

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 7th December 2016 at Beeson House, Lintot Square, Southwater commencing at 7.30 pm.

Chairman: Cllr M.Neale

Councillors: Cllr G.Cole Cllr K.Diamond
Cllr P. Flores-Moore Cllr J.Hutchings
Cllr C.Pearce Cllr G. Watkins
Cllr N. Whitear

County: Apologies provided by Cllr B. Watson OBE

District: Apologies provided by Cllr Dr J. Chidlow

Clerk: Mrs.C.Tobin

Press: Not present

Public: None

FG100/12/16 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting, then highlighted the housekeeping rules and indicated that should anyone wish to film/record the proceedings could they make themselves known if they had not already done so to the Clerk.

The Chairman advised that the meeting was being recorded.

There were no members of public.

FG101/12/16 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Dye and Vickers

Members noted these apologies.

FG102/12/16 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 which should assist Members in reaching their decision; this not being overly complicated.

FG103/12/16 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman said that he was delighted to welcome Cllr Chris Pearce to his first

committee meeting.

Cllr Neale also stated that he would like to take the opportunity of thanking fellow councillors, parish council staff and volunteers involved in the Christmas event which was once again a great success. A general discussion took place in relation to the Christmas event in that it was thought that the numbers attending were down possibly due to the fact that there were at least three other events on in the local area. The decision to change the date could also have played a part in that many people would have been out Christmas shopping. The Clerk stated that she would be speaking to the team involved and would come back to the Committee at a later date with a proposed date for 2017 and discuss any possible changes.

FG104/12/16 CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk referred to the correspondence list.

FG105/12/16 MINUTES

It was RESOLVED by all present that the Minutes of the meeting held on 16th November, 2016 be approved as a true and correct record of the meeting.

Cllr Whitear declared an interest in the item relating to the leasing of iPADS, having assisted the Clerk with the report.

FG106/12/16 ACCOUNTS & FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Clerk presented to Members the financial pack produced for the meeting, detailing income and expenditure, cash and investment analysis and debtors to 8th December 2016.

Members NOTED and APPROVED the information provided in that this was a true and correct position of the Council's financial affairs as at 8th December 2016.

The Clerk indicated that due to Christmas it would be helpful if the Committee could provided delegated powers to process both the December payments and payroll the following Tuesday. Councillors would therefore receive the financial information on the night of the meeting due to time constraints between meetings and the fact that Council had received up to date information the previous week.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk and two bank signatories be authorised to sign and approve the payments, which would in turn be presented on Wednesday 14th December to Council in a pack.

Internal Audit

The Clerk asked Members whether they wished to comment further following receipt of the Internal Auditors report. The Clerk reported that the Virgin book would be updated shortly and a further update provided for year end 31st March 2016. Council policies are currently being examined and if necessary new draft policies or updates provided.

Members NOTED the Clerk's comments.

SALC/NALC Subscriptions

The Clerk advised that on the basis of an electorate of 7982, the Council had been advised of the subscriptions for SALC/NALC for the forthcoming year. With a cap of the highest banding in which the Council sat the SALC subscription would be £1650 and the NALC subscription £537.1886.

A short discussion took place with Cllr Whitear expressing dismay at the response received from NALC in relation to the potential lease agreements for the proposed gym equipment. The information provided was no more than the Council already had in its possession.

Cllr Diamond stated that both he and the Clerk had put forward their names as suggested by the Council the previous year for the Larger Council's Committee, however had been unsuccessful.

Cllr Watkins asked whether NALC's solicitors had professional indemnity. The Clerk stated that she would enquire and report back.

It was APPROVED that when the invoice was received the Clerk should present this for payment.

Christmas Lighting

The Clerk advised that due to the requirements from SSE Contracting for a Structural Engineers report on the siting of the new motifs on lamp posts in Worthing Road an additional cost of £702.75 should be authorised. This report will ensure that the motifs can be erected thereafter for a period of five years, although the licence must be applied for annually. After a brief discussion councillors felt that the new motifs should be put up albeit for a shorter period than first envisaged. Cllr Neale stated that the staff had been working hard to make this happen having put so much effort into the project, it was only right that the sponsors and public see what was won in the national competition.

