

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 12th October 2016 at Beeson House, Lintot Square, Southwater commencing at 7.30 pm.

Chairman: Cllr M. Neale

Councillors: Cllr G. Cole Cllr P. Flores-Moore
Cllr G. Watkins Cllr N. Whitear

County: Apologies provided by Cllr B. Watson OBE

District: Apologies provided by Cllr Dr J. Chidlow

Clerk: Mrs J. Nagy

Also Present: Mr S. Brew, Leisure Centre Manager
Mr T. Kidd, Asst Leisure Centre Manager

Press: Not present

Public: One

FG69/10/16 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.

He apologised for the late start of this meeting, which commenced at 7.40pm, due to the over running of the previous Leisure Centre Management Meeting.

The Chairman, Cllr Neale stated that he would like to remind members that the primary reason for this item on the agenda is to note items made by the public for reporting to the relevant body, discussion on the items raised should be for clarification. It should be noted that no decisions can be made on these items raised at the meeting as they have not been specified in the agenda. If the item raised by the public requires a decision by the members then it will be raised on the following appropriate meeting agenda. He would also like to remind members that any items they receive in advance of the meeting can be passed to the office in advance of the meeting. The reason for this statement is that recently he and Mr Watkins attended a Chairman's training course from which they have both discovered that there are several ways where we can improve the way the Council conducts its meetings.

Mrs Flores-Moore and Mr Cole asked for clarification of this advice. The Chairman said that the staff needed time to research queries. Mr Watkins said that Councillor could

contact the parish office at any time, and any matter may be dealt with quicker than waiting until a meeting to report it. Members of the public will have a period of 20 minutes in total to speak. This will be the format as of the next meeting of the Council.

Mr Whitear reported that Berkeleys had put in roadworks which narrowed the road in Cedar Drive, near the junction with the new roundabout. There were no lights; it was operated on a “give way” system. He had almost had an accident there. The Deputy Clerk advised that the roadworks were deemed acceptable in Highways terms. Mr Watkins said that he is due to meet with Berkeleys next week, and would raise the issue then.

Mrs Flores-Moore said that a white van parked regularly in Worthing Rd too close to the Coles roundabout, which causes obstruction. The Deputy Clerk reported that she had previously reported this van to the police but would do so again.

Mrs Flores-Moore asked if the newly erected Berkeleys advertising board had planning permission. The Deputy Clerk reported that this has been already queried with Enforcement, and a reply was awaited.

Mrs Flores-Moore said that she would like the Council to consider naming a road in Southwater after the late District Councillor Ian Howard as recognition of his contribution to the village.

It was AGREED that this matter would be put on the next agenda for consideration; the Deputy Clerk will discuss the matter with Mrs Howard, to seek her prior consent.

Mr Greening, present as a member of the public, reported that various incidents of anti-social behaviour was taking place in the Village Surgery car park, these being reported to the police.

FG70/10/16 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs Apted, Diamond and Mrs Vickers.

Members noted these apologies.

FG71/10/16 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.

Mr Whitear indicated an interest in any discussions involving the lease of gym equipment at the Leisure Centre; he did not intend to vote on this particular issue.

FG72/10/16 CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman had no announcements.

The Chairman Cllr Neale, stated that both he and the Chairman of Council, Cllr Watkins discovered at the Chairman's course that there is no requirement for the Clerk to read out at the meeting the correspondence received, therefore in an effort to make the meetings more efficient at the next Full Council meeting this agenda item, correspondence will change slightly, and it will be proposed that the Clerk will not read out the correspondence. There will be a list of the relevant important correspondence items sent to members on the agenda which will enable members to fully brief themselves prior to the meeting. Discussion on the proposed changes can take place at that meeting

Horsham District Older Persons Forum

A meeting of the group would be held on Thursday 8th December 2016 at Lower Beeding Village Hall, details of which had been passed to Mrs Varley, the Council's representative at this Forum.

Members noted this information

FG74/10/16 MINUTES

It was RESOLVED by all present that the Minutes of the meeting held on 14th September 2016 be approved as a true and correct record of the meeting.

At this point, the Chairman proposed moving Item 9 Gym Equipment to this point in the agenda, to allow for Mr Kidd to return to his duties at the Centre at the earliest opportunity. This was AGREED by all.

For the sake of continuity, these Minutes will remain in the order as per the Agenda.

