

SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 30th November 2016 at 7.30 p.m., in the Council Chamber, Beeson House, Southwater.

Present Were:	Cllr.G.Watkins (Chairman)	
	Cllr L. Apted	Cllr G.Cole
	Cllr K. Diamond	Cllr P.Flores-Moore
	Cllr B.Greening	Cllr J. Hutchings
	Cllr M. Neale	Cllr B. Varley
	Cllr N. Whitear	
Clerk:	Mrs.C.M.Tobin	
County Councillor:	WSCC Cllr.B.Watson	
District Councillors:	Not Present	
Sussex Police:	Not present	
Members of the public:	1	
Press:	Not present	

F39/11/16 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman provided those present with information on housekeeping for the meeting including evacuation of the building in the event of fire.

The Chairman asked whether anyone present wished to film or record the meeting and if so they could make themselves known via the Chair.

The Chairman asked whether the County Councillor wished to address the Council.

Cllr Watson said that the main point that he wished to impart was that the County Council was into its budget period which was proving as difficult as before targets being £40M we have to take that out of our working budget but half of that is schools budgets. It is going to be difficult in how we allocate that saving. Despite all the changes around Government funding it still means that the major savings must be made.

Cllr Watson said that he was trying to assist the Parish Council by cutting away the red tape in relation to the new Christmas Lighting with the electricity company concerned.

Cllr Watkins stated that it was always difficult at this time of year with such cuts coming forward for County Councils and other authorities. Cllr Watkins said that a fellow councillor wished to take up an issue.

Cllr Cole, said that he had a friend who was wheelchair bound and coming down the Worthing Road; the footpath was not sufficient lending him to use this in the road. With utility companies continually cutting up the pavements, it was in his view about time that the County Council did something about this problem. Other Councils in the country seemed to cope, but not West Sussex. Cllr Watson said that the member had raised a very good point with all the pressure on pot holes, but County members have advised officers that there was a need to concentrate on the Better Footway Fund. It was important to highlight to Highways where the serious problems were and this would be put on the list. It is not the case that there was sufficient money to go and do every footpath, but will look at those which were dangerous. They do now inspect footways more regularly so that these issues can be picked up.

Cllr Flores-Moore said that she does not understand why the Authority cannot charge the utility companies in the first place rather than the public purse pick up the costs. Cllr Watson said that he thought that it was often the repair by statutory undertakers, and it was they who had the responsibility to repair but the difficulty was getting them back which sometimes led to the County intervening to get something repaired. He felt that there were new systems in place which may help going forward. Any statutory undertaker if they claim an emergency can dig up the road, sad anomaly. Cllr Flores Moore said that they should leave in a good condition not poor when someone could fall over. Cllr Watson agreed, and stated that drains were another problem caused in some parts with statutory undertakers. Cllr Flores-Moore said that at Pollards Hill the statutory undertakers undertook work, but have to date still not come back. County should be chasing them; Cllr Watson agreed that the companies should be carrying out the work. Cllr Watkins thanked Cllr Watson for his response and he knew that the County were trying to get on top of the problem.

Mr.Ross Dye stated that he raised a question at the last meeting about Christ's Hospital. The Clerk responded that the County were working up a scheme and that whilst on site she had seen the problem. The Scheme would be consulted upon. Mr.Dye thanked the Clerk for the update.

Mr.John Conde stated that he had a lengthy period of working for one of the utility companies; if the work is done wrongly the Council take a bore sample and the company are legally obliged to repair. All the County have to do is look at the opening notice, and send someone out. It is not up the Council to fork out public money. Cllr Watkins thanked the resident for his comments.

F40/11/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs O'Toole-Quinn and Vickers.

F41/11/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Clerk referred Members of the Council to information issued in relation to the Member's Code of Conduct and Standing Orders asking whether any Member had at this point in the meeting anything of note to declare.

There were no declarations made at this point in the meeting.

