

Southwater Parish Council

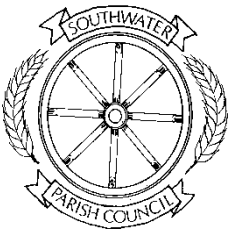


Human Resources Parish Council Meeting Draft Minutes

Wednesday 26th March, 2019, 7.30pm
Beeson House
Lintot Square
Southwater
Horsham
RH13 9LA

Members

Cllr Graham Watkins (Chairman)
Cllr Michael Neale (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Geoff Cole
Cllr Pauline Flores-Moore
Cllr Claire Vickers
Cllr Neil Whitear



Clerk: **Mrs.C.M.Tobin**
FSLCC.,

SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL

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



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DRAFT MINUTES

The Draft Minutes of the HUMAN RESOURCES PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on Wednesday 26th March, 2019 in the Council Chamber, Beeson House, Southwater, West Sussex, RH13 9LA commencing at 7.30pm

Present: Chairman: Cllr. G. Watkins

**Cllr G.Cole
Cllr. M. Neale
Cllr. N. Whitear**

**Cllr P.Flores-Moore
Cllr C.Vickers**

Clerk to the Meeting: Catherine Tobin, Clerk to the Council

Clerk to Meeting & Consultant David Carden

County Councillor: Not present

District Councillors: Not present

Press: Not present

Members of the Public: 1

HR01/03/19 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.

HR02/03/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies, other than the fact that Cllr Flores-Moore would be arriving later in the meeting.

Councillors NOTED and APPROVED the apologies.

HR03/03/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Clerk referred Members of the Council to information issued previously 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 of interest.

EX04/03/19 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman had no announcements at this point in the meeting.

HR05/03/19 PARISH NEWSLETTER – COMPLAINT BY COUNCILLOR LOWIS**

- 5.1** To consider and received information in relation to a complaint received from Cllr Lewis relating to the errors and distribution without permission of the Council of the Parish Newsletter either by, a Councillor or a member of staff.
- 5.2** The Chairman asked the Clerk to explain the circumstances surrounding the fact that the newsletter had been issued without the consent of the Council and prior to the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council at which the Neighbourhood Plan was discussed and at which Cllr Lewis made his remarks.

The Clerk advised members that having received previous instructions from the Council in relation to the production and distribution of the Parish Newsletter required to be distributed four times per year, that due to her absence through illness for a period of three weeks and staff shortages through holidays, the staff had endeavoured to ensure that this document be issued prior to purdah.

The inaccurate statement in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan had not been picked up, nor had the omission of both Cllr Knott's and Cllr Lewis details from the page back. Both members received an apology from the Clerk for this omission which had been down to purely work pressures at the time. All Councillors had been informed of those pressures on the staff and office in particular having been written to in the Clerk's absence by the Operations Manager.

As soon as the Clerk had returned to work and was made aware she had put out a statement to all councillors. The distributor unbeknown to the staff involved had commenced issuing this on the Tuesday but the majority of residents did not receive this until the weekend following the Extraordinary Meeting this being dependent of the various areas of the parish.

The Chairman asked Cllr Lewis whether he wished to comment further on those made at the Extraordinary Council Meeting?

At this point in the meeting the Chairman suspended Standing Orders to allow Cllr Lewis to speak as he was not a member of the HR Committee.

Cllr Lewis stated that he did not think it was a mistake and in particular the statement regarding the Neighbourhood Plan was extremely unfortunate and could have had a dramatic impact the individual(s) should be disciplined.

The Clerk informed members that she had standing instructions to prepare the newsletter and in relation to its distribution, Council were required to produce four of these annually, and as previously stated apologised for the errors but denied that these were intentional.

The Chairman indicated that whilst he had seen the first draft, he felt that the error had come about due to the fact that the distributor had put this out prior to the date originally intended; this being before purdah. Staff had been under extreme pressure, with the Clerk off through illness, and he was confident that this was an unfortunate incident. Cllr Lewis referred to previous errors in relation to the deletion of the information on the Velo event and other typographic issues. Cllr Whitear stated that in terms of issues and the newsletter over 40 of these had been issued in the past 10 years, and whilst some may have had minor typographical this was possibly the first that he could recall which could have had an impact. The Clerk had informed Councillors as soon as she was made aware of the situation. A general discussion then took place, as to how this would be overcome in the future.

Cllr Vickers stated that the incorrect statement was both unfortunate and presumptuous to say the least, but she generally believed that this had been an unfortunate set of circumstances and mainly down to human error. The Chairman reiterated that the office staff had been under extreme pressure during the last couple of months, especially with the onset of Freedom of Information requests etc., now being received this only added to these pressures. He was satisfied that more care would take place in future.

The Chairman asked Cllr Lewis if he were now satisfied that his complain had been fully discussed; Cllr Lewis was in agreement with this.

Standing Orders were then reinstated.

****At this point in the meeting the Chairman proposed the exclusion of the press and public due to the confidential nature of the matter to be discussed this relating to a personnel matter.**

HR06/03/19 RETIREMENT OF THE CLERK**

Confidential Minute

HR07/03/19 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting of Council would be determined later in the meeting and advised to the Clerk.

Signed.....(Chairman)

Dated.....