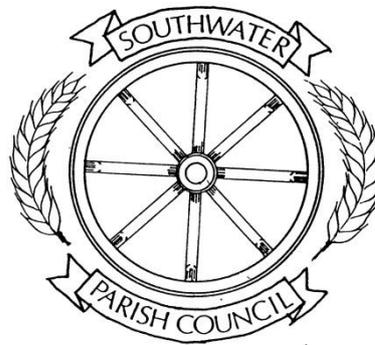


# Southwater Parish Council



## **Finance and General Purposes Meeting Draft Minutes**

Wednesday 18 April 2018, 7.30pm  
Beeson House  
Lintot Square  
Southwater  
Horsham  
RH13 9LA

### **Committee Members**

Cllr Michael Neale (Chairman)  
Cllr Geoff Cole (Vice Chairman)  
Cllr Laurie Apted  
Cllr Pauline Flores-Moore  
Cllr Derek Moore  
Cllr Geoff Scoon  
Cllr Hayley Timson  
Cllr Claire Vickers  
Cllr Graham Watkins  
Cllr Neil Whitear



## SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL

Beeson House,  
26 Lintot Square,  
Fairbank Road,  
Southwater,  
West Sussex  
RH13 9LA



Clerk: **Mrs.C.M.Tobin**  
Cert.Ed.L.Pol.FILCM.,

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### DRAFT MINUTES

**The Draft Minutes of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE meeting held on Wednesday 18 April 2018 in the Council Chamber, Beeson House, Southwater, West Sussex, RH13 9LA commencing at 7.30pm.**

**Present: Chairman: Cllr M Neale**

**Cllr G Cole  
Cllr D Moore  
Cllr H Timson  
Cllr G Watkins**

**Cllr P Flores-Moore  
Cllr G Scoon  
Cllr C Vickers  
Cllr N Whitear**

**Clerk to the Meeting: Mr D Carden**

**County Councillor: Not present**

**District Councillors: Not present**

**Press: Not present**

**Members of the Public: 15**

#### FG01/04/18 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Chairman asked those present to turn mobile phones to silent for the duration of the meeting, unless the phone call was deemed urgent in which case phone calls could be received with permission from the Chairman. In the event of a fire alarm sounding, everyone would be directed to evacuate the building via the exits indicated.

The Chairman advised that the meeting was being recorded in accordance with Standing Orders for minute purposes. Unfortunately, the computer was faulty and no recording could be saved. The Chairman asked members of the public if they intended to record the meeting and received no reply.

Two members of the public had registered to address the meeting. They were advised by the Chairman on invitation to approach the desk, sit down and switch the

microphone on to ensure their comments were recorded. Speakers were informed that they would be restricted to a limit of two minutes.

The first speaker was invited to address the Parish Council. He confirmed his name as Nick Longdon, a resident of Southwater. He stated that he was happy that the item, 'Council Premises and Land', would be discussed in open session, rather than when the public and the press were excluded. The Committee Chairman confirmed that would be the case.

Mr Longdon then sought assurance from the Committee Chairman, that in future, only the very specific matters, as set out in the relevant legislation (Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960), would be discussed when the public and press are excluded. The Committee Chairman explained that the Parish Council were duty bound by legislation and policy to ensure that was the case. He referred to Appendix B section 9 of Standing Orders regarding exclusion of access to the public at meetings.

Mr Longdon asked for confirmation that the extension to the end date for hirers of Easteds Barn had been moved from April to July. The Committee Chairman confirmed this was the case for those customers who required D1 use only.

Mr Longdon then stated on behalf of Tracy Sambrook, Beaver Leader of the Southwater Sea Scouts, who could not attend the meeting, but they would love to be considered to use Easteds Barn as their permanent base. They could not afford market rate and would be prepared to allow other users to use the Barn. They could manage room bookings on behalf of the Council and would use a similar system to that of the village hall.

Cllr Cole answered that he looked into a permanent venue for the Southwater Sea Scouts two years ago. During that time he attempted several times to communicate with the Sea Scouts, with no response. Cllr Watkins stated that he has sourced a temporary structure with approximately forty years of warranty left and was now working with Cllr Vickers, in her District Councillor capacity, to find a permanent location to house the structure. He also struggled to get a response from the Southwater Sea Scouts.

Cllr Timson informed the Council that she knew personally that Ms Sambrook was keen to talk with the Council. Cllr Flores-Moore expressed her understanding that there was a place available for the temporary structure in Southwater Country Park.

Finally, Mr Longdon offered an invitation to the Chairman and other members of Council to attend a meeting of the Action Group next Tuesday 24 April. Cllr Watkins stated that he may be available to attend and other Councillors expressed their interest in attending.

The second speaker was invited to address the Parish Council. He confirmed his name as Colin Young, a resident of Southwater. He stated that he felt Mr Longdon had addressed most of his questions and therefore, in the interest of brevity, he only had one question for the Council this evening. He would e-mail the Parish Council with his other questions at a later date.

Mr Young thanked the Parish Council for permitting his statement to be read out at the Parish Council meeting of 28 March 2018. He had received written responses to his questions that he felt were unsatisfactory. Therefore, he wished to re-iterate one of his questions asked on 28 March 2018.

He paraphrased the previous question... 'I note from minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 10 January 2018 that the Council indicated that the future of Easteds Barn was up for review, but there is no evidence at all as to what shape this review took and that any decision was reached. You appear to have gone straight to the next stage and started cancelling bookings and seeking an alternative long-term lease. Are there any background papers, was there a vote?

