



SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL

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DRAFT Minutes of the Finance & General Purpose Committee meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 18th December 2019 in the Council Chamber, Beeson House, Southwater, West Sussex, RH13 9LA commencing at 7.30pm.

Present: Councillors: M Neale (Chairman), G Watkins, B Varley, R Stranks, S Lewis, R Williams, G Cole, G Scoon, D Moore, P Flores-Moore (*arr 8.20pm*), N Knott and H Timson

Members of the Public:

Clerk: Dawn Spouge

Press: Not Present

ACTIONS

The Chairman asked those present to turn off their mobile phones for the duration of the meeting, unless in an emergency, when they should go through the Chairman. In the event of a fire alarm sounding, everyone should evacuate the building via the exits indicated.

The Chairman advised that the meeting was being recorded.

- 1. Public Forum** – (*maximum 3 minutes per person with an overall limit of 15 minutes*). **All parishioners wishing to speak, must make their name known to the Clerk prior to the commencement of the meeting.**

Mr Michael Fuller spoke about the use of open space near Easteds Barn and how he believed it had been fenced off by the current tenant, who leases it from the Parish Council, contrary to the existing covenant. Mr Fuller asked whether it was an oversight or a deliberate act. Councillor Watkins responded to Mr Fuller stating that the plans to which he was referring were incorrect and that that the areas were not public open spaces but subject to D1 planning use. However, there was a small area which the Council was considering bringing back into public use by changing the boundary. Councillor Watkins continued to explain that he believed the Land Registry had the incorrect public open space allocation for the area. Mr Fuller disagreed with Councillor Watkins but it was decided to continue the discussion at another time. Clerk to organise a meeting.

Mr Steve Clark raised concerns about future changes to Southwater Leisure Centre to which the Chairman replied that it would be discussed at Council as an agenda item later in the meeting and if he still required more information, the Clerk could write to him further

- 2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were given by Councillor Vickers and Councillor Timson due to prior engagements. Councillor Flores-Moore notice given of arriving later in the meeting due to prior commitments.

Clerk

3. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Neale declared a personal interest in item 16
Councillor Lewis declared a personal interest in item 11

4. Minutes - For noting only, approved at Full Council on 20th November 2019.
The minutes were noted

5. Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on the 16th October 2019 not covered elsewhere on the agenda – For noting only, approved at Full Council on 20th November 2019.

6. Chairman's Report

The Chairman advised that Laurie Apted had sadly passed away on 11th December. He served 25 years as a Southwater Parish Councillor, being one of the original members and also serviced as Chairman to the Council. The Council's thoughts were with his family.

7. Correspondence
There were none

8. Accounts

- i) Bank Reconciliation – To approve the Bank Reconciliation of 30th November 2019
- ii) Debtors and Creditors – To approve the Debtors/Creditors list as at the date of the meeting

Councillor Flores- Moore recommended approval of the Bank Reconciliation and Debtors/Creditor List, seconded by Councillor Scoon, and **AGREED** unanimously.

It was noted that the outstanding debt related to Bumpy Jumpy was proceeding through Small Claims Court.

9. Payments Schedule

- i) To approve the payment schedule of Wednesday 18th December 2019
TOTAL - £136,696.13 for approval

Councillor Watkins recommended approval of the payment schedule, seconded by Councillor Cole, and **AGREED** unanimously.

10. To Receive an update on the old Council Offices in Church Lane

Councillor Watkins updated the Council on the agreed arrangement for Berkeley's homes to utilise the Old Council offices on Church Lane from February 2020 for two years. They will be paying £500 donation per month which will be ring-fenced for future building projects. Southwater Parish Council will be responsible for insuring the building for which Berkeley's would pay an annual sum.

11. Donations – To consider a donation to the Horsham Green Gym for voluntary work undertaken on open space in 2019.

Councillor Lewis excused himself from any discussion on this item.

The Chairman informed the Council that the above voluntary group undertook various works on open spaces in Southwater earlier in 2019, a donation had been agreed to contribute towards cost of transport or tools and their services would hopefully be used again in the near future.

