

**The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> January 2015 at Beeson House, Lintot Square, Southwater commencing at 8.00 pm.**

**Chairman: Mr P. Buckley**

**Councillors: Mrs S. Alway Mr L. Apted  
Mr G. Cole Mr.K.Diamond  
Mrs.P.Flores-Moore Mr.D.Nagy  
Mr.M.Neale Mr.G.Watkins  
Mrs.C.Vickers**

**County: Apologies provided by Cllr B. Watson OBE**

**District: Apologies provided by Cllrs I. Howard, Dr J. Chidlow**

**Clerk: Mrs.C.Tobin**

**Press: Not present**

**Public: 1**

**FG01/01/15 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting and then highlighted the housekeeping rules and indicated that should anyone wish to film/record the proceedings could they make themselves known.

Mrs.Vickers stated that she was sure that the Members of the Committee had all read the recent Interim Statement by the Planning Inspector and should any members wish to discuss this she would be happy to do so. The Chairman indicated that the Interim Statement had been issued and that the matter would be reported the following evening at the Planning Committee, but thanked Mrs.Vickers for her offer.

Mr.Cole expressed concerned about the mess left by SSE on Millstraight, and questioned whether this was related to these works or the Parish Council's Operation Watershed Works. The Clerk stated that she believed this was the former as the Council's contractor had removed all debris created including signage.

Mr.Diamond stated that he would like to make an observation in relation to the condition of many of the buildings in Lintot Square which had algae growing on them particularly the medical centre and Beeson House. The Clerk stated that she was aware that this matter was known to the District Council and believed that it was being dealt with in order to treat the problem. The underlying problem being that both buildings had no overhang for water on the roofs causing the problem. The Clerk would

Speak to her colleagues at the District Council once again to clarify the situation.

Mr.Nagy whilst congratulating the Clerk and team on the wonderful Christmas Lights asked when it was intended that they be removed. The Clerk indicated that the lights would be disconnected on the Friday following the meeting with the Christmas tree and lights removed also by the District Council's contractor.

Mrs.Flores-Moore reported the missing bollards by the twitten between Warren Drive and Southwater Street. Mr.Nagy confirmed that this had been reported on at least two previous occasions but had still not been replaced.

Mr.Piper stated in relation to the medical surgery works that he believed that money had been put aside for these.

Mr.Piper questioned the involvement of the local History Society in the meetings to commemorate the end of World War I. The Clerk stated that the intention whether recorded in the minute or not was to include as many organisations who wished to be involved as possible; this included the History Group. An article would be released asking whether those interested could come forward. Mr.Piper questioned the validity of the minutes in that instance. Members were happy with the content and context of the minutes

**FG02/01/15**

**APOLOGIES**

There were apologies received and noted from Mr.S.Francies, who reports to the Council that due to a family member being extremely ill he is unlikely to attend meetings for the next couple of weeks.

**Members NOTED the Members absence, although Mr.Francies had resigned from this particular committee.**

**FG03/01/15**

**DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

The Clerk referred Members of Council to information issued in relation to the Member's Code of Conduct and Standing Orders. This information contained a flow chart previously issued should assist Members in reaching their decision this not being overly complicated.

**Members NOTED the Clerk's comments and advice.**

**FG04/01/15**

**CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman had no announcements at this point in the meeting.

**FG05/01/15**

**CORRESPONDENCE**

The Clerk referred members to general correspondence received and asked

whether Members wished to comment on any particular item.

NALC News Release

Mr.Diamond stated that he would like to question in light of the content of this news release whether the Council would be carrying out a risk assessment about the potential impact in relation to CIL if District Planning Authorities were not required to produce a CIL schedule. Indeed this could have a marked impact on the percentage to be received by Parishes with Neighbourhood Plans; the Government also considering reducing the percentage payable to those parishes.

The Clerk stated that this would be a serious issue in relation to how parishes could achieve the aspirations of the community going forward and that this was a consultation document. The Clerk asked whether Members would like to write to the District Council asking for such a risk assessment and ask how they intend to mitigate for such loss of potential revenue.

Mrs.Vickers stated that there were concerns at the District Council level, with the NHS and Police to name but a few who may seek a percentage of such a levy.

**The Clerk to write to Horsham District Council’s Planning Director asking for a risk assessment in relation to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) should they not be required to produce a CIL Schedule and the consequence of such an action by Government on the ability to provide infrastructure going forward at Parish Council and District level.**

**The Clerk to write to the County Association of Local Councils expressing concern about the proposal to potential reduce the percentage payable in relation to CIL to parish councils and the need for a Planning Authority to have a CIL schedule in place as it was felt that this would have a dire impact of the sector to provide for future infrastructure within communities.**

WSCC – Care, Support & You

The County Council are consulting between 17<sup>th</sup> December and 11<sup>th</sup> February 2015 in relation to proposed changes in adult social care. Views are sought on, assessments for carers and for people needing care and support; independent advocacy (someone to speak on a person’s behalf; and, how we charge people for services. Various methods of communicating the public views have been notified on the Parish Council’s website and Facebook page.