FG75/10/16 ACCOUNTS & FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Deputy Clerk presented to Members the financial pack produced for the meeting, detailing income and expenditure, cash and investment analysis and debtors to 12th October 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 12th October 2016.

Precept

The Deputy Clerk notified Members that the second half of the precept £162,234 was received on the 30th September 2016 from the District Council.

Councillors NOTED the information that the second half of the Parish Council's precept was received in the sum of £162,234.

Bank Transfers

The Deputy Clerk having spoken with the Clerk would suggest that Members may wish to transfer back into ring-fenced reserves the sum of £50k. The Clerk would suggest that £30k be transferred to Virgin and £20k to Nat West.

It was RESOLVED by all present that the Council transfer monies £30k to Virgin and £20k to Nat West.

Leisure Centre Play area Tenders

The Deputy Clerk informed Members that it was the intention that these tenders be sent out to contractors and placed on the relevant websites/portals by the close of the week.

Mrs Flores-Moore asked if outside gym equipment was to be included. The Deputy Clerk replied that to her knowledge it was not, as funding for the play area was via S106, which stipulated that the monies must be used for play; outside gym equipment is not defined as “play”.

Mr Cole suggested that the Council should be clear on the parameters by which the tenders are judged.

FG76/10/16 PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The Deputy Clerk presented a payment schedules to 12th October 2016 for approval in the sum of £30,406.16.

It was RESOLVED by all present that the payment schedules dated 12th October 2016 be APPROVED in the sum of £30,406.16.

Mrs Flores-Moore noted that the Debtors List was considerably reduced; the accounts team should be congratulated on this achievement.

FG77/10/16 GYM EQUIPMENT**

This matter had been considered and agreed in the Leisure Centre Management Committee, which had been held prior to this meeting.

Members were asked to consider Appendix A – Schedule of Gym Tenders received, and Appendix B – Schedule of Leasing Company quotations received.

The recommendation was the preferred supplier was Precor, with the preferred leasing company being Société Générale. It is recommended that the order shall be placed, on the proviso that:

- Delivery should not be before end February/beginning of March 2017
- The cost should be the same as quoted
- There is no financial penalty for delaying delivery
- There is no requirement for a deposit or prepayment
- That the lease is checked by NALC prior to signing

Mrs Flores-Moore was concerned about the staffing levels of at the Leisure Centre. A package should be put together to allow for personal training and extra payment for classes to supplement income for the fitness staff, and therefore attract applicants for the two vacancies. An additional member of staff was needed to cover reception from 9am to

4pm. Personal alarms need to be issued. Staff need training in conflict resolution and manual handling.

The Deputy Clerk advised that the Clerk is qualified to give Manual Handling training and has done so.

The whole Centre needs updating, in Mrs Flores-Moore's opinion, and a Business Plan should be put together to allow this.

The Chairman said that S106 monies would be available, but not until the current building developments are at a later stage.

He asked the Committee whether they were of the opinion that the ordering of the Gym Equipment should be delayed until the staffing issue was resolved.

Mr Brew reported that he had advertised the vacancies at the Job Centre, on the Indeed website, in the District Post, at Collyers, on social media and on parish noticeboards.

The Chairman reminded Members that this Agenda Item was for Gym Equipment, and not staffing.

Mr Brew was asked what impact new equipment would have on staffing; he replied that inductions would have to be carried out for all members. This would be done in groups, and would be to instruct members on how to operate the consoles of the machines.

Mr Whitear asked if this could be done via an instruction leaflet. The Deputy Clerk said that this would not be acceptable on Health & Safety grounds.

Mr Watkins said that until the Centre was fully staffed, he was not in favour of getting new equipment.

Mr Whitear advised that as the current lease had expired, the ongoing lease payments were for "thin air".

Mr Watkins said that the Centre did need a proper Gym, but also needed better showers and other facilities to support it.

Mr Brew said that the Gym does generate profit for the Centre.

Mr Watkins would like to understand the implication of what a delay of 12 months in ordering new equipment would mean.

Mr Brew said that the Gym would lose members, in his opinion. Only one or two Gym members used the showers. New equipment was necessary in the next four to six months, in his opinion.

Mr Watkins said that the area around the Gym, such as the corridor was not welcoming.

Mr Cole said that it would be gesture of good faith in the Centre and the staff to provide

new equipment; it would help boost morale, in his opinion.

