



Parish Council

Central Swindon North Parish Council

Pinetrees Community Centre,

The Circle,

SWINDON SN2 1QR

FULL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday 29th January 2025 19.00

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr K Small (Chair)
Cllr John Ballman
Cllr Paul Exell
Cllr Ana Fernandes
Cllr Joy Grotzinger
Cllr Muhammad Khan
Cllr Mick Lucas
Cllr Paul Park
Cllr Raj Patel
Cllr Dave Patey
Cllr Javes Rodrigues
Cllr Tom Smith
Cllr James Yeowell

Clerk:

Mr Andy Reeves

Officers:

Mr Andrew Briggs
Mr Matt Gleed

Member of the Public Present: Mrs Josie Lewis (Oasis Campaigner)

Apologies

Cllr Ian Edwards

		Action
FC436	Declarations of Interest Cllr Paul Park declared a non-pecuniary interest in The Leisure & Libraries Trust. Cllr John Ballman declared a non-pecuniary interest in The Library & Leisure Trust, the RSPB, HBuF and Swindon Borough Council Planning Committee. Cllr Tom Smith declared a non-pecuniary interest in Swindon Borough Council Planning Committee. Cllr Ana Fernandes declared a non-pecuniary interest in Swindon Borough Council Planning Committee. Cllr K Small declared a non-pecuniary interest in Redlynch Close – SBC Allotment Offer as the lead decision maker for the transfer at Swindon Borough Council. RESOLVED Councillors NOTED the declarations.	
FC437	Public Question Time & Correspondence Mrs J Lewis asked if The Parish Council was fighting to keep the football pitches, bike track, skateboard park, play areas and open spaces protected for all residents so that it can't be built upon. Cllr K Small explained that the Oasis was run as a public building on private land. The land has been shut off since the closure of the Oasis, and if the land had been public owned access to the public would have had to be provided. However, as it was private land, this is not the situation. Cllr P Park, The Parishes Chair of the Environment and Planning Committee, can explain the public responses and The Parishes decisions to any planning applications made by the owners of the land. Cllr J Ballman, Cllr A Fernandes and Cllr T Smith declared and interest as members of Swindon Borough Council Planning Committee, Cllr P Park, Chair of The Parish Environment & Planning Committee explained that The Parish had objected to the flats and parking, but had agreed with the industrial warehouse units as the land itself is considered for industrial use.	

	Mrs J Lewis asked if this meant The Parish was trying to protect the Oasis building itself. Cllr K Small explained that The Parish had not declared an interest in protecting the Oasis building, but had disagreed with the building of flats and parking due to over-development. Mrs J Lewis mentioned that Thames Water were not happy with development plans due to various factors. Cllr K Small explained that this information would need to go to Swindon Borough Council as it was not a Parish issue. The land is in our Parish boundary, and as a Parish we have made our opinions known on the situation, but decisions on future usage of the land is up to Swindon Borough Council. Cllr J Ballman clarified that he was a member of the Swindon Borough Council Planning Committee, and also a Central Swindon North Parish Council Councillor, but had excluded himself from the Parish Planning Committee to avoid a conflict in interest. RESOLVED Councillors NOTED the public question.	
FC438	Section 85(1) Dispensation Councillors to APPROVE Cllr Raj Patel dispensation for January 2025. Cllr R Patel explained that he had a medical issue that required returning to India for treatment, and he was unable to participate in his Councillor duties during that time. RESOLVED Councillors APPROVED Cllr Raj Patels dispensation for January 2025. Cllr K Small asked Councillors to NOTE that item 11 would be moved to the end of the meeting as he was a lead decision maker at Swindon Borough Council signing off on this project, and he does not feel it would be appropriate for him to be a part of the decision making on the issue at The Parish. Cllr K Small proposed that Cllr M Lucas chair the meeting in his absence.	

