

**The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016 at Beeson House, Lintot Square, Southwater commencing at 7.30 pm.**

**Chairman: Mr P. Buckley**

**Councillors: Mr L. Apted Mr K. Diamond  
Mrs P. Flores-Moore Mr A. Green  
Mr B. Greening Mr S. Tresadern  
Mrs C. Vickers Mr G. Watkins  
Mr N. Whitear**

**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: 20**

**FG194/03/16 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.**

Mr Whitear enquired after the health of the Clerk. Mr Buckley confirmed that she was still unwell, and there was no firm date for her return to work.

Mrs Nuttall, a local resident, said that she was concerned that the Tree Preservation Orders on the land west of the Worthing Rd were not being adhered to by Berkeley Homes. Large areas of hedgerows had been removed, despite it being the bird nesting season.

The Deputy Clerk said that did not have the dates of the bird nesting season to hand, but that all tree works on site had been approved by the District Council. She does meet with Berkeleys on a monthly basis to be updated with build and works schedules etc.

Mr Brown, local resident, said that he had noted a higher volume of dog excrement in the village. The Deputy Clerk reported that there was little that could be done, apart from putting up notices, unless the dog owner was caught in the act, and Horsham District Council Dog Warden informed. A fine can then be imposed.

Mr Eric Vincent, local resident, reported that he had seen lots of posters

advertising events etc. around the village, and he knew that the Parish Council had to give permission for these to be displayed. The Deputy Clerk said that the Parish Council only gave permission for notices and banners at Hangman's Hill roundabout. Council staff were instructed to remove notices that were equivalent to fly-posting.

**Mrs Vickers arrived at 7.40pm**

**FG195/03/16 APOLOGIES**

There were apologies from Mr Cole and Mr Neale. Mrs Flores-Moore will be arriving late.

**Members noted and approved these apologies**

**FG196/03/16 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

The Deputy 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.

**Mr Tresadern declared an interest in FG200/03/16 when the possibility of renewing the Council's insurance policy with Zurich Municipal, as he is an employee of Zurich.**

**FG197/03/16 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr Buckley reported that the Clerk was still on long term sick leave, with no firm date for her return to work.

The Management Plan agreed by this Committee at the January Full Council meeting only ran until the end of March, so he and Mrs Flores-Moore will meet with the Acting Clerk at the end of March to agree an extension of this Plan. This will be reported to March Full Council meeting for ratification.

Mr David Carden will be attending as Locum Clerk at the March Full Council as the Deputy Clerk will be on annual leave.

**FG198/03/16 CORRESPONDENCE**

The Deputy Clerk referred members to general correspondence received and asked whether Members wished to comment on any particular item.

**Members NOTED the correspondence received.**

Twinning Invitation

A representative from the Mairie de Cuincy, which is a small town in northern

France, with 7000 residents has written to ask if Southwater would like to consider twinning.

The Deputy Clerk reminded councillors that they had agreed to investigate twinning in the past, but that unfortunately this has not been progressed due to other priorities.

Mr Diamond asked what benefits would there be to Southwater if it were twinned to this town.

Mrs Vickers reported that Horsham was twinned with towns in France and Germany, which was mainly to encourage tourism.

Mr Greening thought that with the planned commemoration events to mark the end of the First World War, it may be considered appropriate to twin with a French town.

**It was resolved that the Deputy Clerk would make further investigations as to the benefits or otherwise of twinning, and would report to the next Finance and General Purposes Committee.**

**FG199/03/16 MINUTES**

**It was RESOLVED by all present that the Minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2016 be approved as a true and correct record of the meeting, including the Confidential Minute.**

**FG200/03/16 ACCOUNTS & FINANCIAL MATTERS**

The Deputy Clerk provided Members with information on the current financial position of the Council to 9<sup>th</sup> March having provided the Cash Reconciliation, Income & Expenditure and Debtors Listing.

The Deputy Clerk reported that £35,000 had been transferred from the Nat West account into the current account to cover ongoing costs until the precept is received at the end of April. A sum of £30,000 had been agreed at January Full Council, but Councillor Buckley as Internal Controller had felt that as the account was earning so little interest at 0.5%, there was little point keeping it there. The Nat West account was originally opened as there was a branch in Lintot Square, but this has since closed. A balance of £270.03 was left in the account for consideration by this Committee.

