

SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 29th March, 2017 at 7.30 p.m., in the Council Chamber, Beeson House, Lintot Square, Southwater.

Present Were:	Cllr G. Watkins (Chairman)	
	Cllr L. Apted	Cllr G. Cole
	Cllr P. Davies	Cllr P. Flores-Moore
	Cllr B. Greening	Cllr J. Hutchings
	Cllr M. Neale	Cllr R O'Toole-Quin
	Cllr C. Pearce	Cllr B. Varley
	Cllr N. Whitear	
Co-Opted Non-Voting*	Mr. D. Moore	
Member:	Mrs Hayley Timson joined the table at 7.47pm	
Clerk:	Mrs C.M. Tobin	
County Councillor:	Cllr Brad Watson OBE	
District Councillors:	Not present	
Sussex Police:	Not present	
Members of the public:	Nil	
Press:	Not present	

F83/03/17 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave out the housekeeping rules for the meeting including that relating to fire, asking whether anyone present wished to record the meeting. The Chairman informed those present that the meeting was being recorded by the Parish Council.

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Brad Watson OBE., to the meeting and asked whether he had anything he wished to say. Cllr Watson accepted the invitation to speak and stated that this would probably be his last for the County Council and offered his thanks for the support shown to him by Southwater Parish Council. West Sussex County Council (WSSC) had a working budget (after school deductions) of £530 million. There had been a lot invested, despite grant deductions from the Treasury which would mean that WSSC would be financially dependent from the Treasury by 2019.

Investment will be in footways and highways, plus £1.2 million to fund social workers (as key workers are difficult to attract to the area due to high living costs).

There was also investment of £25 billion from the Government over the next three years to fund social care.

The Chairman offered thanks offered to Cllr Brad Watson OBE., for his services over the last 16 years and hoped he would keep his role as Father Christmas for the next few years.

F84/03/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Diamond, Dye, and Vickers. A welcome was extended to Rachel O'Toole-Quinn on her return.

Councillors NOTED the absences and return.

F85/03/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Clerk referred Members of the Council to information issued 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 made at this point.

F86/03/17 MINUTES

The Full Council meeting minutes of the 25th January 2017 were APPROVED by all present, as a true and correct record of the meeting.

F87/03/17 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman had no announcements.

F88/03/17 CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk indicated that the current list had been distributed by her office and asked whether there were any items wished councillors wished to discuss in relation to these or whether any item should be considered at a future meeting of the Council.

Councillors NOTED the information provided.

F89/03/17 COMMITTEES

Planning Committee – 8th February, 1st March and 15th March 2017

It was RESOLVED by all present having been proposed by Cllr Apted and seconded by Cllr Varley that the Minutes of the Planning Committees dated 8th February, 1st March and 15th March 2017 were APPROVED by all those present as a true and correct record of the meetings held.

The date of the next meeting Wednesday, 5th April 2017.

Finance & General Purposes Committee – 15th February and 8th March 2017

It was RESOLVED by all present having been proposed by Cllr Apted and seconded by Cllr Varley that the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committees dated 15th February and 8th March 2017 were APPROVED by all those present as a true and correct record of the meeting held.

The date of the next meeting Wednesday, 12th April 2017

F90/03/17 ACCOUNTS

The Clerk presented to Council the current financial position of the Council, including detailed Income & Expenditure, Sales Ledger Aged Account Balances, Bank Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 29th March 2017.

The Financial information provided to the 29th March 2017 were APPROVED by those present, as a true and correct record of the financial position of the Council.

Cash Flow

The Clerk referred Members to the Balance Sheet information provided as of 29th March 2017 which indicated that the general fund available is £36766 and the current year fund is -£19024, which represents a reduction in deficit due to monies coming in. The figures include the March salary run.

Cllr Flores-Moore questioned the deficit in the pension contributions within the accounts. The Clerk indicated, that this negative was identified as an overspend against the years budget. The Clerk had reviewed the figures for the Leisure Centre pension contributions and these were correct.

Councillors NOTED this information as correct.

WSSC Community Initiative Funding

The Clerk reported that the Friday Luncheon Club had obtained just over £1800 from the West Sussex County Council Community Initiative Fund. The Group would like to thank the Parish Council for continuing to hold its funds.

Councillors NOTED this information.

Easteds Barn Income

Cllr Neale wanted it recorded for the minutes that the income from Easteds Barn had led to a profit of around £4,500 by year end and wished to thank all staff, especially the bookings co-ordinator for all of her hard work.

Councillors NOTED this and thanked staff accordingly.

F91/03/17 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

The Clerk presented to the Council, the payment schedule to 29th March, 2017 being £56,060.89 including March salaries.

The Schedule of Payments were APPROVED by all present in the sum of £56,060.89.

F92/03/17 CO-OPTION OF A NON VOTING PARISH COUNCILLOR

The Clerk indicated that she was delighted to confirm that Hayley Ann Timson had applied for the second non-voting role within the Parish Council. At this point the Chairman asked whether members wished to vote on this position, or were they happy to appoint Mrs. Timson to this position. No vote required.

