

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 9th October, 2013 at Beeson House, Lintot Square, Southwater commencing at 8.00 pm.

Chairman: Mr P. Buckley

**Councillors: Mr L. Apted Dr A. Cash
Mr G. Cole Mrs P. Flores-Moore
Mr D. Nagy Mr M. Neale
Mrs C. Vickers Mr G. Watkins
Mrs J. Williamson**

County: Apologies provided by Cllr B. Watson OBE

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

Clerk: Mrs J. Nagy

Press: Not present

Public: Not present

FG88/10/13 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting and then highlighted the housekeeping rules and also the fact that mobile phones should be switched off during the meeting, members of the public not being permitted to tape or film meetings of the Council.

There were no members of the press present.

The Chairman proposed the suspension of Standing Orders, and this was AGREED by all present.

There being no member of the public present, Standing Orders were reinstated.

FG89/10/13 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies, but the Deputy Clerk advised that Mr Nagy will be arriving late.

Members noted this.

FG90/10/13 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations at this point in the meeting.

Dr Cash advised Councillors that it was a requirement to note their home

addresses on the Register of Interest document, and also to state that they were residents of Southwater, as he was not sure if they were aware of this.

He announced that he had been elected Chairman of Southwater Action Team. Mr Buckley congratulated him on his appointment, and reminded him that he would need to change his Register of Interest accordingly. Dr Cash said that he had received the paperwork from the Deputy Clerk to record this, and would complete and return this when he had the time.

FG91/10/13**CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman reminded Members of meetings arranged and asked that all Councillors ensure their attendance:-

- Councillor Briefing Session – 14th October 7pm in the Council Chamber
- Councillor Training – 21st October 7pm in the Council Chamber

The Chairman asked that Member's of Council made endeavours to attending these meetings.

The Chairman reminded Members that at the Full Council there would be a guest from the Police Commissioners Office.

The Deputy Clerk said that she believed this may be the Police Commissioner herself, but that would have to be confirmed.

FG92/10/13**CORRESPONDENCE**

The Deputy Clerk referred members to general correspondence received and asked whether Members wished to comment on any particular item. The Councillors present had no matter they wished to raise.

Dr Cash asked if the Council's response to the Preferred Strategy had been input onto the District Council website, and the Deputy Clerk confirmed that she had done so, and had written a letter to cover the additional general comments made at the last Full Council meeting.

Two Minutes for Southwater

Following on from the Southwater Road Safety responses and evaluation, a community event will be held on 29th October in Lintot Square to promote the local campaign "Two Minutes for Southwater". This will be held in conjunction with the WS Road Safety Team, Horsham District Community Safety, Sussex Police and Sussex Fire & Rescue and others including the local person from whom the Two Minutes for Southwater derived.

AGE UK Horsham District

The Deputy Clerk indicated that the Council were now displayed various

leaflets within Beeson House including the “Arun” magazine.

The Prevention Assessment Team – Working Age Adults’ Service

The County Council have launched a new team to help adults of a working age who face difficulties with everyday life, including those with High Functioning Autism and Asperger’s. A leaflet has been produced and is to be made available.

WSSC Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The Deputy Clerk highlighted the receipt of this document which contained matters which the Committee may like to note in relation to the Community Right to Challenge, WSSC Premises Review, Business Rates Pooling by local authorities, Social Value Act 2012 and Flood Risk Management Strategy.

Mr Nagy arrived at 8.07pm.

West Sussex Better Connected

The Deputy Clerk referred Members to the correspondence provided to them.

Members did not wish to raise any particular matter at this point.

FG93/10/13

MINUTES

It was RESOLVED by all present that the Minutes of the meeting held on 4th September, 2013 be approved as a true and correct record of the meeting.

FG94/10/13

GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Deputy Clerk advised that it was expected that a grant form would be returned in time for this meeting, hence this agenda item. However, none had been received.

FG95/10/13

ACCOUNTS & FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Deputy Clerk provided Members with information on the current financial position of the Council to 9th October, 2013, including Income and Expenditure and Bank Balances. The Deputy Clerk confirmed receipt of the second half of the Precept (Local Council Tax). The Accounts had not yet been closed for the end of September.

Mrs Flores-Moore queried why Adult Education was in arrears. The Deputy Clerk said that they had changed their email address for invoices and had not notified the Parish Council. The Council accounts team were actively pursuing the outstanding monies, and would be applying the late payment charge.

It was RESOLVED by all present that the financial information provided

was a true and correct position of the Council as at 9th October 2013.

New Bank Accounts and Transfers

A number of differing difficulties have been experienced in setting up the new bank accounts most especially with NatWest (who issued a cheque book in the name of the Members of Southwater Parish Council) and Lloyds who are still to provide the relevant account numbers.