**The decision to transfer £35,000 instead of £30,000 previously agreed was RATIFIED and it was RESOLVED that the Nat West account would be closed, and the remaining balance of £270.03 be transferred into the current account.**

**Members NOTED and APPROVED the information provided in that this was a true and correct position of the Council's financial affairs as at 9<sup>th</sup>**

**March 2016**

Tender to supply new microphone system in the Chamber

The Deputy Clerk referred members to the report issued with the agenda on this matter.

Mr Diamond asked if there was an option to video meetings. The Deputy Clerk said that this was an audio recording only, as she was asked to remove the camera option at the last meeting.

**It was RESOLVED that the preferred supplier would be On-AV with the Bosch CCS900 system at a purchase price of £4950 plus VAT.**

Extension to the Zurich Insurance Policy for One/Two Years

The Deputy Clerk referred members to the report issued with the agenda on this matter.

**Mr Tresadern declared an interest in this item as he is an employee of Zurich Municipal. He left the meeting.**

**It was RESOLVED that the Council would extend the existing insurance policy with Zurich for three years at a cost of £13011.93 per annum**

**Mr Tresadern returned to the meeting.**

Timing of Issuing of Invoices

The Deputy Clerk referred members to the report issued with the agenda on this matter.

**It was RESOLVED that invoices would continue to be produced at the end of the month, for that month's hires.**

Purchase of an additional Flag Pole

At the last meeting, the Deputy Clerk was asked to ascertain the cost of the purchase and erection of a second flag pole at the Southwater War Memorial, in order to fly the St George's flag at all times.

The existing pole is an aluminium pole, with hinged base plate, with internal halyard. To purchase a pole to the same specification would cost £1543.95 + VAT, plus delivery of £193. This does not include installation.

**It was RESOLVED that a second flag pole would not be purchased, but that St George's flag would be flown on St George's Day.**

Beeson House Lift

The existing halogen lights in the lift are often in need of replacement, and it has been suggested that LED lights are installed. It appears that any such replacement by an electrical contractor would void the lift warranty. Schindler has provided a quotation for £840.00 ex VAT, which after negotiation has been reduced to

£657.67 ex VAT.

At the last meeting, it was generally thought that this price was very expensive to replace six bulb units, and the Deputy Clerk was asked to ascertain the cost of replacing one halogen bulb, and one LED bulb, including labour.

The price of one replacement halogen light bulb is £3, and for one replacement LED light bulb is £10, both costs being exclusive of VAT. Labour costs would be the same for both.

However, LED lights last longer, at an average of 30000 hours as opposed to 2000 hours for a halogen bulb so would need to be replaced less frequently. In addition, LED lights consume around 28 times less energy when on.

LED lights are readily available and could be changed by the Council's maintenance operative without the need for an engineer call out

**It was RESOLVED that the lift lights would be changed to LED, at a cost of £657.67 plus VAT**

Gatwick Diamond Business Membership

The invoice has been received from the Gatwick Diamond for the annual membership March 2016 to February 2017 at a cost of £410.00 ex VAT.

The Deputy Clerk reminded Councillors that David Nagy had attended Gatwick Diamond meetings when he was a councillor, but to her knowledge, no one had attended since Mr Nagy left the Council

**It was RESOLVED that membership of the Gatwick Diamond would not be renewed at a cost of £410.00.**

Action in Rural Sussex – Community Buildings Advice Service

The invoice has been received from AiRS for the annual renewal of the Community Buildings Advice Service at a cost of £120 ex VAT. The service includes monthly newsletters, attendance at 6 free workshops, web-based access and access to advice and information.

The Deputy Clerk advised that the Bookings Clerk had attended a workshop last year, but did not find it useful as the Council ensures that it is up to date with all advice. She suggested that whilst this service has been beneficial in the past, perhaps the Council has outgrown the service.

**It was RESOLVED that this subscription would not be renewed at a cost of £120 + VAT**

Payment of next grant contribution to Southwater Youth Project

At the last meeting it was agreed that Councillors Buckley and Flores-Moore, together with the Deputy Clerk would meet with representatives from the Youth Project Management Board to discuss the Parish Council's ongoing contributions

to the Youth Project.

This meeting has now taken place, and matters have been clarified with regard to the partners' contributions. Mr Buckley and Mrs Flores-Moore recommend that the invoice for £17,000 for the next grant contribution to Southwater Youth Project should be passed for payment.