Cllr Whitear stated that in relation to Item 12 Gym Tenders he had been assisting the

Clerk with the tenders in terms of the leasing. This was duly NOTED by Council.

F42/11/16 MINUTES

The Full Council meeting minutes of the 28th September 2016 were APPROVED by all those present as a true and correct record of the meeting.

F43/11/16 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman had no announcements.

F44/11/16 CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk referred to the list of correspondence issued with the members information packs for the meeting and asked whether those present wished to raise anything in relation to this.

F45/11/16 COMMITTEES

Planning Committee – 6th October 2016 and 9th November 2016

It was RESOLVED by all present that the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 6th October and 9th November, 2016 be APPROVED as a true and correct record of the meeting.

The date of the next meeting would be Wednesday 4th January 2017.

Leisure Centre Sub-Committee 12th October and 16th November 2016

It was RESOLVED by all present that the Minutes of the Leisure Centre Sub-Committees held on 12th October and 17th November be APPROVED as a true and correct record of the meeting. The minutes were amended due to the dates being incorrect.

The Clerk informed members that the date of the next meeting at this point would be 11th January 2017.

Finance & General Purposes Committee – 12th October and 16th November 2016

It was RESOLVED by all present that the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee of the 12th October and 17th November 2016 be APPROVED as a true and correct record of the meeting, following an amendment to the attendance list of the 17th November in that Cllr. Vickers was present at the meeting.

The date of the next meeting would be Wednesday 11th January 2017.

F46/11/16 ACCOUNTS

The Clerk presented to Council the current financial position of the Council, including detailed Income & Expenditure, Sales Ledger Aged Account Balances, Bank Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 30th November 2016.

All present APPROVED the financial information provided by the Clerk dated 30th November as the true and correct financial position of the Council.

Parish Council Interim Audit

The Clerk informed Members that she had had the accounts looked at by Stuart Wilbur who had previously carried out the end of year accounting process and who was familiar with the Council's accounts. Whilst Mr. Wilbur questioned the need to accrue for some items at the year end in relation to funds for the new window and air conditioning for Beeson House, this could have been a transfer to Ring-fenced. However, the Clerk stated that she was satisfied that the accounts were generally in order and other for a number of transfers at the end of year it appeared as of last week the Council had an operating balance of £99,811 with a general fund of £36,766. Mr. Wilbur had been extremely helpful to Cllr Neale and the Clerk and had provided further information on the system being operated which would in future assist with year end accounts.

The Clerk had supplied Members in their post a copy of the Detailed Balance Sheet (Excluding Stock Movement) as at 24th November 2016.

The current position of the Council was NOTED and APPROVED by all present.

The Clerk had also arranged for Mr. Wilbur to attend to assist at year end the cost being £275 plus mileage.

It was APPROVED by all concerned that the Parish Council would appoint Mr. Wilbur of Microshade to assist with the end of year accounts and accounts package at a cost of £275 plus mileage.

F47/11/16 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

The Clerk presented the payments schedule dated 30th November 2016 in the sum of £47,722.61.

Cllr. Whitear questioned the figure of £100 in relation to the Direct Debit renewal fee. The Clerk stated that she did not have the detail available for the meeting but would forward this to Cllr Whitear.

The Clerk to forward to Cllr Whitear the information he requested.

It was APPROVED by all present that the schedule of payments in the sum of £47,722.61 be authorised for payment.

F48/11/16 CO-OPTION OF PARISH COUNCILLORS

The Chairman indicated that he believed that there were currently three applicants for the three positions on the Council and asked whether Members were happy to co-opt this en-bloc but wondered whether Members wished to ask questions of the candidates prior to any appointment. The candidates being Mr.Paul Davies, Mr.Ross Dye and Mr.Christopher Pearce.

It was AGREED by all present that Mr.Paul Davies, Mr.Ross Dye and Mr.Christopher Pearce by CO-OPTED to the Parish Council.