At this point the Clerk asked Mrs. Timson to signed the relevant Declarations of Office and received documentation in relation to the role of a Parish Councillor albeit non-voting.

It was RESOLVED by all present that Mrs. Hayley Ann Timson be duly CO-OPTED to the Parish Council as a non-voting member.

Mrs Timson joined the committee table at 7.47pm and was officially welcomed by the Chairman.

F93/03/17 REPORTS BACK FROM REPRESENTATIVES ATTENTION OUTSIDE MEETING ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL

Clerks Networking Day

The Clerk reported that she had attended the networking day held at Fontwell Race Course held by the Sussex & Surrey Association of Local Councils. This was a particularly good conference especially the information regarding the Draft Planning & Housing White Paper. One key consideration is to change the administration of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The possible consolidation of larger authorities (such as Manchester, Birmingham and Sheffield) and encourage them to adopt a strategic approach in the future. If successful, this approach will be cascaded down to the neighbourhood planning system at District/Parish level. The Clerk will be circulating the papers from the day and should any councillors wish further information she would be pleased to provide this.

Community Conference to discuss Health and Wellbeing

Cllrs Neale, Flores-Moore were present and a presentation was given by Elizabeth Leggo, MRPharmS, Health & Wellbeing Project Manager for Surrey and Sussex Association of Local Councils (SSALC) on Health and Wellbeing and how communities can get involved.

Facilitated discussion occurred with the community present at the conference regarding community desires. The Doctor/Patient group was discussed with a meeting now scheduled to see if this can be taken forward. Notes on the community conference will be circulated to the community group following this meeting taking place.

Rural Car Park Meeting

Cllrs Neale, Cole and the Clerk met with Mr Ben Golds, Parking Services Manager and Mr

Brian Elliot, Property and Development Manager of Horsham District Council regarding the management and enforcement of car parking in Lintot Square. Southwater Parish Council representatives again expressed a desire to self manage the car park, as car parking may be subject to abuse at times by local residents (as evidenced by local residents and businesses) and visitors. West Sussex County Council it would appear have strict criterion regarding becoming an enforcement agency. The management of the car park is currently outsourced to Lambert Smith Hampton who will canvass the local businesses. Southwater Parish Council will be kept in the loop.

Keep Southwater Green

The Chairman was present at this meeting on 8th March 2017. The meeting was called by the Parish Council, as a joint program regarding information sharing and problem solving by the Parish Council and the Keep Southwater Green. Sections of the Neighbourhood Plan document will be allocated and sent out for view and comment. It was agreed to meet twice a year so feedback can be received on the neighbourhood plan documentation.

Cllr. Whitear raised a question regarding 'Keep Southwater Green' Facebook page. The clerk confirmed that this is a separate entity and has nothing to do with the Southwater Community page. A meeting was to be arranged with the operators of this page due to the concerns raised about comments emanating from the site.

Car Parking at Southwater Country Park

The Chairman was present at this meeting on 16th March 2017, with representatives of the Country Park, regarding Easter and dates going forward. The car parking is being considered and proposals are out for consultation regarding parking restrictions along Cripplegate Lane.

The Chairman stated that Southwater Parish Council were being consulted but it was evident that the works had been planned. Further to this meeting the Council had received notification from West Sussex County Council about the proposed Road Traffic Order.

Horsham District Council's proposal was for another 40 spaces and further car parking within the Station Road area. Any extension to the main car park is currently on hold. Car parking could be further tested further by the works occurring by Southern Water trenching. Discussion followed regarding trees removed from this area (designated as ancient woodland). This was allegedly 'scrub' but was refuted by several present.

Southwater Country Park car parking charges are to be raised in an effort to increase turnover of cars. Cllr. O'Toole-Quinn raised the possibility of the Parish Council receiving negative feedback after the price rises. She was concerned about the office staff once again taking the brunt of any ill feeling regarding the changes. The Clerk stated that any complaints would be directed to Leisure Services at Horsham District Council. Cllr O'Toole-Quinn, also noted that out of all of the actions raised at the residents meeting regarding the Country Park last year, the only one acted upon was the car parking charges. It was confirmed by Cllr. Greening that charges occur from 10am until 6pm.

It was noted that last weekend on a beautiful sunny day the overflow car park was locked leading to an overflowing car park.

Further discussion occurred regarding water safety (particularly with regard to swimming),

disabled access to the beach area and legal liability before returning to car parking. A list was requested to keep a check on actions from the meeting referred to by Cllr O'Toole-Quinn above. The clerk explained she had a long list and was often contacted by members of the public and she had been directing them to the minutes produced for Horsham District Council; it was not appropriate for her to issue them.

The Chairman noted that if water testing is not carried out by Horsham District Council or others this would be a serious concern for him.