<p>Councillor Watkins proposed a donation of £300, seconded by Councillor Moore, and AGREED unanimously.</p>	
<p>Councillor Stranks asked for clarification on how donations differed from grants and requested that the Council consider a Donation Policy to make it more transparent if it was felt it was necessary.</p>	Clerk
<p>12. Budget and Precept 2020/2021 – To consider and approve the budget – Circulated The Chairman advised the Committee that the final budget requirement stood at £677,802 which was a 1.98% increase in precept. Councillor Watkins requested that the final figure be deferred until full council in January due to residents legal challenges resulting in additional legal expenditure, at present related to Easteds Barn and the Nutham Lane area. Concerns were raised about adding such expenditure after the budget had been provisionally discussed at previous workshops. It was decided that an extraordinary F&GP Committee meeting should be convened to include any legal expenditure which would subsequently be considered at the Full Council meeting in January.</p>	Nxt F&GP and FPC
<p>13. To Receive and Consider a Safeguarding Policy – Circulated. A Safeguarding Policy had been circulated, however it had been found that an historic Safeguarding policy had been proposed in the past but never adopted by the Council. Councillor Lewis explained the necessity to have such a policy in place and that a newly circulated draft would be satisfactory. It was agreed to delegate further review of the policy to Councillors Lewis and Scoon in time for the next Committee meeting.</p>	SL/GS Nxt F&GP
<p>14. To Receive and update on Beeson House Roof Further leaks had occurred and the Clerk had chased Horsham District Council on when the works would be carried out several times. Water had recently damaged an internal part of the intruder alarm, which HDC have agreed to compensate for as well as the call outs to office staff associated with this to a sum of £425. A new leak had since sprung in the Council Chamber above the projector and they had been informed of this as well. HDC have employed a contractor and the Council have been told works are commencing in early January, although an actual date had not yet been given. HDC to keep the Parish Council informed of the different stages of work. A discussion ensued about overflowing rainwater outlets and the cost of any remedial works. Both the sinking fund and service charge costs for Beeson House had been allocated in the budget.</p>	
<p>15. To Receive and update and consider any recommendations from the Southwater Leisure Centre Working Party – Circulated The Chairman informed the Committee that the charity established to manage the Leisure Centre would be a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). The model would be similar to a Village Hall but adapted for the Leisure Centre. The Laurie Apted building would be also run by the Council and brought under the management of the CIO. Councillor Moore reiterated that the main aim was to reduce the cost of managing the Council buildings and less of a burden on the public purse, hence why a CIO was to be established. A discussion ensued about the management structure of the CIO and it was proposed by Councillor Watkins, seconded by Councillor Moore that a minimum of seven trustees should be appointed to the charity and would stand for four years with a minimum of two and maximum of four councillors, with the remaining positions filled by members of the public. The four Councillors would be, Councillors Watkins, Neale, Cole and Lewis. This was AGREED unanimously by the Committee.</p>	

<p>A discussion then followed regarding the terms of lease for both the Laurie Apted building and the Leisure and Community Centre. It was proposed by Councillor Cole, seconded by Councillor Scoon and AGREED unanimously that the licensed period for Southwater Leisure Centre would be 125 years and for the Laurie Apted Building, to run concurrently with the during of the current lease.</p> <p>Councillor Moore proposed, and Councillor Scoon seconded, and it was AGREED unanimously that the land encompassed in the lease would be the total area set out in the title deeds for both buildings.</p> <p>A discussion regarding budget for future costs associated with the running/management of the buildings followed. Funding had been allocated in the Council's budget for next year which would be transferred to the charity in the form of a grant. Future required funding for would be provided but it was expected that this would be less than what the current budget provided.</p> <p>Concerns had been raised by residents about the main hall at the Leisure Centre. The Council had been in discussions with Infinity Gymnastics who wished to license the main hall and would include working with other groups within the community where possible. It was highlighted that if any residents wanted to use the hall they could approach Infinity. It was proposed by Councillor Knott, seconded by Councillor Cole, and AGREED unanimously that Infinity Gymnastics would license the main hall at Southwater Leisure Centre, subject to finalising the details.</p> <p>Councillor Watkins also advised that there was Section 106 funding from Berkeley's Home to contribute towards improvements to the leisure centre and there would be a public meeting when plans were ready</p>	<p>Asst Clerk/ SPC</p>
<p>16. To discuss and consider the future of the Fare Share Table in Beeson House Councillor Neale declared an interest Councillor Neale excused himself from this discussion Councillor Watkins reiterated that the Fare Share Table was run by the Youth project, the principals behind the initiative were good, however the position of the table needed to be reconsidered. He suggested the table was currently in an unsuitable position because it caused an obstruction in a fire exit corridor. The Council would continue to work with the Youth Project to find a suitable solution. It was proposed by Cllr Watkins, seconded by Cllr Moore, and AGREED unanimously that that the table should be moved to a new location and that the clerk liaise with the youth group leader.</p>	<p>Youth Project/ Clerk</p>
<p>17. To Receive an update on the Old Skate Park – Report from the Youth Project circulated. The update was noted by Councillors and that £250 had been donated by Ramesh Shingadia for repairs. It was suggested that the Youth project crowdfund for further funding.</p>	<p>Youth Project</p>
<p>18. To Receive, consider and approve the Parish Council Business Plan – circulated. It was decided that the Business Plan should be given final approval with the budget in January.</p>	<p>Asst Clerk</p>
<p>19. Operational Matters - To receive, discuss and approve the Operational Report which has been circulated. Councillor Knott proposed spending £715 on Paxton software at the leisure centre, seconded by Councillor Cole, and AGREED unanimously.</p>	
<p>Councillor Watkins proposed spending £428.68 on purchasing a speed gun, seconded by Councillor Moore, and AGREED (nine in favour and two against), motion carried.</p>	<p>Asst Clerk</p>

