute Book. Councillors formally accepted receipt of the report.

**139. Parish Building**

It was agreed that Councillors would discuss use of the Parish Offices at a future meeting.

**Meeting finished: 8.30 pm**

**Date of next meeting: Monday 27 November 6.45pm**

Signed: .....

Chair, West Swindon Parish Council

Date: .....