



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

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2018, 7.30pm  
Beeson House  
Lintot Square  
Southwater  
Horsham  
RH13 9LA

### **Committee Members**

Cllr Michael Neale (Chairman)  
Cllr Geoff Cole (Vice Chairman)  
Cllr Ross Dye  
Cllr Pauline Flores-Moore  
Cllr Derek Moore  
Cllr Geoff Scoon  
Cllr Hayley Timson  
Cllr Claire Vickers  
Cllr Graham Watkins  
Cllr Neil Whitear



Clerk: Mrs.C.M.Tobin

## SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL

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



Telephone No: 01403 733202 Fax: 01403 732420  
Email: Catherine.Tobin@southwater-pc.gov.uk  
Community Web Site: [www.southwater-pc.gov.uk](http://www.southwater-pc.gov.uk)

### MINUTES

**The Minutes of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE meeting held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2018 in the Council Chamber, Beeson House, Southwater, West Sussex, RH13 9LA commencing at 7.30pm.**

**Present: Chairman: Cllr G.Cole**

Cllr R Dye  
Cllr G Scoon  
Cllr N Whitear

Cllr P Flores-Moore  
Cllr H Timson

**Clerk to the Meeting: Mrs Catherine Tobin**

**County Councillor: Not present**

**District Councillors: Not present**

**Press: Not present**

**Members of the Public: 4**

#### **FG78/10/18 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

*(Maximum of 2 minutes per person with an overall limit of 15 minutes)*

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 of the meeting indicated that unfortunately the Chairman of Finance & General Purposes could not be present.

**Members of the public present did not raise any questions.**

#### **FG79/10/18 APOLOGIES**

Apologies received on behalf of Cllrs Moore, Neale and Vickers.

**Councillors NOTED and APPROVED the absence**

**FG80/10/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chairman referred Members of the 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.

**The Clerk stated that there were no declarations of interest received at that point.**

**FG81/10/18 MINUTES**

**It was proposed by Cllr Flores-Moore, seconded by Cllr Whitear, and it was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018 be accepted as a true and correct record of the meeting.**

**FG82/10/18 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman had no announcements.

**FG83/10/18 CORRESPONDENCE**

The Clerk referred members to the new Legal Topic Notes provided to them these being, Parish & Community Council Meetings, Parish Meetings and Elections. The Clerk reminded members that there would be the following May 19 elections for both the Parish and District Councils.

**Councillors NOTED the information provided by the Clerks office.**

**FG84/10/18 ACCOUNTS**

The Clerk had provided financial information against budget year to date. Members should note and approve.

Bank Reconciliation

The Clerk reported that the purpose of the report is to approve the Bank Reconciliation as at 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018 (Month 6) as a true reflection of the current financial position of the Council. Members have been furnished with a copy of this document.

Recommendation

The Committee are recommended to approve the Bank Reconciliation as at 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

**The Bank Reconciliation of 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018 was APPROVED by all present.**

### **DEBTORS & CREDITORS**

The purpose of this report is to approve the Debtors and Creditors as at 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018 (Month 6). The Clerk reported that she would be meeting with one of the longest outstanding debtors in the near future to resolve the non-payment of their account. The client had refused a meeting in September but had indicated that she could meet in October 18, the Clerk is therefore writing to advise that a response to whether a meeting can be arranged should be carried out within 7 days otherwise the Council will have to refer to solicitors to seek not only the debt outstanding but also legal costs.

A short discussion ensued regarding another debtor however the Clerk explained it was not the fact that the customer was not paying just paying outside our terms and conditions; this was being discussed with the customer.

#### **Recommendation**

The Committee was recommended to approve the Debtors and Creditors lists dated 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

**The Debtor and Creditors lists dated 8<sup>th</sup> October, 2018 were APPROVED by all present.**

### **FG85/10/18 PAYMENTS SCHEDULE**

To approve the payments schedule to 8<sup>th</sup> October in the sum of £52,159.13 with other payments of £52,652.22 having been approved since the last meeting a total of £104,811.35. A copy of this document was provided to all members.

Cllr Scoon asked a question about three large payments. The Clerk provided the information from information in the Payments Schedule and invoices therein and the members were satisfied as to the reasons for the expenditure. The Clerk asked that Members contact her office to ensure that they discussed such administration issues with the Clerk prior to meetings; this would also ensure that members received an answer to any questions as it may not always be possible during the course of a meeting as the information may not be readily available.