It was APPROVED by all that the Council should spend a further £702.75 on Christmas Lighting Structural Engineer Report for the motifs in Worthing Road. The motifs having been won in a National Competition held by Blachere Lighting and Revive & Thrive. The structural reports would be relevant for a period of five years.

Bonfire Hill – Yellow Salt Box

A local resident has requested that the Parish Council provides a yellow salt box for Bonfire Hill, which has a extremely sharp bend. In the past the Council's litter team had as and when required spread such grit and this area is on the emergency plan. WSCC instruct the Council as to when it should deploy. The cost of a salt box is relatively inexpensive, but the Clerk has asked the Southwater Safer Roads Partnership whether it could consider such provision. There could be an additional cost of providing salt to go in the bin which at this point in the year the Council may have to spend.

Councillors expressed concern at the way in which the local resident was parking on such a dangerous bend. The Clerk informed members that this matter had been taken up with PCSO Cecil who had visited the premises to discuss with the elderly resident.

Councillors NOTED the information and action taken by the Clerk in relation to this matter, should funding not be forthcoming then the Council would purchase the salt box and arranging for the grit to be provided. WSCC Highways to be consulted upon the best location due to the dangerous bend.

FG107/12/16 PURCHASE OF ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

Further to Cllr Whitear's investigations, the Deputy Clerk is in the process of acquiring further information as to what the cost would be to provide for 16 iPADS for the Parish Councillors use. The reason why this matter is being brought back to Committee is that it is thought that whilst permission for five has been approved, it may be prudent in terms of a lease to take out such a lease for fifteen.

Cllr Watkins asked why this item had appeared on the agenda, which Council had already resolved to lease five as a trial. Cllr Neale stated that following investigations it had been felt that perhaps further discussion should take place to see whether Council wished to lease the greater number with one lease period for the whole. Cllr Watkins stated that he felt that the five were sufficient as a trial. Councillors expressed concerns that if the equipment were provided then training would be required, along with cases for the iPads.

Cllr Pearce asked whether the public had been consulted upon this through a public consultation. Cllr Diamond stated that this had been approved in the budget for this financial year the idea being that this would reduce considerably the amount of papers issued and copied via the office for councillors thereby a cost saving in time and stationery. It was hoped that the Council could eventually be virtually paperless. Cllr Watkins stated that not every item of the budget was consulted on individually with the public. iPads should be equipped with WiFi, hard cases and applications that enabled the various Microsoft office programmes to be compatible with information sent by the Clerk. The Clerk to check with Zurich regarding whether the Council could obtain insurance cover if not consider Applecare offered by Apple.

After a further brief discussion when it was agreed that only five iPads would be leased for a year long trial, Members felt that the following councillors should take the lead with the Clerk arranging any necessary training. Cllrs. Watkins, Neale, Cole, Flores-Moore and Apted.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should make enquiries regarding an operating lease in relation to the lease of five iPADS together with ancilliary products that may be required. The Clerk to further make enquiries about insurance cover for such products.

FG108/12/16 PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The Clerk advised Members that there was no payment schedule for this meeting, the meeting being directly after Full Council in November.

Members NOTED and APPROVED the proposed course of ACTION.

FG109/12/16 GRANT APPLICATION

The Clerk advised Members that a grant request had been received in relation to the programmes for the Southwater Remembrance Day held in November from Church of the Holy Innocents. The grant request being for £144. Councillors indicated that this amount was similar to that of the previous year and was the Parish Council's financial contribution towards the Remembrance Day Service.

It was RESOLVED that the Council will provide a Community Grant of £144 in connection with the programmes for the Southwater Remembrance Day.

FG110/12/16 DRAFT BUDGET 2017/18

The Chairman referred to the discussions held at Full Council in November indicating that there was likely to be some further changes one of which would see income at the Barn increase by £5k. This is on the basis that the Council will now let subject to conditions the Barn for parties. There were obviously restrictions in terms of the licence but the team felt confident of achieving this figure.

Cllr Watkins indicated to those present that the version of the agenda he had was not the final version and therefore he had not prepared for the budget discussions tonight. This was acknowledged by those present.

Cllr Flores-Moore stated that she would rather see an income of £12k and thought that if the further £3k was achieved this would boost the staff concerned rather than demoralise them if the higher figure were not achieved.

