



## **SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL**

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**Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 20 October 2021 at 7:30pm at the Parish Council Chambers, Beeson House, 26 Lintot Square, Fairbank Road, Southwater, West Sussex, RH13 9LA.**

**Present:**

**Councillors Present:** D Moore (Chairman), M Neale, P Flores Moore, S Lewis, C Vickers

**Members of the Public:** 0 persons in Chamber and meeting accessible by live YouTube Stream.

**Executive Officer (& RFO):** Justin Tyler

	Actions
<p><b>1. Public Question Time</b> – 15 minutes in total.</p> <p>None requested to speak.</p> <p><b>2. Apologies for Absence</b></p> <p>Apologies received from Councillors I Slowly, G Scoon, G Watkins and G Cole.</p> <p><b>3. Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>Councillor Lewis declared a personal interest in item 13 (Allotments).</p> <p><b>4. Chairman’s Report</b></p> <p>The Chairman thanked Councillor Neale for his Chairmanship during his tenure as F&amp;GP Committee Chairman.</p> <p><b>5. Correspondence</b></p> <p>The Executive Officer provided the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Internal Audit was conducted by Mulberry &amp; Co on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021.</li><li>• The External Audit – Notice of Conclusion of Audit had been uploaded to the website.</li><li>• Southwater Ghyll CIO had requested an extension to the deadline to submit their revenue deficit budgetary forecast from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 to 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021 and the EO was expecting to receive it accordingly which would feed into the budget drafting process for 2022-23.</li><li>• Southwater Ghyll CIO had submitted their yearend report and financial statements to the Charity Commission.</li><li>• Co-Op Bank Account Signatories were Councillors G Cole, P Flores-Moore, G Watkins, M Neale, and D Moore.</li></ul>	

## 6. Minutes –

- i) To note approval of the minutes of the F&GP Committee meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021 (approved at Full Council 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021).

Noted.

- ii) Matters arising from previous F&GP Committee meeting of 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

None.

## 7. Accounts

- (i) Debtors and Creditors – To note the Debtors/Creditors list as at the date of the meeting

Noted.

- (ii) Balance Sheet/Earmarked Reserves – To approve

Proposal of Balance Sheet/Earmarked Reserves for approval as of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021 by Councillor Neale, seconded by Vickers and **AGREED** unanimously.

- (iii) Detailed Income and Expenditure – To approve

Councillor Neale proposed approval of Detailed Income and Expenditure as of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021, seconded by Councillor Lewis and **AGREED** unanimously.

- (iv) Bank Reconciliation – To approve the Bank Reconciliation of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

Councillor Scoon had verified the Bank Reconciliation, bank statements and petty cash as a non-signatory inline with the Financial Regulations. Confirmation by email.

Councillor Neale proposed acceptance of the Bank Reconciliation of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021, seconded by Councillor Vickers and **AGREED** unanimously.

## 8. Payments Schedule

To approve the payment schedule of Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

- (i) £73,736.81 for approval.

Approval of Payment schedule of 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021 for £73,736.81 proposed by Councillor Vickers, seconded by Councillor Neale, and **AGREED** unanimously.

## 9. Budget Review – To receive update.

The Executive officer noted a report had been circulated to the Committee and he provided a verbal update which advised the Council was likely to meet proposed budgets for both Income and Expenditure. There was considerable expenditure expected towards the latter part of the financial year with the Tree Survey works that would be required as identified and required by the tree survey. Furthermore, should the Council proceed with a works order/contractor relating to Item 16 this will significantly increase expenditure, which would counterbalance the budgetary provision for £60,000 General Reserves Recovery for FY2021-22 which is surplus to the requirements of the General Reserves Policy (based on General Reserves as at 30<sup>th</sup> Sept 2021). The Council was still awaiting a backlog of invoices from HDC relating to Rent and Service Charges for Beeson House and the office had been chasing HDC. He advised that as part of the budget setting process for 2022-23 he would be preparing, by no later than December 2021, detailed estimates for the following financial year in the form of a draft budget to be considered by the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Council. This draft budget would include recognition of available general and earmarked reserves.