**It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council's contribution towards Southwater Youth Project should be authorised to be included in the March Full Council payment schedule.**

The Deputy Clerk said that the Parish Council's contribution of £17,000 for three years should be taken into consideration when working on the budget in October 2016.

Boar's Head Street Light

It was reported at the last meeting that the cable repair for this light was imminent, but as this will require temporary traffic control lights, the Deputy Clerk is awaiting confirmation that the Parish Council will not be charged for this.

The Deputy Clerk reported that the repair is still "imminent", with no date for the repair, and she has escalated the complaint accordingly. Apparently the delay is that WSCC has to grant a licence to operate temporary traffic lights and this has not yet been received.

**The Deputy Clerk will report the matter to Brad Watson, County Councillor to see if he can expedite matters.**

**FG201/03/16 PAYMENT SCHEDULE**

The Deputy Clerk presented a payment schedules to 9<sup>th</sup> March for approval in the sum of £58,608.95. This includes February salaries, and February and March payment schedules, there being no Full Council meeting in February.

**It was RESOLVED by all present that the payment schedules dated 10<sup>th</sup> February 2016 be APPROVED in the sum of £58,608.95**

**FG202/03/16 COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS**

The Deputy Clerk asked Councillors to consider the following grant applications, the paperwork for which having been previously circulated:

Age UK - £250

This grant is to assist with the funding of the Information and Advice Service.

Mt Watkins said that it had been recently reported in the media that the advice given by Age UK in relation to seeking new power providers had not been

entirely transparent.

It was not clear from the documentation supplied, how many Southwater residents were assisted by Age UK

**It was RESOLVED to defer consideration of the grant to Age UK to the next Finance & General Purposes Committee, and that a representative from Age UK would be invited to the meeting.**

**FG203/03/16 POLICE MATTERS**

The Deputy Clerk has circulated an invitation to a briefing session about the changes to local policing and the current state of progress with the Local Policing Programme. This is to take place on Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> March at 7pm here in Beeson House.

Councillors wishing to attend should advise the Parish Office, as it is believed that numbers are limited.

**FG204/03/16 COUNCIL PREMISES & LAND\*\***

The Deputy Clerk reported that the value of March 2016 bookings across all buildings had exceeded £10,000 for the first time, the exact sum being £10,322.83.

Bookings confirmed across all buildings for April 2016 to March 2017 total over £97,000.

**It was RESOLVED that the Deputy Clerk would congratulate Mrs Hully on behalf of the Council, for her hard work in securing this high value of bookings.**

Easteds Barn

Nothing to report

Southwater Leisure Centre

Summer Fun Day

At the last meeting, it was agreed not to hold a Community Fun Day at the Leisure Centre on 16<sup>th</sup> July, to include a fun fair, due to the current staffing shortage. However, it was agreed that the fun fair could still take place, on the proviso that all activity would cease at 10pm, and all damage to the field would be repaired, both of which would be made conditions of permission.

As instructed, the Deputy Clerk wrote to residents in the vicinity of the Leisure Centre to advise them of this.

The Deputy Clerk referred Councillors to a pack of residents' letters, emails, and

telephone calls received as of Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March, all objecting to the siting of the fun fair in this location. In summary, the objections included

- Hours of operation
- Noise whilst in operation.
- Noise of generators and shouting etc. whilst not in operation
- Still in term time, children would be unable to sleep
- No consultation
- Concerns about parking
- Concerns about fairground traffic accessing via Pevensey Rd
- Possible anti-social behaviour

Mr Shayler, the proprietor of the fun fair was present at the meeting.

Mr Watkins queried the legality of discussing the matter again, as a resolution had already been agreed at the last meeting. The Deputy Clerk said that she had sought advice, and despite the fact that matters cannot be discussed for six months, more information has been supplied that needs to be addressed.

Mr Watkins asked if planning permission was required to hold the fun fair at the Leisure Centre, and the Deputy Clerk confirmed that it was not.

**At this point the Chairman proposed the suspension of Standing Orders to allow members of the public to speak. This was seconded by Mr Apted and agreed by all.**

Mr Brown, a resident in Nutham Lane, said that noise travels, and he can hear football matches at the Leisure Centre from his property now, so he would certainly hear a fun fair. He was concerned about the state of the field after the fair had left, as an injury may be sustained by a football player due to a rutted surface.