Mr Brew advised that once the current lease has expired, the monthly payment would decrease from £1400 per month to £1200 per month, plus £350 annual payment for the resistance equipment. He would be happy with an end February/beginning March delivery.

If the Council agrees which is the preferred company, then Mr Brew said that he will be able to contact them to ascertain the additional information required. Other considerations such as the decoration of the Gym also needed to be agreed.

Mr Watkins said that Mrs Flores-Moore had said that she wanted to get the staffing levels right before ordering the equipment. She replied that if delivery was delayed until February/March, replacement staff should then be in place. Further improvements to the Centre, such as the showers, could come via S106 monies at a later date.

Mr Watkins said that the Council could consider a Public Works Loan to fund such improvements.

The Chairman said that it had been agreed that £5000 for the redecoration of the Gym could come out of the Maintenance Budget.

Mr Whitear said that allowing for a 6 to 8 weeks lead time, the matter could be decided in early December.

The Deputy Clerk expressed concern that quoted prices were usually held for 3 months, and to postpone a decision until December could mean an increase in costs.

Mr Cole agreed, saying that if the equipment was imported, the low value of the £ sterling could have an impact on the prices. Mr Brew advised that Precor was an American company, so could indeed be the case.

The Chairman proposed that the order for the gym equipment be placed with Precor now, on the condition that:

- **The price quoted remain the same**
- **The delivery is to be end of February/beginning of March 2017**
- **There is to be no prepayment.**

Mr Neale, Mr Cole, Mrs Flores-Moore and Mr Whitear were in favour; Mr Watkins was against.

It was therefore RESOLVED by a majority vote that the order would be placed with Precor, on the conditions as above.

The Chairman further proposed that the new lease agreement for the Gym equipment would be drawn up with the Société Générale, on the condition that:

- **That the lease is checked by NALC prior to signing**

Mr Whitear declared an interest in this matter, as he has been advising the Clerk on

leasing arrangements.

Mr Neale, Mr Cole, Mrs Flores-Moore and Mr Watkins were in favour; Mr Whitear did not vote.

It was therefore RESOLVED that the lease agreement would be drawn up with Société Générale on the conditions as above.

Mr Kidd left the meeting.

FG78/10/16 COMMUNITY GRANTS

Southwater Churches – Remembrance Day

The Deputy Clerk referred to the grant request made by the local churches in relation to the provision of signage for the event and in particular road closures. The Clerk was asked at Full Council to investigate whether she could access some signage to assist. The Clerk reports that she has received an indication that the equipment required for this and the Christmas event will be delivered the day prior to both events.

It was therefore the Committees decision having had this matter referred back from Full Council as to whether the grant is indeed now required.

It was RESOLVED by all present that having obtained equipment from another source that the grant was not required.

FG79/10/16 POLICY DOCUMENTS

The Deputy Clerk stated that having reported the previous Council comments in relation to the filming, taping etc. of Council meetings, the Clerk would refer to the draft document prepared. However, the Clerk would advise that in her view this original policy agreed too by Council covered all eventualities including the filming by third parties irrespective of whether the Parish Council wishes to film or not. The Clerk also considers that the retention time should also remain unchanged.

After some discussion, it was thought that recordings should be retained for a period twelve months.

It was RESOLVED by all present that the Policy in relation to the filming and taping of Council meetings should remain in place, after the amendment that recordings be retained for a period of twelve months.

FG80/10/16 ELECTORAL REVIEW OF HORSHAM – WARDING ARRANGEMENTS

The Deputy Clerk referred to the correspondence received and distributed to Members in relation to the Electoral Review and the potential warding arrangements. The Deputy Clerk asked whether Members wish to comment on these proposals, which could potential see Southwater divided into four Wards in terms of the District Council arrangements. This could potentially be considered necessary due to the current development being

undertaken in the village.

The Chairman noted that the boundary of Southwater did not show the inclusion of the Wates development site to the south. The Deputy Clerk said that this was in hand with the District Council, with the possibility of a formal petition being explored.

It was noted that whilst it was proposed to divide Southwater into four wards, thereby having four district councillors rather than three, how the village would be divided was not shown.

It was RESOLVED to defer this matter to the November Full Council, after ward boundaries had been ascertained.