<p>A decision on installing motion lighting at the leisure centre was deferred due to possible alterations.</p>	<p>Nxt Mtg</p>
<p>A discussion took place on the installation of a perch seat to the existing College Road bus shelter for £1,278.13. Councillors felt the installation price was quite high. It was suggested that the local bus operator might wish to sponsor the seat. It was proposed by Cllr Neale, seconded by Cllr Scoon, and AGREED unanimously that the Council spend £1,278.13 on a perch seat but the Assistant Clerk would look for grant funding in the meantime and bring back to the Council before purchasing.</p>	<p>Asst Clerk Nxt Mtg</p>
<p>A request from a resident to protect Charlock Way by erecting fencing or bollards was discussed. Three quotes were considered which varied substantially in price. It was decided that a decision should be deferred to enable a group of Councillors to look at all sites in the area and the possible cost of this, before making a decision.</p>	<p>Nxt Mtg</p>
<p>20. Receive and discuss the feedback from the grant applications from:</p>	
<p>SPC currently hold £695 in their Grant funding pot remaining until the end of March 2020.</p>	
<p>(i) – West Sussex Mediation Service – they have stated they have taken 10 referrals since April 2019, which they state normally equates to 20 households. They also state numbers are increasing year on year. – They are requesting £300 in grant funding. After consideration, it was AGREED unanimously not to grant £300 to West Sussex Mediation Service as the application did not meet the Council’s funding criteria</p>	
<p>(ii) – 4 Sight Vision – They state that they have 3 registered members living in Southwater and have had interaction and supported each one, over the last year. – They are requesting £440 in grant funding. After consideration, it was AGREED unanimously not to grant £440 to 4Sight Vision</p>	
<p>21. Easteds Barn – To receive any updates and consider any matters on Easteds Barn</p>	
<p>Councillor Watkins informed the Committee that Planning permission had been granted for the Little Barn Owls following approval of the traffic plan. A retrospective planning application had been submitted to bring the car parking in line with the traffic plan and the problem with the lighting around the barn had been resolved.</p>	
<p>In response to a question from Councillor Moore, Councillor Watkins explained what potential legal and professional costs there could be in the future regarding resident’s challenges on matters pertaining to Easteds Barn, a suggested footpath that was not currently a public right of way and Nutham Lane Open Space. Further advice would be sought from planning consultant Andrew Metcalfe.</p>	
<p>22. Neighbourhood Plan – To receive any updates and consider any matters on the</p>	
<p>Councillor Watkins provided an update on the Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan had entered Regulation 16 and was ready for inspection. The examiner agreed that it was a complete submission but because of complications regarding challenges from developers, he proposed a public examination of certain elements February. Councillor Watkins explained the importance of the Neighbourhood Plan for Southwater which outlined the infrastructure, educational, business and housing requirements for Southwater until 2031. It would also mean an increase in Community Infrastructure Levy for the Parish Council from 15% to 25% on any houses developed after the plan is in place.</p>	

The Following item will be taken under confidential matters. The Press and Public may be excluded Due to the Confidential Nature of the Business to be transacted and in accordance with Section 1 (e) of Standing Orders (Meetings)

23. Protocol

The meeting ended at 9.20pm

24. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 19th February 2020

DRAFT