This brings me to my final question. Do you have the authority to make such a decision and have you gone through proper due process to reach this stage or are you acting outside your remit? Are you acting legally?'

Cllr Watkins stated that he was sorry that Mr Young felt the answers he provided were unsatisfactory. The Committee Chairman responded that in his view, the Parish Council had acted legally.

FG02/04/18

#### **APOLOGIES**

There were apologies noted and agreed from Cllr Apted.

**Councillors NOTED and APPROVED the absence.**

FG03/04/18

#### **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

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

**There were no declarations of interest received.**

FG04/04/18

#### **MINUTES**

**It was RESOLVED by all present having been proposed by Cllr Moore and seconded by Cllr Whitear that the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday 14 March 2018 be accepted as a true and correct record of the meetings.**

FG05/04/18

#### **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman announced that he had decided to move agenda item 'Council Premises and Land' into the public session.

**Members NOTED the information.**

FG06/04/18

#### **BANK RECONCILIATION**

Members were informed the bank reconciliation had not yet been completed. It would be brought before Council for approval once the month has been closed.

**It was AGREED to defer this item to the next Finance and General Purposes meeting.**

FG07/04/18

### **PAYMENTS SCHEDULE**

A payment schedule was presented to the Council to 18 April 2018 to the sum of £52,510.46.

**It was AGREED by all present that the payment schedule dated 18 April 2018 to the sum of £52,510.46 be APPROVED.**

FG08/04/18

### **RING FENCED SKATE PARK RESERVE**

The Committee Chairman referred Members to the document circulated prior to the meeting regarding options to discharge the negative ring-fenced reserve figure in relation to the skate park and a discussion ensued. The Committee Chairman indicated that this would be possible but he would check with the Parish Council's internal auditor prior to the write off.

**It was RESOLVED by all present that the negative ring-fenced reserve figure in relation to the skate park be written off subject to advice from the Parish Council's internal auditors.**

FG09/04/18

### **SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

Members were referred to the revised report submitted prior to the meeting. They were asked to consider a minor amendment to the Scheme of Delegation and adopt the revised edition of the policy document as reported to the meeting.

**It was RESOLVED by all present that the amended scheme of delegation be adopted by the Parish Council.**

The Chairman of the Parish Council then asked for retrospective approval of the decision he and the Vice Chairman had made, under urgent matters of the Scheme of Delegation, regarding the nomination of Mr David Carden as Proper Officer in the temporary absence of the Parish Clerk due to illness. It was noted the Proper Officer role was in line with Standing Order 3B (I – vviii).

**It was RESOLVED by all present that the delegated decision to nominate Mr David Carden as Proper Officer in the temporary absence of the Clerk due to illness.**

FG10/04/18

### **COUNCIL PREMISES & LAND**

#### Southwater Leisure Centre

Members were informed that the report detailed the findings of the review of Southwater Leisure Centre had now been received and would be circulated to Councillors via the normal means. The Leisure Centre working party would now be called to review the document and bring recommendations to the Parish Council shortly.

#### Easteds Barn

Members were informed that, as previously mentioned in item FG01/04/18, customers were now permitted to hire the barn on an ad hoc basis up to July 2018. This was subject to intended use of the barn satisfying the restrictive covenant recently discovered. They were also informed that the Parish Council had now received note of the intended registration of Easteds Barn as an 'Asset of

Community Interest' and the Council had twelve weeks to reply to Horsham District Council.

The Chairman of Council explained that if the application to register the building as a 'Asset of Community Interest' was successful it meant that should Easteds Barn be ever placed on the market for sale, the 'Action Group' would have first refusal to purchase at a price to be agreed, but normally market rate. Similarly, should the Parish Council ever offer Easteds Barn on a long term let over 25 years then they would have first refusal price to be agreed, but normally market rate. In the interim, the Chairman of Council had clarified with Horsham District Council that he was permitted to enter a negotiation with potential long-term hirers. He also confirmed that offers for the permanent let of Easteds Barn had been received and negotiations had been commenced.

#### Poppy Close Play Area

The Chairman of Council informed Members that following his investigation into the S106 agreement referring to the Poppy Close Play Area revealed that the area was bound to be a park. In consequence, The Parish Council were in breach of the agreement by removing the damaged play equipment. In a breach situation, the adopted land reverts back to developer but in this case, the situation was complicated. The Chairman has asked for time from Horsham District Council to review the legal documents and seek legal advice if appropriate. Cllr Watkins and Cllr Vickers, acting in her capacity as District Councillor, will review the relevant paperwork and options will be brought back to Full Council for discussion in due course.

**Members NOTED the information.**

FG11/04/18

#### **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, Members will be asked to consider a resolution to exclude members of the public and press in accordance with Section 1 (e) of Standing Orders (Meetings).

**In accordance with Section 1 (e) of Standing Orders (Meetings) and due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed, Members RESOLVED to exclude members of the public and press at this point.**

FG12/04/18

#### **PERSONNEL, PENSIONS & TRAINING**

'Confidential Note'

**It was RESOLVED by all present that:**

- a) Staff be thanked for their hard work over recent weeks;**
- b) The interim staffing arrangements continue pending the outcome of the Leisure centre review, and;**
- c) A Staffing report then be undertaken.**

FG13/04/18

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 16 May 2018**

**Meeting finished at 8.30pm.**