FG81/10/16 SCHEDULING OF COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Mr Watkins said that now he had been elected Chairman, he would prefer to avoid meetings on Thursdays as he had a previous longstanding commitment. He would like to propose to have all Council meetings on Wednesdays, which could be easier for members of the public too.

He would also like to propose removing consideration of planning applications from the Full Council agenda to avoid lengthy meetings. In addition, he would like the Council to consider delegating non-contentious planning applications, for example simple extensions, to a Councillor and the Clerk/Deputy Clerk, such as occurred during the August recess. The Council needed to look at its efficiency as a whole, and this could be a way to improve this.

It was RESOLVED that a recommendation be made to November Full Council that all meetings of the Council should take place on Wednesdays, that consideration of planning applications be removed from the Full Council agenda, and that non-contentious planning applications be considered by a Councillor and the Clerk/Deputy Clerk as during the August recess.

FG82/10/16 POLICE MATTERS

The Deputy Clerk advised that the latest figures available from Sussex Police website were those for July, which had been previously reported to this Committee at the last meeting.

Members noted this information.

Mr Cole noted that now the car park to the rear of Beeson House is closed overnight, anti-social behaviour has been displaced to the service road, and to the Surgery car park.

FG83/10/16 COUNCIL PREMISES & LAND**

Allotments

The Deputy Clerk report that there was still an individual(s) fly tipping at the allotment site. This matter has been addressed in the Parish Council's newsletter. The Clerk has also discussed this matter with officers from Horsham District Council.

Councillors NOTED the information.

Easteds Barn

The Deputy Clerk referred to a quotation received in relation to the provision of a cooker and hob for the kitchen at the Barn. Whilst the Council has tried to obtain two further quotations, unfortunately it would appear that other company's had been unable or unwilling to quote. The quote received being from Grange Domestic Services in the sum of £710 inclusive of VAT.

Concerns were raised over ventilation issues, and whether the quotation was for a domestic or a catering cooker.

It was RESOLVED that the decision whether or not to purchase a cooker for Easteds Barn should be delegated to the Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee in order to allow for clarification of the above concerns.

Poppy Close Play Area

Mrs Flores-Moore said that this play area is looking awful; the Deputy Clerk reminded her that it was closed and locked whilst the Council decided what action to take with it. This was a project delayed due to the long term absence of the Clerk.

Mrs Flores-Moore suggested that the area be made into a memorial garden for Mr Ian Howard, perhaps on a Gambia theme to reflect his charity work. The District Council could be approached for monies to fund this.

The Chairman agreed that this matter could be put on an agenda for future discussion.

FG84/10/16 PERSONNEL, PENSIONS & TRAINING

Due to the confidential nature of the matter to be discussed, this relating to staffing, the Chairman proposed that the press and public be excluded from the meeting. This was agreed by all.

Councillor Billy Greening was present at the meeting. It was agreed that he could remain, but should take no part in discussions. As Councillor, he is privy to Confidential Minutes.

Mr Brew remained at the meeting, to offer advice.

The next item is minuted under Confidential Minute.

Press and public were invited to re-join the meeting

PR Media Position

The Clerk would advise that she is currently interviewing individuals for this position.

Council NOTED the comments received.

Additional Litter Warden

The Clerk has advised that within the Council's budget there was provision for an additional litter warden, and would therefore like to employ a further litter warden to assist the existing team. This position would be for a fixed term of six months to March 2017 and would be considered within the Staff Review being undertaken in terms of the longer plan, but would give the Council greater flexibility in terms of holiday and sickness.

It was AGREED that an additional member of staff be employed, on a fixed term six month contract.

West Sussex Government Pension Scheme – Discretions Policy

The Committee are asked to confirm the Council's Draft Revised Policy in relation to the Pensions Scheme. This had been sent to the County Council as required by the end of August but required ratification by Council.

The Parish Council's Pensions Discretions Policy was APPROVED by all present.

West Sussex Pensions Scheme – Pooling Policy

The Clerk would recommend that the Council remain within the smaller bodies 'pooling arrangements'. The costs of not doing so would be prohibitive in terms of cost to the Council and public purse.

It was APPROVED by all present that the Parish Council would remain within the Smaller Bodies 'Pooling Arrangements'.

FG85/10/16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Finance & General Purposes meeting will be **Wednesday, 16th November 2016.**

The meeting closed at 9.35pm