It was proposed that since the car parking/Country Park is scheduled for discussion next week in the planning meeting it was agreed to postpone further discussion until then.

Southwater Sea Scouts

Cllr. Cole attended a meeting with the Southwater Sea Scouts looking for a permanent base. They are struggling to find a permanent base for 80-90 children as they have no budget and costs from hiring school rooms are increasing. Currently the Group have a storage container at Colgate. They have expressed reluctance at sharing premises although their exact needs in writing have not yet been received by either Horsham or Southwater Parish Councils. The Southwater Scouts have been approached but as yet have not commented. Cllr Cole expressed views that a facility for up to 200 youths would be a great coup for Southwater but obviously depended on funds.

Cllr Flores-Moore considered the possibility to contacting Berkeley's to utilize an unused showroom building on their land and move it to local land, possibly the country park to be close to the water. The Chairman expressed caution in that this could possibly affect Section 106 gains. The Clerk indicated that she would be progressing discussions with the Fletcher Trust over a possible extension to the new community building.

The Clerk will contact Berkeley's regarding the possible re-use of the existing sales building at the end of the build and investigate community funding outside of the Section 106 provision.

F94/03/17 PARISH COUNCIL LAND & BUILDINGS

The Clerk reported that she along with other staff members and a representative of the Council had carried out the visual inspection of the Council's Land. A report was being prepared by the Special Projects and Events Officer for the Finance & General Purposes Committee in April 2017. However the following was of concern and required immediate action:-

Southwater Skatepark

It was noted on the day of the visit that there was a large panel missing from the rear section, this was found and secured later than day to prevent further access under the ramps.

The Clerk identified a small hole which lay between two planks of wood which would either have to be repaired, and in the Clerk's view this would be the cheaper option before the Council. The other alternatives would be to Heras fence the entire area and or dismantle the ramps. These two compared to the repair costs would be prohibitive in line with the parish council accounts. The Clerk is currently awaiting a contractor to provide a quote for the repairs, and will be contacting two further companies to obtain quotes. The Clerk is aware of

the Council's previous views but in terms of risk to the Council, this proposal would provide the lowest risk to the Council.

The Council were reluctant to spend any more budget on the skate park but accepted the Clerks argument that any repairs to the skate park would be regarded as improvements to the park and will negate the health and safety risk currently identified.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should obtain the relevant quotations for the improvements required and will pursue separately a consideration to claim Section 106 funds retrospectively for previous works carried out.

F95/03/17 TOWN COUNCIL STATUS

The Chairman referred to the documentation and advice received from Mr. Leggo, the Chief Executive of the Sussex & Surrey Association of Local Councils following earlier discussions regarding this proposal where doubts on grant funding and political status were brought up as potential barriers to becoming a Town Council in name.

The Chairman explained that grant funding would not be affected by the change and remaining a parish would not necessarily prohibit political activity anyway. If the term 'town' is not adopted then Cllr Flores-Moore wished a change to the word 'Parish' to be considered in the future.

It was RESOLVED to re-agenda this topic for June post residents Annual Parish Meeting of the Council.

F96/03/17 SOUTHWATER YOUTH PROJECT**

The Vice Chairman of Council indicated that both he and Cllr Whitear had attended meetings which were looking at the Constitutional implications for the Youth Project. The Council released the grant funding of £17,000 (Year 2016/17) for the project. Questions regarding anomalies within the budget (a small rounding error of £1) and the other provision for staff costs relating to a 'just in case' provision where £400 had been allocated for staff training, £250 for recruitment, £550 for 'others' of which £300 has been earmarked for online or telephone youth worker support. These anomalies were considered to be answered satisfactorily. Cllr Neale indicated that the youth worker was actually paid by the Dorking Circuit on behalf of the Youth Project, of whom the Parish Council was one of three contributors, the others being Southwater Community Methodist Church and Horsham United Reform Church. There was discussion regarding the possibility of the Project seeking charity status being met with reluctance by the churches – despite the obvious advantages of being a charity strengthening the possibility of securing grants. The facts being, that if Charity status is secured then going forward the two representatives will be Trustees. This point needs to be taken into account by Southwater Parish Council.

To bring the Youth Project in line with standard procedures, the Parish Council felt it would be appropriate to clarify the Constitution to ensure that goal setting was transparent and the accountability of the Project could be measured more objectively in the future. A meeting was to be held on the 2nd May should finalise the Constitution and the result will be brought to the Council at the end of May 17.

Cllr Varley acknowledged that Southwater were fortunate to have a Youth Project and acknowledged the work that the youth worker had put into the scheme.

Councillors NOTED the information provided.

F97/03/17 PERSONEL & WSCC LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME**

The Clerk advised Members that all vacancies within the Council with the exception of a caretaker were now filled. References had been taken up and relevant members of staff would now enter the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Councillors NOTED the information provided

F98/03/17 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting to be Wednesday 26th July 2017

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.