EO JT

<p><b>10. Operational Report</b> – to receive and note.</p> <p>The Executive Office provided an update on the Horsham Museum artifacts which confirmed the items had now been moved from Horsham Museum into secure storage. He noted there were further delays relating to the skate park due to the planning permission required to progress the project and it would be going to Horsham District Council planning committee in December. Councillor Vickers noted that the Water Neutrality Statement from Natural England was the reason for the delays as the HDC October Planning Committee was cancelled and any applications were thus moved to the November meeting, hence December was the next possible meeting to consider the skate park due to the quantity of applications for November. Councillor Flores Moore expressed her concerns over why the planning application was potentially being challenged on noise when the skate park had been established for 14 years and was also next to the A24 dual carriageway.</p> <p>The Executive Officer noted that the report had been circulated to the committee and would be made available on the website with the draft minutes once prepared.</p>	<p>EO JT</p>
<p><b>11. Lintot Square Car Park Festive Lights Repair Work</b> – to consider quote and repair works identified by survey.</p> <p>Councillor Flores Moore queried how the repair works would be funded. The Executive Officer confirmed that the Council would have exceeded the budget for 2021-22 relating to Festive lights and any expenditure would come from the General Fund. He further added that the Council receives £3,500 annually from HDC via the service charges collected from the commercial tenants of Lintot Square. He noted that the F&amp;GP Committee did not have the spending authority to approve the works and would thus have to be ratified by Full Council. Councillor Moore presented concerns over the installation method used at the War Memorial trees and wanted confirmation of a guarantee and if SparkX could provide solutions to limit risk of trees outgrowing the lights. He requested the Executive Officer seek clarification from SparkX. Councillor Flores Moore proposed proceeding with the quote of £6,260 to strip faulty lights and re-dress with new on 10x trees in the main Lintot Square car park. Seconded by Councillor Neale and <b>AGREED</b> unanimously.</p>	<p>EO JT</p>
<p><b>12. Footpath leading from Wilberforce Way to Hangman Hill Roundabout</b> – to receive update on footpath extension works with reference to Section 106 funding relating to the Martindales Development.</p> <p>The Executive Officer provided an update that he had been liaising with County Councillor Nigel Jupp to hold a meeting to discuss the Section 106 available relating to DC/12/0579 Martindale Farm, Worthing Road, West Sussex, RH13 9AS Southwater PC. Available balance £79,356.59 and the possible path extension works which may be put towards Cycle facilities on the Worthing Road to the schools, the Southwater to Hop Oast cycle route, upgrading and enhancing the footpath between Wilberforce Way/RSPCA roundabout and Worthing Road and the provision of a footpath on Blakes Farm Road (from bridge to Hangmans Hill Roundabout). Councillor Vickers advised she had a meeting with Councillor Jupp and District Councillor Billy Greening regarding this matter and there was a shortfall which would require additional financial support in order to complete such works as the S106 funding available would not meet the entire cost of the project. It was discussed that Councillor Vickers be included in any future meetings arranged by the Executive Officer with Councillor Jupp. Councillor Scoon and Lewis expressed their frustrations with the developer having not installed the appropriate paths when the development was built as their build costs would have been significantly less and current day costs far exceed those of 2012.</p>	<p>EO JT</p>
<p><b>13. Allotments Pricing for 2022-23</b> – to consider pricing for Easteds Allotments for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.</p> <p><i>Councillor Lewis left the room at 8:06pm.</i></p> <p>The Executive Officer explained the current pricing (£18.50 per annum per allotment) and that prices were frozen for 2021-22 with no increase from 2020-21. He noted that all Committee members had received the report on pricing and expressed a preference that any price change, if any, be rounded to the nearest £0.50. Councillor Neale proposed increasing the annual price for Easteds Allotments and fixing it for a two-year period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 to £20.00 per annum, seconded by Councillor Flores Moore and <b>AGREED</b> unanimously.</p>	<p>EO JT</p>

*Councillor Lewis returned to the room at 8:10pm.*

**14. Grant Applications** – to consider a grant request from 4 Sight Vision Support.

Discussion took place regarding the grant application from 4 Sight Vision Support and that it would benefit up to 13 residents in Southwater. The Executive Officer noted there was £4,000 in the budget for grants applications. Councillor Flores Moore proposed acceptance of the grant to 4 Sight Vision Support for £350.00, seconded by Councillor Neale and **AGREED** unanimously.

EO JT

**15. New Website Development and Social Media Reports** – to note written reports and consider any further action.

The Committee noted that both reports had been received. The Executive Officer provided a verbal update on how the Council was making vast improvements to Social Media presence including a new Instagram Account to target the younger demographic of Southwater and more regular informative posts. He advised that there were different options set out in the report with regards to modernising and improving the Council website. He noted that having had a meeting with Octotech for some guidance that it would be appropriate to proceed with building a new website in house using platform WIX and using contractors for ad-hoc assistance in relation to graphic or web design works where required. This was the alternative to outsourcing the entire rebuild which would be costly and would give the Council full control. Councillor Neale queried if a member only section would be incorporated in the new website. The Executive Officer clarified it would not be required as the Council now operated on Microsoft 365 and all councillors have access to SharePoint/Secure Data Drives. The Executive Officer advised he would be happy to provide training to any Councillors that were unsure how to access these folders and Councillors were always able to contact Octotech for IT support relating to Council matters. He suggested that it would be great if members of the community could assist with stock photos of Southwater which could be used as part of a revolving home page. Councillor Moore suggested a local resident who was an experienced photographer who may be happy to assist, and Councillor Lewis confirmed he could approach the resident.

EO JT

Cllr  
Lewis

*The committee entered confidential session at 8:29pm due to the contractual nature of the agenda item.*

**16. Play Area Refurbishment** – to consider quotes received from the Invitation to Quote (Public Works Contracts Finder) to carry out refurbishment works to play areas located on Cornflower Way, Eversfield, Larkspur Way, Nutham Lane, Warren Drive.

*The committee returned from confidential session at 8:44pm.*

The Chairman noted that the Committee had chosen a contractor to recommend to Full Council for approval.

**17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 15 December 2021**

**This meeting was live streamed and ended at 8:45pm**