At this point in the meeting all three candidates signed their Declaration of Office, and provided with a Register of Interest which should be completed and returned to the office.

The Chairman welcome Cllr Davies, Cllr Dye and Cllr Pearce to the Council.

Cllr Watson said that at this point whilst the Clerk was undertaking the formalities, he would like to congratulate Cllr Billy Greening on his success at Election for the District Council.

F49/11/16 DRAFT ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL BUDGET 2017/18

The Chairman of Finance & General Purposes, Cllr Michael Neale presented to Members the Draft Budget and gave a summary of how the figures had been arrived at.

The Chairman informed those present that during the budgeting process both he and the Clerk had found discrepancies in the current year's budget which had been approved by the Council at which point Cllr Neale highlighted the areas of concern.

Cllr Neale took this in sections and why the Council was in the position it was, and then look at solutions.

From his notes difference from last year to this year and were in order 101 (1800) Miscellaneous Income last year there is a difference -£6,200 from last year to this year. A lot of this to do with adverts and income funfair in the summer which didn't happen, this years figure was more realistic. 101 (1901) Precept Grant this year is set at £927 from Horsham District no movement from that has come down dramatically over the years. 102 (Hall Hire) difference of -£2,220 from last year. We have had a discussion on this and have mitigated some of this and there was a proposal to be made primarily for the chamber. On a number of occasions we hire out to community organisations at a very low cost as a community grant and this prevents our taking commercial bookings. Cllr Neale gave an example in that Neighbourhood Watch would now meet in the Leisure Centre Meeting room giving greater opportunity of acquiring commercial income. The Council recently looked at all the voluntary community groups. Cllr Diamond said that could we pilot this for six months. Cllr Neale said that it was important that the income stream was strengthened. Cllr Diamond stated that he would like to make a decision on this. The Clerk informed Members that the meeting room at the Leisure Centre was not generally booked and this would be better facilities to offer these groups, leaving the chamber with all its facilities being made available to commercial

organisations. Cllr Flores-Moore said that the room got very hot in the summer, if blinds or air conditioning could be considered it would be better not to mention the noise. Cllr Watkins said that Cllr Neale was asking Members to consider further ways of achieving an increased income. Cllr Flores-Moore felt that the change to blinds was inexpensive. Members could come back to this discussion at a later date. Cllr Neale said, that the point was that, the budget was put together from facts from this year with a little extra, more realistic this year the Council were over optimistic for this year. 102 (1546) Income Code -£13,608 Parish Council Service Charge, we think that the assumption last year was incorrect going to collect money from ourselves which we would pay on, how can we collect monies from ourselves. 102 (1528) Youth Club rental income, who pays for that the Parish Council, so we have another incorrect assumption. A number of other anomalies were also approved by Council the previous year. 105 (1301) Coaching - £4,000 this didn't make our expectations and what Steve Brew was proposing. Steve Brew stated that this would be offset by less expenditure.

The next 105 (1800) - £29,950. Council budgeted for £30k, and have not budgeted this year as this was budgeted against Section 106, this should not have happened and the monies are not currently available. Cllr Watkins said that it was important to stress the monies may become available only maybe. Cllr Neale said that this should not have been budgeted as guaranteed income.

Cllr Neale said that moving on, item 110 (1000) - £8,000 Easteds Barn this is a difference as income did not meet expectations. Cllr Diamond said that this should change with new marketing strategy. Cllr Neale said that this would partly account for some of the loss, but there was a need to have adult parties, a general discussion took place with Cllr Diamond suggesting a pilot scheme in order not to alienate local residents. Cllr Watkins said that councillors need to come up with ideas as to how to generate additional income. Cllr Diamond said that there should be a statement ready to go to the press if the Council considers this option going forward. Cllr Neale stated that the budget had been prepared on what was happening currently. Cllr Cole stated that there were lots of complaints from local residents, to adult parties, but one of the alternatives was a nursery in the building, but we have to look at the viability. Cllr Watkins stated that the building should be used longer and for more purposes. Cllr Varley, stated that she thought that when opened one of the understanding was that the Council wouldn't have parties in the evening. The Clerk advised those present that there had been restrictions previously, but that planning permission had been gained since that time and whilst there were restrictions, the proposals going forward would comply within the conditions imposed.