Figures on maintenance and improvements projects of approximately £106k were quoted to members however due to the sensitivity of the discussion it was felt that the Clerk should deal with this as part of her management role, taking advice as necessary.

Councillors were advised that there still may be further minor changes to the salary, national insurance element of the budget, but this was subject to the confidential discussions of the Staff Review on the 14th December.

The Clerk to seek advice on a matter relating to financial management.

FG111/12/16 DRAFT LONE WORKER POLICY

The Clerk referred to the Lone Worker Policy, once approved and following consultation with staff, procedures will then be put in place to ensure that the Policy is implemented. Councillors are asked to approve the recommendations therein.

Cllr Watkins stated that he thought that the policy was well written however, he did not feel that it took account of Councillors and lone working contractors employed by the Parish Council.

In relation to the Leisure Centre which was a large and compartmentalised building, he was concerned about how the measures would work in terms of staff risk assessing the situation; he was not confident that such risk assessments would be carried out. He therefore felt that further investigation was required for this specific area.

The Clerk stated that both she and the Locum Deputy Clerk would investigate Cllr Watkins comments and take advice from HSE etc., and bring forward further proposals to Committee in relation to specifically the Leisure Centre where the risk was considered far greater.

It was AGREED that the Clerk and Locum Deputy Clerk amend the Draft Policy to take account of Councillors and Contractors. Further investigate what actions could be put in place in relation to the Leisure Centre specific.

FG112/12/16 ELECTORAL REVIEW OF HORSHAM – WARDING ARRANGEMENTS

The Clerk referred to information sent to Members regarding the Electoral Review of Horsham District Council's Warding Arrangements, in that there was a proposal for a new ward for Southwater and Shipley, which would provide for a further District Councillor and would see two further parish councillors for Southwater.

The Clerk referred to the proposed for a new ward covering the south of the village to be named Shipley & Southwater South. The ward as proposed has 3067 or 73% of the predicted electors being from Southwater. Councillors may wish to consider naming on the basis of this fact Southwater South & Shipley.

A discussion took place as to the ever increasing complexity in terms of local residents with the County Ward for Southwater being Southwater/Nuthurst and the District Wards which will now be Southwater North and Southwater South & Shipley. Cllr Cole said that there was a further one when there were also the elections for just Southwater Parish being quite distinct from either Shipley or Nuthurst.

Members NOTED the information provided, but had no further comments other than Southwater should precede Shipley.

FG113/12/16 THE SUSSEX AND EAST SURREY SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSFORMATION PLAN (STP) "OUR PLAN FOR PERSON CENTRED INTERGRATED CARE ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES"

The Clerk referred to correspondence dated 24th November from the Sussex and East Surrey Sustainability and Transformation Plan Team regarding their Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP).

The Plan outlines how we will all work together to transform and integrate health and social care services to meet the changing needs of all of the people who live in our area. It

is the first time that all parties will have worked together in this way and it gives us a unique opportunity to bring about positive and genuine improvement in health and social care delivery over the next five years. Priorities will be:

- Urgent and Emergency Care
- Frailty
- Primary Care

It is hoped that by adopting this model it will provide better health and wellbeing, better standards of care, better use of staff and funds.

The Clerk advised Members that as per instructions previously the Council would be writing to the CCG on various matters regarding the health and wellbeing of residents of Southwater and in particular the service from Southwater Surgery.

Members NOTED the information provided but had no further comment at this point.

FG114/12/16 SOUTHWATER YOUTH PROJECT

The Clerk referred to the report produced and circulated to all members by Cllr Whitear with both Cllrs Flores-Moore and Whitear having attended the recent Youth Club Management Board Meeting.

Cllr Whitear said that should the Parish Council not pay the £17k then they had been informed that the project might fold. Councillors indicated that whilst they support the project overall the Youth Management Group must ensure that they act in a constitutional manner and in accordance with its objections. Accordingly there should be four management meetings per year and an Annual General Meeting. To date Council have not seen evidence of such meetings having taken place. Councillors were also concerned that the Charity Commission Model was not the one being proposed by the Management Group; its version being substantially smaller than the model proposed by the Charity Commission. No formal accounts have been received and those that had been received were not correct, members had received this information and passed this on.