	RESOLVED Councillors APPROVED the Agenda alteration and Cllr M Lucas to chair the meeting in Cllr K Smalls absence.	
FC439	25/26 Budget Recommendation Councillors to CONSIDER the FGP recommendation, FGP334, proposed to APPROVE the 25/26 Budget in the enclosed report, which will result in a Parish Council Precept of £2,156,928 which equates to a Band D Council Tax of £216.03, and a 17.80% increase. Cllr K Small explained the proposed 25/26 Budget Recommendation. Cllr K Small explained that the Idverde quote has come in at slightly lower than expected, but he recommends the extra money be made available to negotiate extra needed services especially street cleaning etc. Cllr D Patey explained that the FGP Committee looked at various choices including providing all the funding asked for, to cutting back to bare essentials. The difference in percentage increase was between 15%-20%. The FGP Committee believe this is the best solution to maintain the essentially needed items and allowing some spending of extras for residents, while keeping the overall percentage increase as low as possible. Cllr J Ballman asked how the salary increases would affect the rental charges for Parish properties. Mr A Reeves explained it would be a 4.85% increase. Mr Javes Rodrigues asked why The Parish still uses Agency staff so much as the costs to The Parish are so high. He feels that as a Parish we could employ two members of staff permanently to cover the roles needed which would reduce the staffing costs. Cllr K Small explained he also would like to see a smaller Agency cost in the budget but that a lot of the roles covered by Agency staff are small roles that it is not cost effective or regular enough to be covered by a full or part time member of staff. Mr A Reeves explained that the cost of using Agency staff works out about £1.00 cheaper per hour due mainly to The Parishes high pension costs. There are also other costs involved including advertising the job role, interviewing and then processing the payroll every month which all	

incur extra costs. Mr A Reeves explained that a lot of the staff being employed to cover the roles are either young people wanting a few days or weeks flexible work to put some money in their pocket before heading off to University, or older people looking to supplement their pension.

Mr A Reeves explained that to cover the hours needed it would involve hiring someone on a zero-hours contract where one week they would have work and the next week they wouldn't. The Parish prefers to have members of staff on fixed contracts so that people have a regular income each month, rather than a variable one that is not consistent.

Cllr J Rodrigues accepted Mr A Reeves explanation but disagreed with it. He would support the Budget setting but would like it to be looked at further.

Cllr J Rodrigues asked if by accepting the proposed budget The Parish was approving the Idverde bid.

Cllr K Small thanked Cllr J Rodrigues for bringing this subject to Councillors attention, and said yes, by approving the 25/26 Budget recommendation Councillors are approving the proposed Idverde contract for the next two years. This allows time for The Parish to renegotiate the contract ready for 2027.

Cllr J Rodrigues asked how much The Parish was taking out in loans to invest into The Parish.

Cllr K Small explained in total it is around £1,900,000.

Cllr J Rodrigues noted this is a lot of investment and commitment by The Parish for it's residents and that he feels it should be explained to the residents what The Parish is doing to improve different areas for local residents.

Cllr J Rodrigues asked about café income.

Mr A Reeves explained that the predictions were conservative as The Parish had only six months' worth of figures to work with.

Cllr J Rodrigues asked about the bin budget.

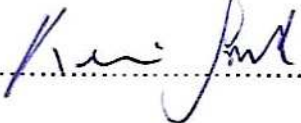
	Cllr P Exell explained that the budget was mainly for purchasing in bulk to decrease the cost of bins. It was not just to place new bins, but also to replace damaged ones. Cllr J Ballman mentioned his desire to purchase mechanised street cleaners so the Parish can deal with the street cleaning ourselves. Mr A Reeves explained that The Parish is putting measures into place to reduce litter overall. This should in the future reduce the litter picking costs in subsequent budgets. Cllr J Grotzinger asked Councillors about extra funding towards her African Festival. Cllr K Small explained she could use some of her future Ward Allowance and ask at the Community Development Committee meeting. Cllr M Lucas explained that a cleaner area encourages residents to keep the area clean. Cllr J Ballman mentioned the bin reporting hotline, and the importance of using this. Cllr K Small PROPOSED Councillors APPROVE FGP recommendation, FGP334, the 25/26 Budget in the enclosed report, which will result in a Parish Council Precept of £2,156,928 which equates to a Band D Council Tax of £216.03, and a 17.80% increase. Also, the extension of the Idverde contract for a further two years. RESOLVED Councillors APPROVED the FGP recommendation, FGP334, the 25/26 Budget in the enclosed report, which will result in a Parish Council Precept of £2,156,928 which equates to a Band D Council Tax of £216.03, and a 17.80% increase. Also, the extension of the Idverde contract for a further two years.	
FC440	Minutes of the Previous Meeting The Chair presented the minutes of the meeting held on the 27th November 2024 to be approved as a true and accurate record. RESOLVED to APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on the 27th November 2024 as a true and accurate record.	

FC441	Environment & Planning Committee The Chair presented the minutes of the Environment & Planning Committee meetings held on the 20th November 2024, 4th December 2024, 18th December 2024, 8th January 2025 & the Extraordinary Environment & Planning Committee meeting held on the 27th November 2024 to be approved as a true and accurate record. RESOLVED to APPROVE the minutes of the Environment & Planning Committee meetings held on the 20th November 2024, 4th December 2024, 18th December 2024 and 8th January 2025, and the Extraordinary Environment & Planning Committee meeting held on the 27th November 2024 as a true and accurate record. The Environment & Planning Committee meeting held on the 22nd January 2025: RESOLVED: To purchase two tiered flowerpots for Ferndale Ward at a cost of £2,250. RESOLVED: To purchase a long arm sign cleaner for £299. Cllr P Park PROPOSED and Cllr P Exell seconded. RESOLVED Councillors APPROVED the two Environment & Planning Committee meeting recommendations. The Environment & Planning Committee meeting held on the 22nd January 2025: RESOLVED: To purchase two tiered flowerpots for Ferndale Ward at a cost of £2,250. RESOLVED: To purchase a long arm sign cleaner for £299.	
FC442	Finance & General Purposes Committee The Chair presented the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meetings held on the 3rd December 2024 and the 7th January 2025 to be approved as a true and accurate record. RESOLVED to APPROVE the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meetings held on the 3rd December 2024 and the 7th January 2025 as a true and accurate record.	
FC443	Community Development Committee The Chair presented the minutes of the Community Development Committee meetings held on the 4th December 2024 and the 8th January 2025 to be approved as a true and accurate record.	

	RESOLVED to APPROVE the minutes of the Community Development Committee meetings held on the 4th December 2024 and the 8th January 2025 as a true and accurate record.	
FC444	Leisure & Recreation Committee The Chair presented the minutes of the Leisure & Recreation Committee meetings held on the 5th December 2024 and the 9th January 2025 to be approved as a true and accurate record. RESOLVED to APPROVE the minutes of the Leisure & Recreation Committee meetings held on the 5th December 2024 and the 9th January 2025 as a true and accurate record.	
FC445	Moredon Sporting Hub Committee The Chair presented the minutes of the Moredon Sporting Hub Committee meeting held on the 18th November 2024 to be approved as a true and accurate record. RESOLVED to APPROVE the minutes of the Moredon Sporting Hub Committee meeting held on the 18th November 2024 as a true and accurate record.	
FC446	Updated Policy Approval To REVIEW and ADOPT updated policies & procedures. a) Advertising & Sponsorship Policy. b) Internal Controls Policy. a) RESOLVED Councillors ADOPTED the updated Advertising & Sponsorship Policy. b) RESOLVED Councillors ADOPTED the Internal Controls Policy.	
FC447	Seven Field Changing Rooms Procurement Evaluation To CONSIDER and APPROVE the Finance & General Purposes Committee recommendation FGP342. Cllr D Patey PROPOSED and Cllr K Small seconded to appoint Contractor C for the replacement of mechanical services at Penhill Changing Rooms. RESOLVED Councillors APPROVED to appoint Contractor C for the replacement of mechanical services at Penhill Changing Rooms. Councillor Kevin Small left the meeting.	

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FC448	Redlynch Close – SBC Allotment Land Offer To CONSIDER and APPROVE the Leisure & Recreation Committee recommendation LR409. A discussion was held on the land and possible usage. Cllr J Ballman PROPOSED and Cllr P Exell seconded to APPROVE The Parish accepting Swindon Borough Councils offer to take on the freehold of the Redlynch Close Allotment Land. RESOLVED Councillors APPROVED The Parish accepting Swindon Borough Councils offer to take on the freehold of the Redlynch Close Allotment Land.	
	Meeting Closed 20:17	

Signed.....

Date.....4/3/25.....