102 (4198) £10,500 Beeson House Internal Charges, the Council didn't set a budget for that last year the Parish Council have a responsibility to maintain its part of the building, so it made sense to ensure that monies were set aside £5k added. Cllr Cole said that this should become a sinking fund.

Altogether there was a difference of -£91,252 difference between last year and this year, so members could see why the bottom line this year was so off the mark. Cllrs Flores-Moore questioned the income on the MUGA, she would like to reduce to ensure that we get to a positive, -£2,463 balance. The Clerk stated that she was hopeful that during the later part of the year this would become a positive situation after five months, figures quoted from Month 7. Cllr Whitear from what the Manager said that this was almost guaranteed from bookings. Cllr Flores-Moore was concerned that the Council be more realistic this year when setting the

budget. The Clerk stated that based on last year and this year the figure on income was realistic.

Cllr Diamond thanked Cllr Neale for his work with the Clerk on the budget. Cllr Neale stated that this would come back to Finance & General Purposes on the 7th December. On the 14th December, the Staff Review will be discussed and Cllr Neale did not feel that there would be a huge difference from what was being budgeted.

The Clerk indicated that the Government will not be announcing the finance settlement until January or February; there were strong rumours that the Council may be capped on anything over 2% and this would cause major problems in relation to the proposals before members. It may be subject to this information that the Council will have to hold a Referendum on the Budget for 2017/18 and such a referendum if imposed by Government would cost in the region of £15k. The Clerk indicated to Members the rates at which the Government are stating are acceptable, but that this was based on a District Council's precept in Cumbria but whose local parishes already precept more than them. If the Council failed at Referendum a secondary budget will have to be placed. Cllr Diamond stated that the Council's Media and PR Strategy was extremely important in winning the hearts and minds in the local community; the Council should inform the public of what they do, what they intend to do this being based on information from the Neighbourhood Plan etc. The Clerk also advised Members that the Council's Vision was based on such responses and also from a community conference held in September which supported the Vision. Cllr Whitear asked when a Referendum would be held, the Clerk stated that this would be held by the District Council and a secondary budget would have to be prepared. The Clerk was hoping that through discussions further ideas would come forward until January's Finance & General Purposes Committee when there should be a recommendation to Full Council to set a precept. Legally the Council do not have to provide this until beginning of March. Cllr Watkins said that he would hope that the community of Southwater would support the aims of their Parish Council, but these matters must be considered.

Cllr Neale asked whether there were any further comments. Cllr Watkins stated that there was a positive in that the Church Lane property was now let at a figure of £18k per annum this would be achieved next year 2017/18.

Cllr Cole said that in relation to the potential Referendum Figure of £15k on a Band D what would be the affect, Cllr Neale said that this would be £3-£4 per household, which is about half of what we were looking for at worst. The Clerk indicated that the Council have written to the Minister objecting to the Government's proposals. The Clerk also indicated that over the last three years the Council have lost approximately £15k from the District Council's Revenue Support Grant. Cllr Greening asked what the percentage increase was, Cllr Neale said that it was 11.28% on Band D a rise of £8.72 which would be in excess of the £5 Band D figure.

Cllr Neale referred Members to the draft Precept Calculations and ways in which we could mitigate some of the increase. Grass Cutting we budget for this we believe that this should have been deducted from the Public Open Space. The proposal would be the transfer of £80k of funds from Public Open Space Ring-fenced at year end into general reserves to support the Budget for 2017/18. On the first day of the new year this will then sit in general reserves. Cllr Diamond asked whether this was permissible, the Clerk indicated that the S106 was given to

maintain public open space, with the only area prior to receipt of the monies being the Leisure Centre. Cllr Watkins indicated that the public open space would then be topped up as and when the Parish Council took over other areas of such land along with monies for the future maintenance thereof. Cllr Neale stated that at the present time there were queries in relation to the current contract, and that to date no grassing cutting invoices had been put through as credits were due for two months.