Cllr Whitear and Flores-Moore felt that whilst it had been a difficult meeting, it was felt that there was a way forward with the Council paying the £17k. Cllr Diamond and Cole both indicated that any other community group or organisation applying for a grant had to go through a rigorous process via the application system supplying audited accounts and could see no reason why the Youth Management Board should differ. Cllr Flores-Moore expressed concerns that the office could not find the original papers in relation to the partnership. The Clerk stated that she was in the process of trying to track down papers; some of which appeared to be missing. The Clerk believed that there had been an original agreement, with their originally being four partners.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should write to the Youth Management Board indicating whilst the Parish Council continued to be supportive of the aims and aspirations of the Group it was necessary due to the value of the grant to be provided

that it provides a copy of verified accounts for Year 2015/16 and to date 2016/17.

The Clerk to ask for clarity in terms of the proposed timing of the application for Charitable Status which would assist the group with its aims and funding. The Group to also look at the Constitution document and this should be revised to ensure clarity in terms of how much each partner would grant fund.

FG115/12/16 SKATEPARK (OFF STAKERS LANE, SOUTHWATER)

The Clerk informed Members that her office were awaiting a quotation for works from RADiRamps. However the Clerk would inform members that according to the Ring-fenced Schedule there was a -£14,791.

From the Clerks investigations only one claim for insurance had been put through in the last five years, with one claim for Section 106. Councillors felt that this situation could not simply carry on, but had believed that there were further Section 106 monies to be obtained. The Clerk stated that she was currently working on the schedule and if there were monies these would be obtained to offset the negative balance on ring-fenced. Cllr Cole stated that he felt that a decision had already been taken not to repair. Members then discussed the possibility of removal of the skate park and what use this area could have going forward.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should hold discussions with Horsham District Council in relation to Section 106 monies for a basketball court for the site and report back to Council on any meetings. The Clerk to ensure that weekly checks were made and noted in relation to the Skate Park.

FG116/12/16 COUNCIL PREMISES & LAND**

Blakes Farm Road, Southwater

Following a recent storm as previously reported a tree fell on a nearby house, which necessitated emergency works being carried out which involved the use of a crane. The cost of this emergency work being £1650+VAT.

At this point in the proceedings Cllr Flores-Moore declared a personal interest and took no part in any resolution.

The Clerk asked that Members approved this sum retrospectively.

It was RESOLVED by all with the exception of Cllr Flores-Moore, that the Emergency Works to remove a tree from a nearby house roof be APPROVED amounting to £1650+VAT.

Southwater Leisure Centre

The Clerk advised that the Council via the Leisure Centre had adopted the District Council's Leisure Access card which offered a range of discounts for residents on low income. The District Council are enquiring whether the Parish Council wish to continue to operate the scheme. The benefits are:

- All promotional costs for the Leisure Access Card scheme are met by the District Council;
- There is an extensive print, media and online marketing campaign;
- The Leisure Access Card scheme is promoted in the Horsham District News magazine which is distributed to 57,000 homes across the District twice Yearly;
- Because the LAC scheme offers discounted activities it encourages people to visit attractions and leisure venues which they may not have otherwise done;
- By being part of this scheme you are promoting your services at no extra cost to yourself with the potential for attracting new customers to your business.

The Committee APPROVED that the Leisure Centre could continue to offer the benefits of the Leisure Access Card to residents on low incomes.

FG117/11/16 PERSONNEL, PENSIONS & TRAINING**

The Clerk advised Members that she was seeking quotations for Ill Health Insurance for Senior Members of Staff from Came & Company. Unfortunately the Council's insurers Zurich Insurance do not currently have such cover.

Leisure Centre Staff Member

The Clerk has received a request that a member of the leisure centre staff be allowed to assist Fit to Box on a Friday evening, whilst not working at the Leisure Centre. Staff are required to receive consent, from the Council, to work for others outside of their normal hours of work. Cllr Watkins stated, that his view was that the Council should support staff in such ventures, which would ultimately benefit the Council and staff member.

It was APPROVED by all present that the Member of Staff may assist with the Fit to Box group at the Leisure Centre on a Friday evening.

FG118/11/16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Finance & General Purposes meeting will be **Wednesday, 11th January 2016.**

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm.