



## **SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL**

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### **Minutes of the remote meeting of The Parish Council held on Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 7.30pm.**

#### **Present:**

**Councillors Present Remotely:** G Watkins (Chairman), M Neale (Vice Chairman), P Flores Moore, G Cole, G Scoon, S Lewis, R Stranks, R Williams, I Slowly, D Moore, C Vickers and County Councillor N Jupp (*joined at 7.35pm*).

**Neighbourhood Wardens :** Dominic Woodhead and Jacque Cave attended remotely to give a verbal Report – Item 8/21.

#### ***Members of the Public were able to view meeting by Live YouTube Stream***

**Clerk:** Dawn Spouge (*Present remotely*)

**Deputy Clerk and RFO:** Justin Tyler (*managing the IT remotely*)

The Chairman advised that the meeting was being conducted virtually with none present in the Chamber and confirmed it was being live streamed to YouTube.

The Chairman confirmed that the meeting was not being recorded and did a roll call at the commencement of the meeting of all those attending remotely for the benefit of those viewing the streamed meeting. He stated that the meeting was being held in accordance with Government Regulations approved during the COVID-19 Pandemic for the period of May 2020 – May 2021.

The Chairman welcomed all Councillors in attendance remotely and all members of the Public watching via live stream, to the meeting. He clarified with the Clerk that no members of the public had requested to speak at the meeting. He stated that when a member of the public does request to speak in any convened meeting that public are invited to speak at, this would be for maximum of 5 minutes.

The Chairman confirmed with all Councillors that they had received the documentation required to consider the Agenda items.

The Chairman clarified the voting protocol required for decisions, etiquette required to conduct the meeting and housekeeping rules and also reminded all Councillors that if an interest had been declared, they would not be able to take part in any discussion or vote. Voting would be symbolised by a thumbs up for approval, down for against or horizontal hand for abstention. He explained that in cases where, in the opinion of the Chairperson, there is consensus, the Chairperson may seek to secure agreement whilst providing an opportunity for any dissenting members to be heard or to request a formal roll call vote.

The Chairman explained that if meeting was at any point not accessible to Councillors/Chairperson through remote means due to any technological or other failure of provision, then he would immediately adjourn the meeting. If the provision of access through remote means could not be restored within 10 minutes, then the remaining business will be considered at a time and date. If a new date could not be fixed the remaining business will be considered at the next ordinary meeting.

#### **Actions**

All papers were circulated with the Agenda to all Councillors.

**1/21. Apologies for absence**

Councillor Knott gave her apologies.

**2/21. Declarations of Interest**

None

**3/21. Public Forum – Public Question Time – 15 minutes in total.**

*This is an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions relating to the Agenda. Members of the public can only view the meeting on YouTube and not take part via Zoom unless pre-arranged with either the Clerk, Deputy Clerk or Chairman of the meeting.*

*Participating members of the public will be limited to 3 people maximum per meeting. Each member of the public can only refer to items on the agenda and will be allowed to ask one question and one ancillary question that combined will not last any longer than 5 minutes. Once participating members have asked their questions or made their statements as above, they will be removed from the meeting accordingly and will then only be able to access the meeting via YouTube live stream.*

No requests to speak from the public received.

**4/21. Chairman's Report**

- i) The Chairman announced that Hayley Timson had resigned from the Parish Council in late December 2020. He wanted to publicly thank Hayley for all her contribution to the Council and its work over the time she was with them.

He announced that the notice for co-option had been published on both the notice-board at Beeson House and on the website. There were currently three vacancies for Councillors by Co-option should anyone be willing and interested in the services provided to the Community. If they wished to apply to find out what is involved, to email the Clerk, details are on the website.

The Chairman announced that he had taken delivery of 400 high quality face shields supplied by Local Sussex Freemasons and provided by the United Grand Lodge of England and the Masonic Charitable Foundation. There was a total of 20,000 face shields, provided to organisations within Sussex. These would be made available for collection through various shops in Southwater free of charge to all residents of Southwater, Schools and Charities for their protection. The outlets would be published on the Parish Website. The Chairman thanked the Provincial Grand Lodge of Sussex and the United Grand Lodge of England for this vital donation of PPE.

The Chairman's Discretionary Grant fund was to be enhanced in value by the addition of Councillors allowances that Councillors had opted to transfer to the fund. He expressed his thanks for the extra donations. He advised that access to this fund could be made by contacting the Clerk, Deputy Clerk or the Chairman, this fund was specifically setup to help Southwater residents in need during this current Lockdown.

The Chairman thanked all the staff and Councillors for their efforts during the trying situation of the pandemic. He explained that some staff had suffered from COVID-19 over the Christmas and New Year shutdown and the Councillors managed to provide cover on Parish matters. All the staff were recovering well. The Council offices would be staffed but on a restricted basis from 9:00am to 12:00pm as staff would be working from home until further notice.

- ii) **Southwater Museum Artifacts held currently in Horsham to consider to be transferred to Southwater**

Horsham Museum holds approximately 1000 items all related to historical Southwater Forge, in addition, it holds boxes of patterns of Wheel arches etc.

Portslade hold many Roman artifacts relating to Southwater that have been uncovered over time by various developers.

Due to the current restrictions, all further discussion with Horsham Museum has been put on hold.

Further discussion will take place along with liaising with other community groups on this. An update will be given when the Council have had time to explore all ideas in relation to this.

Clerk

**5/21. Minutes** – To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020  
Councillor Moore proposed acceptance of the Minutes, seconded by Councillor Neale and **AGREED** unanimously by all those present at the meeting.

**6/21. Matters Arising** - To deal with any matters arising from the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020 not covered elsewhere on this agenda.

None

**7/21. Correspondence**

None

**8/21 Community Neighbourhood Wardens Verbal Report** – Report and Interim Report had been circulated with the Agenda.

Dominic Woodhead and Jacquie Cave – both gave a verbal report at the meeting, this covered all aspects of their recent written reports received over the last year and enabled all those present and viewing to get an overview of all the different areas that the Wardens covered within their duties in Southwater. A brief summary of those matters reported are below:-

- Dominic Woodhead thanked the Council for the invite to report at the meeting.
- Antisocial behaviour and Community issues and outcomes were reported with a noted rise in Antisocial behaviour during the lockdown restrictions and a decline in social interaction in line with guidance.
- Detailed work on Community initiatives .
- There had been 103 incidents with the Wardens interacting with the Police on these matters.
- Importance of visible patrolling as a deterrent to further incidents or ASB.
- Provided credible intelligence of a missing person, two children missing and discovery of a cannabis farm.
- Created a virtual personal safety initiative on U-Tube with help from HDC officers.
- Survey of Southwater’s open spaces in relation to incursions.
- Submitting 1000 clear-up disposal reports, including 54 incidents of fly tipping in rural areas of Southwater.
- Dog waste had improved since initial initiative on this matter.
- Less parking patrols had been required for outside the local Schools than normal due to the restrictions of the pandemic.
- Increased communication with secondary schools with workshops afterwards.
- Liaising with Schools on anti-social behaviour.
- Helping set up community groups at the commencing of the first lockdown in March.
- Less group and vulnerable persons visits due to lockdown restrictions.
- Delivered Christmas cards/contact cards to vulnerable persons.
- Worked with local vulnerable persons on several occasions to aid and help them, with follow ups conducted.
- Dealt with 167 public enquires.

The Chairman thanked the Wardens for their report which highlighted the valuable service they delivered to the community. *(The Wardens left the meeting).*

**9/21. Accounts**

i) **Balance Sheet to date – To receive, note and approve**

The balance sheet to date was proposed for approval by Councillor Moore, seconded by Councillor Williams and **AGREED** unanimously.

ii) **Income and Expenditure – To receive, note and approve as at the date of this meeting**

The Income and Expenditure was noted and proposed for approval by Councillor Scoon, seconded by Councillor Moore and **AGREED** unanimously.

**10/21. To Receive and Consider any County Council Reports and Communications not covered elsewhere on this Agenda**

County Councillor Jupp reported the following:-

- Good news was given in regards to the permanent classrooms for the infant and junior academies in Southwater were opened and ready for use by the 4<sup>th</sup> January and were being appreciated by all.
- Attendance currently under the current Covid restrictions at Southwater schools for key worker and vulnerable children in safe bubbles had been between 20-35%. These numbers of attendance were higher than County and national figures.
- He had attended that day a scrutiny meeting on setting budgets within WSCC and reported that although not formally approved/confirmed, there had been a proposal of an uplift of 1.99% in core Council Tax and also a 3% uplift in adult social care. Adult social care was a major expense for the County Council and in the County population had a high percentage of retired and elderly people.
- There had been a debate on potential savings, however, this no longer included a review of waste/recycling centres in this area and therefore those that had been previously discussed, would remain open for the foreseeable future. Councillor Moore stated that he felt it was essential for centres to make it as easy as possible to allow access to help prevent fly-tipping. He was please that it was staying open.
- It had been noted that Cripplegate Lane, despite the recent jet clearance of drains there, had continued to flood. Drainage contractors would return to re-investigate the problem that kept re-occurring.
- Due to a recent realignment, the current use of the children and family centre in Southwater had been considered. It was felt that times had changed and in more recent years, staff were visiting people in their homes rather than people coming into the centre. The building therefore may become available for other groups to put forward an interest of use. Councillor Jupp would notify the Council if the building did become empty.
- In answer to a question from Councillor Stranks, Councillor Jupp confirmed that the school crossing patrol was still operating in this current time of lockdown.

**11/21. To Receive and Consider any District Council Reports and Communications not covered elsewhere on this Agenda**

Councillor Vickers reported the following as District Councillor:-

- HDC were currently setting their budgets, they were considerably down on income due to the current pandemic situation. Council tax would rise, they did not want to cut services, it would be a balanced budget.
  - Local Plan – a health check was being carried out on HDC's local plan to check that it was still on the right lines, reports were in place and the inspector was happy with them. The Government had changed the 'goal posts' again, therefore statements of common ground need to ready and submitted before regulation 19. This will incur a delay on the Local Plan decision making.
- Councillor Watkins asked about test sites for housing, Councillor Vickers replied that there were several with several waiting to go to appeal. Appeals were behind due to the pandemic. 5 year land supply in place by HDC.

**12/21. To Receive from the following Committees: reports, note any delegated decisions taken and make any recommendations**

**F&GP Committee – updates including:**

**i) Minutes of the Meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

The RFO advised that the budget distributed to the Committee for review at this meeting was the same presented to the committee on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020. No further changes had occurred between meetings.

Both Councillor Neale and the RFO confirmed that the budget for the financial year 2021-22 resulted in a total precept requirement of £687,312.00, which produced a decrease to household tax band payers of 2.37%. This figure was based off the, now confirmed and HDC provided final tax base figure of 4686.5.

Councillor Neale proposed acceptance of the Minutes of the F&GP Committee of the 16<sup>th</sup> October, including the above Precept and SPC budget for 2021-22, seconded by Councillor Williams and **AGREED** unanimously by all those who were present at the meeting.

**ii) Update from the extraordinary F&GP Meeting held prior to this meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021 on recommendation of the budget for 2021/22**

*(Full Minutes will be approved at the next F&GP Meeting on 17th February 2021 – to note that the Minute above, no further changes had occurred in the precept/budget figures for 2021-22 since the meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> October 2020.*

**Planning Committee – updates including:**

**i) Minutes of the Meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020**

Councillor Moore proposed acceptance of the above Minutes, seconded by Councillor Scoon and **AGREED** unanimously.

**ii) Minutes of the Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

These had not been circulated and would be approved at the next Planning meeting.

**13/21. General Reserves Policy 2021** – to consider and approve recommendation made by F&GP Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020 to approve policy.

Councillor Moore proposed approval of the recommendation from the F&GP Committee of 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020 meeting, seconded by Councillor Neale and **AGREED** unanimously by all those who had been present at the meeting.

**14.21. Chairman Discretionary Fund** – to consider and approve a transfer from the General Fund to the Chairman Discretionary Fund (Earmarked Reserve) with respect to unclaimed Councillor Allowances

The Chairman announced that the transfer for approval was £1,200, the total fund now stood at £3,880. Further reference to this fund had been mentioned in Item 4/21 of these Minutes.

Councillor Cole proposed acceptance to approve transfer of funds, seconded by Councillor Flores-Moore and **AGREED** unanimously.

**15/21. Reports from Lead Councillors** – To receive and consider any reports from Lead Councillors on the following areas: Amenities, Green Open Space & Boundaries, Public Realm, Play & Leisure facilities.

Reports received on Public Realm and Green Open Space and Boundaries was noted. They would be filed with the approved Minutes.

**Amenities** – Councillor Scoon stated that risk assessments and photo documents for condition reports would be looked at in regards to Beeson House.

All Lead Councillors whom had submitted a report, gave a brief overview.

It was recognised that a Deputy Lead Councillor was required for Play & Leisure. To be decided at a future meeting.

**16/21. Change of SPC Representative on the Village Hall Committee**

It was noted that Councillor Lewis was stepping down as a PC representative on the Village Hall Committee. Councillor Slowly would be replacing him with immediate effect.

Councillor Lewis was thanked for his previous involvement in this role.

Councillor Slowly stated that she had a real interest in the Village hall and felt very motivated by this new role, she felt it was a good connection also with her role with the WI.

Councillor Watkins reiterated that the role was that of Custodial Trustee and he would be happy to explain in more detail this role to Councillor Slowly at a later date. He also gave details to Councillor Slowly of the next Village Hall meeting.

Clerk to notify the Secretary of the Village Hall Committee.

**17/21. Update on Operational matters due to the current Covid 19 Pandemic – Parish Office**

The Clerk had been updating the Councillors on weekly or more regular, if required basis, on the operation of the Parish Office. At present all staff were working remotely from home, however, a daily rota from Mon-Fri had been circulated informing the Councillors that a staff member would be present in the office from 9am-12 noon to attend to matters required in the office. Councillors were reminded not to attend the office unless pre-arranged with the Clerk/Deputy Clerk.

Clerk



days of emailing the request, to copy in , Katy Bourne, Police and Crime Commissioner for Sussex, CEO of HDC and also Southwater Neighbourhood Watch. This would be an extraordinary meeting of the Council.

It was agreed that Councillors, Lewis, Stranks and Williams liaise with the Clerk and aid in putting together an Agenda for the requested meeting.

There was further discussion on the letter received from HDC on the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO), discussion on this would also form part of the meeting that was anticipated with Sarah Leadbeatter.

***NOTE on PSPO:*** - Horsham District Council were looking at renewing the PSPO for a further three years (1 April 2021 - 31 March 2024) and also include new prohibitions. There would be a consultation on the above on the HDC website until 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021.

#### **22/21 - Wardens -**

- i) To consider the future provision of the Wardens from April 2021
- ii) To receive the recommendation from the F&GP Committee Meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020

The Chairman clarified that the F&GP had made a recommendation at the meeting of the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020, therefore the above had been approved under item 12/21 of these Minutes.

- iii) To consider and approve waiving the Financial Regulations as per Figure 11.(c). with respect to entering into a contractual agreement with Horsham District Council for provision of Neighbourhood Wardens service due to the following reasons; the Neighbourhood Wardens services is a specialist service only provided by Horsham District Council; it constitutes continuation of an existing contract; and the Council considers that alternative options i.e. security services would not provide the same District to Parish and Police to Neighbourhood Warden relationship.

The RFO clarified that the above was a continuation of an existing service.

Councillor Lewis proposed acceptance of the above, seconded by Councillor Moore and **AGREED unanimously.**

***NOTE: The live stream of the meeting ended to the Public due to the confidential nature of the following business transacted. in accordance with Section 1 (e) of Standing Orders (Meetings). with Section 1 (e) of Standing Orders (Meetings).***

#### **23/21. The Future of Youth Provision in Southwater**

This Minute was taken in confidential session.

***NOTE: The Live stream of this meeting will be reinstated at this point for the following item to be considered.***

#### **24/21. Budget**

- i) To agree the budget for 2021/22

Councillor Neale proposed acceptance of the budget precept requirement for 2021-22 (£687,312.00) as detailed in item 12/21 of these Minutes. Seconded by Councillor Flores-Moore and **AGREED** unanimously

RFO to notify HDC.

#### **25/21. Date of next meeting – 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

**This meeting was not recorded and ended at 10pm.**

Clerk/  
Lewis/  
Stranks  
Williams

RFO