A general discussion took place as to the process being undertaken. Cllr Diamond said that this was operational learning and we must move forward. Cllr Neale said that there were differences in the current year's budget which affect the draft budget for 2017/18. Cllr Cole more income or find ways of reducing costs because the £80k was only there one, the next year or so will be extremely hard work.

Cllr Watkins asked whether there were three months of salaries in Reserves, and what would happen in January. The Clerk stated that it was unlikely and referred to information provided to Members, but that both she and Cllr Neale will be working further on the accounts system to provide more information. The Clerk again reiterated that the Council should always maintain at least three months operating costs. Cllr Flores-Moore stated that she believed that the Clerk had informed Council of this annually. At this point the precept calculations were discussed; these would change as the process went on until the budget was set. Cllr Diamond said that the Council had discussed this and were all here for the residents, Cllr Watkins said that the Council had assets at its disposal which would assist in meeting its costs.

The Clerk advised Members that Council should be prepared for a media campaign in relation to the Vision which is based as previously stated on the comments received via the Neighbourhood Plan consultation etc. The Clerk would copy out to Members again the Vision document sending this electronically where possible. Cllr Greening asked whether the public were asked whether they were prepared to pay for the services. Cllr Watkins said that it was important to try and achieve the aspirations of the community, but it may be that this would not be done overnight, but Council were in effect in all but name running a large company and at the moment it was running at a loss. The Council have the assets and capability within the Council and staff to turn this around. A short discussion took place on the CIL Contributions which would be received pending the Neighbourhood Plan being successful. Cllr Greening asked where a 40% increase was derived from, Cllr Neale said that this would be the affect if the £80k was not transferred to general reserves. The increase is 11.28%; Cllr Cole said that we must be hard headed in terms of generating income.

The Clerk then explained how the rate demands were split, West Sussex County Council, Sussex Police, Horsham District Council and Southwater Parish Council.

It was RESOLVED that Councillors should look at the Draft Budget for 2017/18 and speak to the Clerk and Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes should they have any further ideas, changes or comments to be made so that these could be incorporated into the next version.

F50/11/16 GYM TENDERS

The Clerk referred to the Leisure Centre Manager's report in relation to the leasing of the proposed new gym equipment from Precor. The report included matters relating to the

surrender of the existing equipment.

The Leisure Centre Manager then went through the report which was compiled to support the Finance & General Purposes recommendation.

It was RESOLVED that the Council's preferred supplier would be Precor subject to the confirmation of the offer made in writing by the company to assist in buying out the leasing companies options on the equipment. The Council was not in a position to do so as the leases in place were operating leases.

The Council's preferred leasing company being Societe General should the terms be acceptable to Precor.

9.05 pm Mr.S.Brew, Leisure Centre Manager left the chamber.

F51/11/16 REPORTS BACK FROM REPRESENTATIVES ATTENDING OUTSIDE MEETING ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL

Youth Club Meeting – Cllrs Flores Moore & Whitear

Cllr Whitear and Flores-Moore indicated that they had attended a meeting which had been productive, and they would provide a fuller report for Finance & General Purposes consideration.

Prevent Workshop – Cllr Whitear

Councillor Whitear said that this had been extremely informative with those attending learning about the early stages of radicalisation and how this may be spotted. Cllr Watkins said that he too had attended such a session and found it enlightening.

Southwater Schools Meeting

The Clerk informed Members that both she and the Council's Neighbourhood Plan Consultant had attended a meeting with the Head of Southwater Infant Academy at which the Chair of Governors for both the Infant and Junior Academies were present. The meeting surrounded the schools ability to apply for Section 106 Development Funding and their need to provide for the needs of the pupils both existing and those in the future.