Christmas Event

Arrangements were going well. Previously Council agreed to sponsor a band subject to sponsorship however this band could not be acquired due to cost. Another option has become available in that the Council could acquire the services of a Michael Bubl  Tribute entertainer for the overall cost of  720 inclusive of VAT, which is a reduction in the normal charge for this entertainer being  1500 plus costs. Sponsorship letters have been issued this week and it would be hoped to cover the cost however, if not the Clerk would like authority to proceed subject to her agreeing the terms of the contract.

Dr Cash did not feel that public money should be spent in this way.

The Deputy Clerk said that the Christmas Event had not made a loss in previous years, and the Clerk and team were confident that all costs would be covered by sponsorship and donations.

Dr Cash said that he therefore withdrew his objection.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should proceed with the booking of the entertainer for the Christmas Event in the sum of  720 inclusive of VAT, subject to her agreeing the contract.

Dr Cash suggested that the Deputy Clerk investigate insuring against bad weather, which could affect the success of the event.

The Deputy Clerk said that she would do so, and report back to Council.

FG96/10/13

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

The Deputy Clerk presented a payment schedule to 9th October 2013 in the sum of  13040.08 including payments made during the recess under delegated powers. The Deputy Clerk advised that the annual renewal for both RBS Accounting and SCUBA were for due for renewal. Both systems were working effectively, although a review meeting is still to be held with SCUBA.

Mr Nagy asked if there were any issues with SCUBA. Mr Buckley said it was working well, but there were still some operational queries that needed addressing.

It was RESOLVED by all present that the payment schedule dated 9th

October, 2013 be approved in the sum of £13040.08

FG97/10/13

COUNCIL INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

The Deputy Clerk reported that the previous resolution of the Council in relation to both hirer and contractors insurance was working well. Members were reminded that such matters were delegated to the Clerk.

The arrangements with regard to partnership organisations differed in that as per the Council's resolution in June 2013, this organisation is required to maintain £10M public liability.

Mrs Flores-Moore asked why this item was on the agenda. The Deputy Clerk advised that Dr Cash had asked for it to be included; however, Dr Cash said that he had not.

Mr Buckley said that Dr Cash, acting in his capacity as Chairman of SWAT had been querying insurance via email. There were two separate issues, one of insurance requirements for hall hirers and contractors, and one for partnership organisations such as SWAT.

It was RESOLVED to retain the current insurance requirements for both hirers and contractors.

Mr Buckley advised that insurance relating to partnership organisations had been discussed and agreed by Full Council in June, and could not be discussed for six months, which would be the end of December.

FG98/10/13

POLICE MATTERS

Crime Figures for Southwater

The Deputy Clerk confirmed that the Council had received a response from Inspector McKnight in relation to figures provided by PCSO Cecil and the concerns of the Parish Council in relation to the reported increases as to the decrease in policing personnel for Southwater.

Members NOTED the Deputy Clerk's comments and the letter received from Inspector McKnight of Sussex Police.

Dr Cash said that he supported the views expressed in this letter, and he thought that the police did a good job.

Mr Buckley said that he still had concerns in relation to policing in Southwater and would like the Council to monitor the situation.

Mr Neale said that he has heard that three more PCSOs had been appointed in Horsham District, but he did not know where they would be deployed. He thought that the 4 year average crime rate for Southwater made good reading.

Mr Buckley said that he was concerned that since the change in staffing in Southwater, the success rate would decrease.

Mrs Flores-Moore said that it had taken a long time for PCSO Worth to deal with issues in the village and to get Southwater into a good position. He had been joined by PCSO Cecil, and later replaced by PSCO Atvardnieks and they had ended up being victims of their own success. She did not want Southwater to go backwards.

Mr Nagy said that he echoed Mrs Flores-Moore's concerns. The good figures in the past had reflected the extremely good local policing that Southwater had enjoyed. In the past there were cohorts of youngsters causing public nuisance, and Southwater had had to have full time police cover to combat this. To reduce this cover, would be to gamble with the future.

Mr Buckley said that he had sympathy with Sussex Police's lack of resources, but Southwater needed support.

Mrs Williamson said that PSCO Cecil also offered valued support for the Youth Worker Angie Choat, in her dealings with youth issues.

Mrs Vickers suggested that the Council write to the Police Commissioner on this matter, despite her possible attendance at Full Council at the end of this month. At the time of the Commissioner's election, she had promised more police on the streets, not less. This letter should be copied to District Councillor Sue Rogers, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for a Safer and Healthier District.

