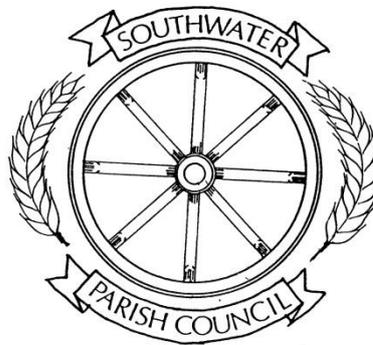


# Southwater Parish Council



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

Wednesday 23 May 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 23 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 G Scoon  
Cllr G Watkins**

**Cllr D Moore  
Cllr H Timson  
Cllr N Whitear**

**Clerk to the Meeting: Mrs.C.M.Tobin**

**County Councillor: Not present**

**District Councillors: Not present**

**Press: Not present**

**Members of the Public: 16**

#### FG14/05/18 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. If a member of the public wished to tape the meeting could they please indicate. In the event of a fire alarm sounding, everyone would be directed to evacuate the building via the exits indicated.

The Chairman stated that the Clerk's office had received a number of requests to speak and asked the first resident to come forward.

The resident who lived in the Thistle Way area to the northern end of the village addressed the Committee.

Speaking on behalf of residents living in the vicinity of the Poppy Close area which has been taken out of use and closed by the Parish Council last year. The resident

strongly oppose the Council's decision which was used on a daily basis by children in the area, residents felt that the only reason for the condition of the play area, was that this had not been maintained by the Council and it had allowed the play area to fall into disrepair.

Despite the survey sent to all resident to canvass their opinion as to a possible replacement residents were concerned to note that the Chairman of Council, Cllr Graham Watkins had suggested that the area be used for affordable housing. Residents were concerned that this particular suggestion was never included in the original survey. Residents value their green space, trees and areas for children to play. This particular area is a woodland corridor in the middle of homes; this being one of the reasons residents chose to live there.

The Chairman, Cllr Michael Neale thanked the resident for the questions in relation to Poppy Close play area and stated that as of the date of the meeting the Clerk's office had not taken this matter further in terms of the suggestion by a member of Council that this area be considered for affordable housing. This whole issue would be subject to further investigation prior to any formal report being prepared by the Clerk. It is however, permissible for other suggestions to be brought forward by members of Council for consideration and evaluation.

In terms of the comments in relation to Health & Safety, this play area was also looked at by experts at the District Council (Leisure Services) and it was also their view that the play area was not originally put in a suitable place. This coupled with the future refurbishment of the Leisure Centre play area coupled with another play area in Warren Drive that the position of the Parish Council be supported and the equipment removed.

In terms of the comments in relation to Health & Safety, this play area was also looked by experts at the District Council, Leisure Services and it was their view also that the play area was not originally put in a suitable place. Therefore, with the proposed future refurbishment to the Leisure Centre play area coupled with another play area close-by in Warren Drive that the position of the Parish Council be supported and the equipment removed. This position was made clear in minutes of the Council over the last four years.

The replacement of the play area based on Risk Assessment and advice from the District Council will be evaluated within the report, including other suggestions put forward in the consultation and by members.

The Chairman stated that there was room for further suggestions. Cllr Watkins stated that the reason that he had made the suggestion in order that the Council could look at maximising all opportunities which would ultimately reduce any potential Council tax. However, this had been without the benefit of looking at the land covenant and Section 106 agreement. It is therefore his opinion that having now done so that such a suggestion would not be possible.

The Chairman asked what was the statement in relation to, the resident indicated that it was in relation to Easteds Barn.

At this point Cllr Watkins, stated that he believed that the Clerk had asked for a copy of this statement on at least two occasions, but that it had not been forthcoming and therefore the Committee should not take this statement especially as this contravened Standing Orders and was not an agenda item for the meeting. Other members felt that they would allow the statement to be read but would not make comment.