Questions raised at this meeting have been sent to WSCC Education Department and responses are awaited in relation to predicted school numbers, funding etc. The Clerk confirmed that she had heard back from her colleague in DCLG but having been at a conference all day had not had a chance to read and digest the information sent.

County Councillor Brad Watson indicated to the Chairman that if he could assist in anyway he would be delighted to do so.

Councillors NOTED this information.

ASB Law – Employment Breakfast Forum

Cllr Neale indicated that he had attended this meeting and the focus had been on HR issues, risk management, Brexit, Cyber Crime most especially Cyber risks relating to Websites, Interviews and Contracts. The session was free, interesting and informative.

Horsham District Young People Forum Meeting

The Clerk indicated that the Southwater Youth Worker had attended this meeting but she did not have a report at this point. Unfortunately Cllr Greening who had intended to go along had been held up with traffic.

West Sussex Association of Local Councils

The Clerk referred to a report prepared and issued previously following attendance at this meeting.

Annual Meeting of Horsham District Council & Horsham Association of Local Councils

The Chairman indicated that both he and Cllr Michael Neal had attended this meeting; the minutes of which the Clerk had circulated.

CAGNE

The Clerk reported that unfortunately due to traffic problems Cllr Greening had been unable to attend and report on the meeting held the previous evening.

HR Partnerships HR Training Seminar

The Clerk indicated that she had attended a free HR Session held by HR Partnerships which had dealt with the issues of discrimination; this had been extremely interesting and the Clerk would send out a note on this for Councillor's information.

National Association of Local Council's Larger Councils Seminar

The Chairman indicated that both he and the Clerk had attended this conference and had attended individual sessions on Devolution and Finance. The Clerk would be discussing following a meeting with the Chair of Finance the potential implications of the Government proposing to cap the Town and Parish Council sector as consulted upon. The Chairman informed the new councillors that the Parish Council had objected strongly to the proposals as had at least 2,000 respondents.

However, it would not be known possibly until January/February whether the sector would be capped. The implications therefore could mean that the Parish Council's budget could be subject to a Referendum. More on this matter will be discussed at the F&GP Meeting in January 2017, Council normally has to set a budget figure by end January and submit to the District Council.

Councillors NOTED the comments made by those attending the various meetings.

F52/11/16 PARISH COUNCIL LAND & BUILDINGS

Beeson House

The Clerk reported that there had been interest shown in Office 2 Upper Floor of Beeson House and she was in discussion with the agents on this matter.

Office 4 – unfortunately due to lease constraints the Parish Council will now hire the office on a daily basis.

The room without a window will now be used as a storage room as the Council have to vacate by end December the Lintot Court Storeroom. Office filing will also be stored in this room.

All those present NOTED and APPROVED the use of the room for parish council storage and filing cabinets.

F53/11/16 PERSONNEL & WSCC LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME

The Clerk indicated that unfortunately due to the need to seek further HR advice, it had been necessary to postpone the discussions in relation to the Staff Review until Full Council on the 14th December 2016.

LGPS Insurance

Discussions are on-going as to whether the Pooling Body will be taking out the Ill Health Insurance in relation to the pension scheme or whether individual councils will pay separately as in the past. When the Council's paid separately, the Council benefited from a slight reduction in its contribution. The Clerk would keep Council informed as to decisions taken by the Body.

Councillors NOTED this information.

Parish Council's Contribution – From 2017 for 3 Years

The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council's LGPS Contribution would be 22.1% for the following three years from 2017.

Councillors NOTED the Parish Council's Pension Contribution from 2017 for a three year period.

Ill Health Insurance Cover

The Clerk indicated that CAME & Co., insurers were now offering such cover for senior personnel and she had asked for an indication as to the potential cover for four personnel £100k.

Councillors NOTED this information.

F54/11/16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Full Council would be 14th December 2016. This will be the Christmas Meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.22 pm.