Dr Cash suggested that Councillors provide written questions for the Police Commissioner, in order that she might have time to prepare her answers.

This was thought to be a good idea, and Councillors were invited to provide written questions to the Clerk to pass to the Police Commissioner prior to the Full Council meeting on 30th October.

Dr Cash said that it would be good practice to provide written questions in this circumstance, as he believed that questions from an elected body member to another elected body member or public body had to have a response in ten working days.

Mrs Vickers said that this was not the case for questions under the Data Protection Act, which provided for a 21 day response.

FG99/10/13

SOUTHWATER LEISURE CENTRE

The Deputy Clerk advised that at the Leisure Centre Management Sub-Committee held prior to this meeting, a recommendation was to be brought to this meeting

Mr Brew had reported that waste collection costs had risen, and that he wanted to purchase re-cycling bins for each room at the Leisure Centre in order to replace one of the large skip bins with a cheaper recycling bin. The cost would be the same in the first year, which would include the costs of purchasing additional bins, but this cost would decrease on subsequent years.

It was RESOVLED to approve the recommendation of the Leisure Centre Management Sub-Committee, in that the collection from HDC would be changed from two 1100 litre waste bins to one, plus one 1100 recycling bin and that 22 recycling bins for internal use should be purchased as per Mr Brew's report.

FG100/10/13

COUNCIL PREMISES & LAND

It was agreed by all present that the item relating to the Bowls Club annex should be discussed under "Council Premises & Land" and not under "Southwater Leisure Centre", as per the agenda

Leisure Centre – Bowls Annex

As previously reported the Council are hopeful of obtaining grant funding from the Bowls Club towards a decking system adjacent to the bowls annex allowing greater use of the overall area.

The Planning Department of HDC have indicted that such a provision would be within the Council's permitted development rights under Part 12 of the GPDO. However, if the Council would like more certainty and a formal determination it should apply for a Lawful Development Certificate under Section 192 of the Town and Country Planning Act (as amended). This is a statutory document confirming the lawfulness of a proposal for planning control purposes.

Mrs Vickers asked for clarification on the Planning Department's advice, as the proposed decking was either permitted development or it was not.

The Deputy Clerk reported that the advice submitted by the Planning Department was "informal officer's opinion", so definitive answer had been given.

It was felt that this advice was unacceptable, and did not ensure avoidance of doubt. Mrs Vickers would take this up with the Planning Department to seek clarification.

As some members present were not familiar with the proposals. Mr Cole went over the details of the plans for the decking.

Mrs Flores-Moore said that wooden decking can become slippery over time. The Deputy Clerk said that the area was not open to all members of the public, but only to bowls club members, hirers of the Bowls Annex and

Leisure Centre staff.

Mrs Flores-Moore reiterated her concerns, and asked for these to be minuted.

Beeson House

The Deputy Clerk confirmed that solicitors had been instructed in this respect.

Easteds Barn

The Deputy Clerk reported that planning permission and the Section 106 variation agreement had been approved, the Parish Council awaited the formal notice. This notice will give the conditions under which permission was approved. The Clerk will be taking forward the project in consultation with Mr Cole and Mr Watkins.

Members NOTED the action currently being undertaken.

Public Open Space

Solicitors have been instructed to provide advice in relation to trees which had been severely cut back on parish council owned land by an unauthorised person.

Members NOTED the action taken.

Dr Cash said that he had asked the Clerk to respond on two items, one being the lack of stile at the end of the footpath which crossed the Bovis development at Roman Lane and accessed directly onto the A24. The Deputy Clerk said that the Clerk was waiting for further information from Public Rights of Way, but she did know that a stile would not be possible in this location as it was a bridleway.

The other matter that Dr Cash has raised with the Clerk was whether the Council's insurance covered buildings and land. The Deputy Clerk said that Council land was covered in the insurance policy, but that she would let the Clerk respond more fully to Dr Cash's query.

FG101/10/13

SKATEPARK

Skatepark

The Deputy Clerk reported that there were still on-going issues in relation to the skatepark over and above what had been reported. These were being investigated and a report produced for Full Council. The skatepark is still fenced and not available for use; works were on-going. Additional monies had been requested from the District Council via the Section 106/CIL in relation to land in Southwater Street and to the rear of Rosbank Worthing Road subject to legal discussions with the developers and the planning authority.

It was **NOTED** that a report would be forthcoming on the additional areas of concern once investigated.

FG102/10/13 PERSONNEL, PENSIONS & TRAINING**

There were no matters of note to report, other than a successful staff meeting had been held.

Fg103/10/13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Finance & General Purposes meeting would be 6th November 2013 at 7.30 pm.

The meeting closed 8.50 pm.