**Standing Orders were removed to allow the resident to deliver his statement.**

A resident supporting the Easteds Barn Action Group addressed the meeting. He referred to the groups who had been relocated or to those who had found alternative accommodation either within the Leisure Centre and elsewhere. The resident questioned whether the Council had acted lawfully in the matter of Easteds Barn in terms of Page 14 (3) Parish Council Standing Orders and the question of whether the Parish Council had consulted in accordance with policy. The Group would be asking for further information under the Freedom of Information Act.

**Leisure Centre**

A local resident who could not attend has asked that the Committee respond to the following questions, the Clerk at this point read the questions.

Cllr Watkins raised a point of order in that there was no item on the agenda in accordance with Standing Orders and requested that this item be deferred to the next meeting when there would be discussions in relation to the Leisure Centre. Members felt that as the resident was not at the meeting and there was no agenda item they would defer a response until the Annual Meeting of the Council when there would be an appropriate agenda item.

**This was agreed by all members present and the Clerk asked to pass this onto the resident concerned.**

**FG15/05/18 APOLOGIES**

There were apologies noted and agreed from Cllrs. Apted, Flores-Moore and Vickers.

**Councillors NOTED and APPROVED the absence.**

**FG16/05/18 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.**

**FG17/05/18 MINUTES**

**It was RESOLVED by all present having been proposed by Cllr Watkins and seconded by Cllr Neale, that the Minutes of the Finance and General**

**Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018 be accepted as a true and correct record of the meetings.**

**FG/18/05/18 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman indicated that he would like to congratulate Prince Harry and Ms. Megan Markle on their recent marriage and the announcement that they were to be known as the Duke and Duchess of Sussex.

**Members NOTED the information.**

**FG/19/05/18 BANK RECONCILIATION**

Members were asked to approve the Bank Reconciliation as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, April's reconciliation not being completed due to year end administration.

**It was AGREED by all present that the Bank Reconciliation as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 be APPROVED.**

Members were asked to approve the Debtors and Creditors report as at the date of the meeting; again due to end of year administration there is no update from year end. The Clerk indicated that due to end of year documentation this was now fully updated but was confident that any outstanding balances would have been collected or being dealt with.

**It was AGREED by all present that the Debtors/Creditors report be approved as at the date of the meeting.**

**FG/20/05/18 PAYMENTS SCHEDULE**

A payment schedule was presented to the Council to 17<sup>th</sup> May 2018 in the sum of £18,701.58 with other payments totalling £75,196.03 an overall total of £93,897.61.

**It was AGREED by all present that the payment schedule dated 17<sup>th</sup> May 2018 in the sum of £18,701.58 be APPROVED, other payments totalling £75,196.03 be APPROVED, and overall total of £93,897.61.**

**FG/21/05/18 DRAFT END OF YEAR ACCOUNTS TO 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2018**

**ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT 2017/18 (PART 3, PAGE 3 OF THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN)**

The Committee is recommended to discuss, comment on the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2017/18 (Part 3, Page 3 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return)

**It was discussed and AGREED by all present that the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2017/18 (Part 3, Page 3 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return) be APPROVED. This matter to be recommended for APPROVAL to the Full Council at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2018.**

**ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (PART 3, PAGE 4: SECTION 1)**

The Committee is recommended to approve the Annual Governance Statement (Part 3, Page 4: Section 1) of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return.

**It was discussed and AGREED by all present that the Annual Governance Statement (Part 3, Page 4: Section 1) of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return be APPROVED. This matter to be recommended for APPROVAL to the Full Council at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2018.**

**THE ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS (PART 3, PAGE 5: SECTION 2)**

The Committee is recommended to discuss and comment on The Accounting Statements (Part 3, Page 5; Section 2 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return, Bank Reconciliation, Debtors and Creditors, Variances, Reserves (General and Ring-fenced).

**It was discussed and AGREED by all present that the Accounting Statements (Part 3, Page 5; Section 2 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return, Bank Reconciliation, Debtors and Creditors, Variances, Reserves (General and Ring-fenced) by APPROVED. This matter to be recommended for APPROVAL to the Full Council at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2018.**

**DATE TO BE SET FOR THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE ELECTORS' RIGHTS**

The Committee notes the date set by the Responsible Financial Officer for the Commencement of the Electors' Rights this being the 4<sup>th</sup> June 2018 ending 13<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

**Members NOTED and APPROVED the date set by the Responsible Financial Office in relation to the Commencement of the Electors' Rights being 4<sup>th</sup> June 2018 to 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2018. This matter to be recommended for APPROVAL to the Full Council at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2018.**

**Cllr Watkins at this stage thanked the staff for all the hard work that had gone into producing the end of year accounts and asked that the Clerk pass on this to the staff.**

**FG/22/05/18 COUNCILLOR VACANCY**

Members were informed that there would be no election called in respect of the vacancy; the Council could therefore co-opt from applicants for the position, subject to the completion of the Council's application process and meeting with the Clerk as previously instructed by Council.

The Chairman indicated that it was likely that Cllr Apted would be resigning at the Annual Meeting, thereafter the Clerk will be instructed to place the vacancy for the relevant period.

It was acknowledged through conversation the enormous contribution by Cllr Apted in service to the community of Southwater, he being the only original member of Council since its inception.

**The Clerk to write to Cllr Apted expressing its gratitude for his many years of service to the community of Southwater.**

**It was RESOLVED by all present that the Clerk should ensure that all applicants complete the relevant application process and attend a meeting to gain information on the work of a parish council prior to the Annual Meeting of the Council on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2018.**

**FG/23/05/18 OPERATIONAL MATTERS**

The Chairman referred to the report issued in relation to all operation aspects of the Council's estates and assets. Members are therefore requested to approve the report in its entirety. With regard to the two memorial benches to be sited at the War Memorial, the Clerk asked which seats did the Committee prefer; it was decided that the Clerk should choose those with poppies on them.

There was also a brief discussion in relation to the new Council website in that it was far clear than the previous site; the Clerk stated that the team were now making every effort to update this with information which the general public would find useful.

**The report was discussed and RESOLVED that the report be APPROVED in its entirety in order that the Management Team could progress the contents of the report.**

**Leisure Centre Playing Fields**

This report informs the Committee that the works have been authorised due to time constraints and seasonal works in order to get the playing fields ready for the football season. Members are requested to approve the report and payment this being retrospective in light that the purchase order has been raised.

**It was RESOLVED that the report be APPROVED by all present.**

**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.**

**FG/24/05/18 PERSONNEL & PENSIONS\*\***

The purpose of the report is to receive an update on the current staffing situation of the Council.

“Confidential Note”

**Members NOTED and APPROVED the matters relating to staffing.**

**SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

As a result of recent staff developments, it is prudent that the Committee consider a minor revision to the Scheme of Delegation. A copy of the proposed amendment was issued in April; the Clerk apologies but this matter was a duplication with the

Operations Manager having been added to the scheme. Cllr Cole indicated that the original draft presented had contained reference to a Deputy Clerk and this should have been removed during the Clerk's absence. The Clerk would check this point.

**Members NOTED and APPROVED the Scheme of Delegation approved in April 2018.**

**ILL HEALTH INSURANCE COVER**

The Clerk reported that the Ill Health Insurance Cover had been received, and indicated that Council had not budgeted for this increased expenditure, the decision therefore to be taken by the Committee would be whether to renew and advise as to where the funds would be found within the current budget. If approved a recommendation would be required for the Annual Meeting to approve.

**It was AGREED that the Ill Health Insurance Cover be reviewed in terms of the actual policy and that this matter be discussed by Finance & General Purposes in June 18 when a decision to renew or not would be taken. The Clerk to check on any roll over period for such policies.**

FG13/04/18 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

**Meeting finished at 8.35 pm.**