Mr Steele, a resident in Dover Close, said that it was not clear why the fair could not be held at Church Lane again. The fair should not be held in an area which already suffers from anti-social behaviour. He was concerned about parking and congestion in the Pevensey Rd area, which may lead to difficulties with emergency vehicles gaining access.

The Deputy Clerk said that the Parish Council had surrendered the lease of the Church Lane fields back to the Fletcher Trust, which is why the fair cannot be held there.

Mr Plomp, a resident in York Close, wanted to know if the Council would be liable for insurance claims from residents for damage to property and vehicles in the area.

Ms Morgan, local resident, said that she was concerned about noise and anti-social behaviour. She works at weekends.

Mr Drabble, resident in York Close, said that his property backs onto the Leisure Centre field. To have the fair operating until 10pm at night would have an impact on family life. The fair would arrive on site on the Monday 11<sup>th</sup> July, so there would be noise from generators etc. before it opened.

Mr Cox, local resident, said that he thought the Council had already made its decision. Mr Brown said that the Committee could change its mind. He asked why there had been no consultation.

Mr Jason Vincent, a resident of Walmer Close, said that the fair would affect more people at the Leisure Centre than it would at Church Lane. He can hear the fair at his house when it is at Church Lane. Residents should have been informed first before the decision was taken. The letter that was sent to residents by the Council said that complaints should be made to the parish office if there were any problems whilst the fair was in operation, yet the office was closed at weekends, so how could they do this? He asked how much rent the Council would receive. This could be used to widen the path which runs alongside the Leisure Centre field.

Mr Jason Vincent asked why the fair took longer to set up than take down. He asked what toilet facilities would be provided, as he thought that people would use the hedges. He had carried out a survey in Walmer Close and of the 30 houses, 27 were against the fair being sited at the Leisure Centre.

Mr Goodchild, a resident in Dover Close, asked if parking issues had been considered for visitors to the fair. Residents currently have to sweep the road outside their houses, to clear the mud deposited from football players' cars. Who will clean the road after the fair vehicles have been on and off the site? The Leisure Centre used to manage parking on Saturdays to stop people parking in Pevensey Rd. That does not happen any more.

Mr Hill, a resident in Pevensey Rd, said that he had received a letter from PSCO Cecil, saying that if cars parked on the pavement, to let him know. Sometimes cars park across driveways. If his family come when the fair is on site, they will not be able to park.

Councillor Whitear said that it was the same where he lived in Timbermill, and perhaps there should be bollards in the road.

Mr Brown asked if the Council had looked at other sites, such as the overflow car park at Southwater Country Park.

Councillor Vickers asked if the Council had asked the Fletcher Trust if the fair could be held on the land at Church Lane.

Mr Jason Vincent did not know how the heavy fair vehicles would get down Pevensey Rd. The Council should have consulted with residents before deciding to hold the fair at the Leisure Centre. He asked how many Councillors live in

Southwater. The response was that they all do, apart from Mr Buckley, who lives in Shipley.

Mr Johnson, a resident in Little Bridges Close, said that he lives about 500 yards away from the Leisure Centre field. It will be summer, and he wants to have his windows open.

Councillor Diamond asked if the Committee could hear from Mr Shayler, the proprietor of the fun fair.

Mr Shayler said that the fair had been coming to Southwater since he was 8 years old, in various sites across the village. In 1976, for example, the fair was sited where the primary school is now. He had been on private land in Church Lane, before moving to the land opposite the Sports Club.

**Mrs Flores-Moore arrived at 8.40pm**

Mr Shayler said that the fair had been in opposite the Sports Club for about four or five years, although the land is wet. The fair lorries will arrive at the Leisure Centre during the day, and will stay on site until the fair leaves, so there will be no to-ing and fro-ing.

The fair operates all over the south-east. The generators run silently, and he provides the toilets. The site is made good and litter-picked after use, and often the site is cleaner than when the fair came on it.

He has references from Councils all over the south-east, with Southwater Parish Council being one of them. With regard to the noise, he cannot stop people screaming on the rides and having fun. The fair is sited near housing in other areas with no problems, such as Newick Green, Broadbridge Heath and Partridge Green. He thinks the car parking is adequate.

Mr Shayler noted that there were a dozen people attending the meeting out of over 11,000 residents. He not aware of any other suitable site in Southwater.