UK Power Networks

UK Power Networks have written regarding proposals by which they will support the network from 1st April 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

WSSC Member's Big Society Fund

The Clerk confirmed that following previous discussions and confirmation that the County would not now consider under its policy the application from the Parish Council, she had written to the County Councillor with the relevant remit highlighting the concerns of the Parish Council. The Parish Council would be happy to highlight many of the community projects made possible through grant applications on behalf of the community by the Parish Council should County Members wish to visit; an invitation was sent.

Local Residents – Colstaple Lane/Kerves Lane

The Clerk indicated that she had received further correspondence from local residents in this area, expressing a need again for a notice board; this having previously been discussed and discounted by the Council. The residents were also requesting the replacement of the old highway signage (similar to those at Christ's Hospital) again Members had previously discussed and indicated that they would not replace like for like but would ask the Highways Authority to replace with the appropriate standard road signs. The Clerk indicated that she had informed the residents that she was happy to meet with them to discuss their concerns.

The Chairman stated that both matters had been discussed and discounted by the Council on the basis of cost and the number of residences affected in relation to the justification of the costs. Members agreed that the current policy remain unchanged and that the Clerk should advise the residents at the meeting.

Mr.Nagy referred to the white gate entrance at the bridge in Southwater Street, these having been reported but not replaced due to funds by the County Council.

**Members NOTED the correspondence received and action to be taken by the Clerk.**

**FG06/01/15**

**MINUTES**

**It was RESOLVED by all present that the Minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2014 be approved as a true and correct record of the meeting, following the change to the date of the meeting which was incorrectly noted.**

**FG07/01/15**

**ACCOUNTS & FINANCIAL MATTERS**

The Clerk provided Members with information on the current financial position of the Council to 7<sup>th</sup> January 2015 including Income and Expenditure and Bank Balances.

A question was raised in relation to the cost of provision of a Disclosure Barring Service Check for staff. The Clerk reported that unfortunately the Council had been an umbrella operation but this had changed a number of

years prior; since that time Horsham Age UK provided this service. It was expensive for paid employees but cheaper for volunteers. Mr.Nagy asked whether or not the Council would be permitted to look at the Disclosure Scotland service. Mr.Nagy believed this to be the case; the committee asked the Clerk to investigate whether the service could be provided cheaper by other organisations including Disclosure Scotland.

**The Clerk to evaluate the cost of providing Disclosure Barring Service checks for members of staff and volunteers and report back to the Committee at a future meeting.**

**Members NOTED and APPROVED the Financial Pack produced by the Clerk.**

#### Bank Balances

The Clerk informed Members that the Council had been overdrawn for a period of a day on Bank Account No. 2 but she had affected a transfer from the 14 day account to cover payments, however it may be necessary to take off of deposit with one of the other banks the sum of £30k to cover future payments to end of March. This left in Bank Account 4 a small sum which again could be used.

**Councillors NOTED the action taken by the Clerk to ensure that there was sufficient cash within the accounts to meet future payments and AUTHORISED that in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council that should the need occur that the Clerk be AUTHORISED to transfer other funds if required.**

#### Forward Budgeting 2016-2020

The Clerk informed Members that following approval of the forthcoming years budget for 2015/16 she had now produced a forecast budget applying 2% to each of the financial years. The Clerk would suggest however, that a spread of 2% across all cross centres including the ring-fenced funds was not appropriate and will need adjusting and asked whether Members wished her to adjust these accordingly and then represent to the Council.

The Clerk reminded Members that despite advice given to the Council, the Parish Council continued to keep its general reserves low. This year she anticipated a drop in the ring-fenced funds due to the various projects undertaken during the financial year but not budgeted for in 2014/15.

A general discussion took place regarding the general reserves held, and the Clerk was advised that the Committee had assessed the risk but were happy in that they did have access to ring-fenced balances.

**Members NOTED the advice received from the Clerk in relation to the General Reserves held by the Council.**

**Members INSTRUCTED the Clerk to re-evaluate the budget forecast**

**from 2016-2020 with the view of the Council discussing this in the near future.**

**LGPS FRS17 Report**

The Clerk asked Members whether they wished to have produced the Annual FRS17 Report which indicated annually to the Council the position of the Council's performance within the West Sussex Local Government Pension Scheme.

**It was PROPOSED that the Clerk should submit the request to WSCC LGPS for the Annual FRS17.**

**Accounts Package Training**

The Clerk confirmed that she had arranged for RBS to visit that day to continue the training of the new Accounts Administrator to ensure the continued effective administration of the Council's accounting systems; this being provided at a discounted price. Further training for year end procedures would take place in March 2015 followed by further training on the Bookings System following the end of year possibly end of May 2015.

**Councillors NOTED and APPROVED the action taken by the Clerk to ensure the continued effective administration of the Council's Accounting System and training of the new Accounts Administrator.**

**FG08/01/15**

**ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

The Clerk presented a payment schedules to 7<sup>th</sup> January 2015 for approval in the sum of £47,018.50 including the additional payments proposed under delegated powers.

Mrs.Flores-Moore questioned the County Council balances. The Clerk responded that she had spoken with the Highways and Library Departments and that they were to chase these funds internally. The Clerk had reminded the authority of its responsibility in relation to the payment of such sums within the time scales provided 30 days payment terms.

**It was RESOLVED by all present that the payments schedules dated 7<sup>th</sup> January 2015 amounting to £47,018.50 be APPROVED.**

**FG09/01/15**

**COMMUNITY GRANT**

The Clerk referred Members to two grants received these being:-

**Dame Vera Lynn Trust for Children with Cerebral Palsy**

The Chairman informed Members that the grant application has been received from the Trust in the sum of £1,080. The proposal being that this sum would be used to provide one small group specialist session for six children and parents using conductive education to become an active learner and increase motor and communication skills and independent living skills.

The Chairman proposed that the Council consider providing the grant requested; this specialist treatment being extremely expensive with no Government funding being available to assist children and families with Cerebral Palsy.

Mr.Buckley stated that currently there was a balance in the grant budget of £2,600 remaining from the community grants fund of £4,000.

Mr.Diamond agreed with the Chairman proposing that the full grant requested of £1080 be provided rather than being reactive the Parish Council would be proactive in relation to the possible future needs of the community.

A general discussion took place about the amount of the grant at this point in the meeting with a suggestion coming forward that perhaps the Chairman should have a fund for special one off awards. The Clerk suggested that perhaps if the Chairman's Allowance is not fully allocated in a year that the balance be ring-fenced and the Chairman of the day every three years this being advertised at the time asking for applications. Members felt that this was a good idea and should be progressed by the Clerk at end of year.

Mr.Diamond's proposal was again put to Council, this being seconded by Mr.Buckley and approved by all present.

The Clerk was asked to inform the Dame Vera Lynn Trust for Children that they were granted the award and arrange for the Charity to visit and give a presentation at which the cheque would be presented and an article put in the press regarding the Parish Council's Community Grant.

**It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council would grant The Dame Vera Lynn Trust for Children with Cerebral Palsy the sum of £1,080.**

**It was RESOLVED that the balance of the Chairman's Allowance be ring-fenced at year end if such a balance existed and that a programme of awards be put in place for expenditure every three years.**

Church of the Holy Innocents

Further to discussions held in December 2014, the Clerk could confirm that 550 leaflets were purchased for the Remembrance Day event by the Parish Church at the cost of £154 which equated to £0.357 pence per sheet.

**It was RESOLVED by all present that the Council should provide a grant of £154 to the Church of the Holy Innocents to reimburse the cost of the Remembrance Day programme.**

**FG10/01/15**

**LEISURE SUB COMMITTEE**

The Chairman gave members of the Committee an overview of the discussions relating to the meeting held prior to this committee that evening.

**Members NOTED and APPROVED matters reported by the Chairman of the Sub-Committee.**

**FG11/01/15**

**POLICE MATTERS**

The Chairman referred Members to correspondence received from Inspector Clare McKnight which also enclosed copy correspondence and information awaited by the Council from Chief Inspector Howard Hodges.

Mr.Nagy said that he would like to comment in that the Parish Council should reasonably expect Sussex Police to be able to produce data on the number of hours spent in Southwater it was in his mind intolerable that it was not given this data and Sussex Police should be accountable.

Mr.Diamond reminded Members that a risk assessment on the changes should have been provided in relation to the new proposed Council and Sussex Police protocol and perhaps the Council should ask for this document in light of the increase in criminal and anti social behaviour since the changes had taken effect. Mr.Diamond suggested that the Clerk write accordingly asking for the Sussex Police Action Plan providing the SMART objectives in line with the number of officers available.

Mr.Neale and Mr.Buckley stated that the reality was despite agreeing with their colleagues sentiments, that the local Commander, Chief Inspector Hodges whilst having a budget for 20 officers actually had 12.

**It was RESOLVED by all present that the Clerk should write to the Right Honourable Francis Maude at the Cabinet Office regarding the lack of funding and recruitment of officers to ensure the effectiveness of policing in the Southwater area, reducing both the fear of crime by the public and crime/antisocial behaviour.**

**It was further RESOLVED that the Clerk should write to the relevant officer at Sussex Police asking for the Police Action Plan and SMART objectives for the provision of policing within the Southwater area. The Clerk to further discussion this matter with the Sussex Association's Chief Executive and ask that HALC put the subject of local policing on an agenda for future discussion.**

**FG12/01/15**

**COUNCIL PREMISES & LAND\*\***

Bee Project

The Clerk would like to organise the final stage of the project with the schools earlier in the year so as not coincide with other community events. It is thought that Members may like to consider the children drawing Ladybirds and Caterpillars to give some differing shapes to those already in place on the bridge in Worthing Road.

**Members APPROVED that the next theme for the Old Railway Bridge and the Schools Project be Ladybirds and Caterpillars.**

Lintot Square – Easter Event

Whilst this area is now within the demesne of the Parish Council the Council is being asked to consider whether it would like to organise events around the possibility of Ferrari event in Horsham at Easter. Easter being the 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> April 2015. The reason being that the original site at the Park and Ride will be used to assist with tourists visiting Horsham during the weekend.

It is proposed if agreed by Members that there would be approximately 150 motorcyclists from the Ducati Owners Club arrive in the Square between 11am and Noon. On the Saturday around 30-40 supercars and 36 minis will visit Horsham Town Centre with 30 Supercars and 10 Alfa's visiting Southwater on the Monday between 10.20 am and 11.20 am.

District Council wonder whether the Parish Council would like to organise events around these visits such as a market/stalls and funfair. It would be hoped that the retailers in the Square would open taking advantage of trade over the Easter weekend.

Mr.Nagy asked the Clerk why this event was being offered to Southwater again, this having been in Southwater a number of years ago and then withdrawn with no reason. The Clerk stated that she believed this to be one of logistics in that one of the sites used had been the park and ride but that this was required for car parking for visitors to the events in Horsham Town. Mr.Diamond asked whether the District Council had considered the Collyers site for such an event, especially with local businesses less than keen to become involved. The Clerk stated that she would discuss this with the Town Centre Manager, Mr.Mortimer-Cooke. Mr.Nagy felt that this logistics problem was someone else's problem, and that the timings would lead him to believe that this was a last minute thought with a little notice being provided. He knew that it took the Clerk and her team some six months to organise the annual Christmas event for example.

The Clerk also referred Members to purdah during the period from when the elections are called at the end of March 2015 and May 2015. Having stated this the Clerk agreed with Mrs.Vickers that general Council business must proceed.

Mr.Watkins and Mr.Diamond also referred to the time involved, in term of the Clerk's workload in organising the event; the priority for the Parish Council being to push forward with the Neighbourhood Plan. Mr.Nagy suggested that perhaps should the District Council wish the Parish Council to consider this for future years, they provide a greater lead time and this should be passed onto the officers involved. Mr.Diamond suggested that in future before the Council took on any such item it took a straw poll of the local businesses to ensure that their was sufficient support.

**It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council would not on this occasion be willing to commit to being involved in the Pizza Italia event at Easter. The Council provided sufficient notice is given in future years, may wish to become involved.**

**Beeson House**

The Clerk referred to the original works instruction in relation to the conversion of the old youth club first floor area into three separate areas in that this had not allowed for data/voice and cable trunking to the middle office space. In order to therefore let the area as offices, it would be necessary to install such trunking. Three quotations had been received with the cheapest being from CBS Electrical Contractors, who subject to their having the necessary insurance and risk assessments in place would be the cheapest, with Volts second and Case Electrical third.

Members asked whether this company had knowledge of the electrical setup of the building the Clerk responded that it had not whilst both Volts and Case had experience of the complex nature of the building. Members felt that in the circumstances they would prefer to appoint an electrician who had this knowledge.

**It was RESOLVED that the Clerk place the order for this additional trunking to the middle office of the first floor area of Beeson House in the sum of £958.76 + VAT to Volts Electrical.**

**Easteds Barn**

The Clerk informed Members that with increased bookings it was now necessary to replace much of the catering equipment for the barn; the existing crockery being over 15 years old. The reason for coming to the committee was that there was no budget for this provision and would require a virement of funds from another cost code, possibly the printing costs for the Barn with the Council taking up this cost within general printing.

**Members RESOLVED that the Clerk place the order for the new crockery to facilitate the hire bookings at the Barn and that the Clerk vire funds from another costs centre to provide for the cost.**

**FG13/01/15**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next Finance & General Purposes meeting would be Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2015.

**The meeting closed at 9.15pm.**