Mr Jason Vincent said that he had nothing against Mr Shayler's fun fair – his own children enjoyed fun fairs. However, the Leisure Centre field is not used at night at the moment, so he was of the opinion that this would set a precedent, and was worried that there would be car boot sales etc. in future.

Mr Shayler said that if the land is not used for leisure, then it will get built on.

Mrs Vincent said that she is doing a petition against the fair in Walmer Close, and she will deliver this to Beeson House.

Mr Hughes asked what fee Mr Shayler was paying for the use of the field. The Deputy Clerk said that this was to be negotiated, but that last year the fee was £500 for the use of the Church Land fields.

Mr Hughes said that this was making money for the Council. Mrs Flores-Moore corrected him, saying it was money for the village.

Mr Drabble said that he would pay not to have it.

Mr Buckley said that the fun fair would provide an event for the whole village to enjoy.

Mr Drabble said that residents would have to endure people leaving at 10pm, shouting and screaming, drinking and throwing bottles about. Would there be extra policing provided?

Mr Shayler said that he controls behaviour on the fair ground.

Mr Buckley said that the residents had expressed their views.

**Standing Orders were reinstated.**

Mrs Flores-Moore said that she thought the fair was in the wrong place, and she would not want it behind her house.

Mr Watkins asked if the Church Lane field was still available. He has concerns about the making good of the Leisure Centre field after the event. Perhaps a bond could be considered, to be retained in the event of damage.

The Deputy Clerk said that the normal practice was for Clerk to inspect the land before and after occupation to ensure that it was reinstated to an acceptable condition.

Mr Whitear said that he could hear the Christmas Festival in Lintot Square from inside his house in Timbermill. The fun fair would be later, when children are trying to sleep.

Mrs Flores-Moore said that the Council was here to listen to residents.

Mr Greening said that if no site could be found, there would be no fun fair in the village.

**At this point the Chairman proposed the suspension of Standing Orders to allow members of the public to speak. This was seconded by Mr Watkins and agreed by all.**

Mr Shayler said that you could not compare the fair with the Christmas Festival as the Festival had amplified music from acts on the stage. The fair music was not amplified.

**Standing Orders were reinstated.**

Mr Diamond said that it was a question of proportionality. Some residents would

be impacted by noise pollution, but all residents would have the fair to enjoy. He is in favour of the fair but thinks it may be in the wrong place. There will be anti-social behaviour anyway, with or without the fair, and this needs to be managed by the police.

Mr Greening said there had been minimal trouble when the fair was at Church Lane.

Mrs Vickers said that it would be a community event, and would provide fun for the young people. She lives in the vicinity of Christ's Hospital School, which holds events until 2am which she can hear from her house, but these are one or two days a year. If the fair is not successful at the Leisure Centre, then it will not get permission to be there again.

Mr Diamond said that if the Council says no to the fair, then it will not come back. Earlier in the meeting a grant for the Youth Project had been discussed, and it seemed ironic to stop an event that the youth would enjoy.

Mrs Flores-Moore said that people would not be able to park to use the Gym etc. People from Horsham would attend. She could understand the concerns about screaming from the rides.

Mrs Vickers suggested that the Deputy Clerk ask the Fletcher Trust if the fair could be held at Church Lane for one last year.

**It was resolved that the Deputy Clerk would approach the Fletcher Trust to ascertain whether the fun fair can be held on the Church Lane field this year. This would be reported to Full Council on 30<sup>th</sup> March for a final decision.**

Mr Diamond thanked the residents for coming, and assured them that the matter would be resolved at Full Council.

**Residents left the meeting leaving three remaining.**

**Beeson House**

Discussions are still ongoing with solicitors in relation to minor changes in the head lease for Beeson House.

Permission has now been granted for the installation of a window in the Community Room; however, the quotation for these works, agreed by the Council, has expired, so the Council's agent is ascertaining if the price is still valid. £9659.00

A licence for the installation of air conditioning is still awaited

**Member noted this information.**

Church Lane Premises

Discussions are ongoing with solicitors in relation to issuing a new lease for this building.

**FG205/03/16 PERSONNEL, PENSIONS & TRAINING\*\***

**Mr Buckley announced that due to the nature of the matter to be discussed, the public and press would be excluded for the next item.**

**Three members of the public left the meeting**

**The next item is minuted under CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE**

**FG206/03/16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next Finance & General Purposes meeting will be Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016

**The meeting closed at 9.20 pm.**