#### **Recommendation**

The recommendation is for the Committee to approve the Payment Schedule in the sum of £52,159.13 with other payments of £52,652.22 having been approved since the last meeting; a total of £104,811.35.

**It was proposed by Cllr Whitear, seconded by Cllr Scoon and agreed by all present, that the payment schedule in the sum of £52,159.13 and other payments of £52,652.22 totalling £104,811.35 made since the last meeting be APPROVED.**

## **FG86/10/18 PARISH COUNCIL COMMUNITY GRANTS**

The Chairman indicated that there were two grants to be discussed by the Committee these being:-

### Southwater Welcome Club

The Club has submitted an application for £250 this being a donation towards the Club's Annual Christmas event.

**The Chairman requested at this point that Standing Orders be suspended to allow representatives of the Welcome Club to speak, this was APPROVED by all present.**

Questions were raised in relation to the previous grant provided to the group. Mrs. Longdon stated that Council had approved a previous amount however, had been asked to resubmit the Christmas element nearer to that time hence the application. Whilst the Group accommodate persons over 55, in the main the group were over 80 years of age.

**Standing Orders were reinstated.**

After a short discussion Councillors felt that the work and activities of the Group were sufficient to provide a further grant to assist the groups Christmas event.

**It was proposed by Cllr Whitear, seconded by Cllr Flores-Moore and AGREED by all present that the grant of £250 be APPROVED to Southwater Welcome Club to assist the Club with its Annual Christmas Event.**

### Southwater Arts Club

The Chairman indicated that this has been resubmitted from the previous month to allow further enquiries to be made. The Clerk read a statement received following the Committee's previous comments this was noted by all present.

**It was proposed by Cllr Whitear, seconded by Cllr Scoon and agreed by all present that the grant of £250 be awarded to the Southwater Arts Club to assist with their website and posters for the Annual Arts Exhibition held in Beeson House, Southwater.**

### Southwater Responders

**Councillor Flores-Moore declared an interest at this point in the meeting being a member of the Southwater Responders.**

Cllr Flores-Moore said that she believed the request for the grant of two room hires was in relation to the recent provision of two boxes to store the Parish

Council owned defibrillators outside of Beeson House and the Leisure Centre. This would allow the training of the general public on the use of these for many members of the public are somewhat nervous of using such equipment. A short discussion ensued.

**Councillor Flores-Moore did not take part in the decision in this matter having declared an interest.**

**It was proposed by Cllr. Cole and seconded by Cllr Whitear that free hall hire should be provided to the Southwater Responders. These rooms being the Chamber in Beeson House and the Café within the Leisure Centre.**

#### **FG87/10/18 POLICIES**

The Clerk indicated that this matter was to review three policies following a meeting of the working party, albeit that not many members were present. Cllr Flores-Moore indicated she had brought to the Clerk's attention a change in the standing orders in terms of financial checking; the Clerk had this in hand. Both the Financial Policy Statement and Regulations also required approval.

**It was AGREED by all present that the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Statement and Regulations be APPROVED.**

#### **FG88/10/18 ELECTRONIC FILING SYSTEM**

The Clerk referred to the report provided in member's packs for the meeting. Members discussed the type of system, Cllr Dye asking what format would the file be stored in? The Clerk indicated that documents would be scanned and stored as pdf folders; Cllr Dye was satisfied with this response. Cllr Scoon questioned the system and expense. The Clerk reported that the cost of this compared to the others quoted, this was the most effective system for an authority of this size and aligns with other operating systems. The only additional cost may be a scanner at the Leisure Centre but this will be evaluated as and when necessary but the cost of a scanner is around £100.

**It was proposed by Cllr Dye, seconded by Cllr Whitear and RESOLVED by all present that the Clerk should place a contractor with Microshade in the sum of £250 for the cost of the package with two users annual fee licence fees being £1680 to enable the Council to commence the scanning of documents received by and sent by the Council.**

#### **FG89/10/18 OPERATIONAL MATTERS**

This report covers all operational aspects of the Council's estates/assets, including expenditure taken under delegated powers, health & safety and proposed future expenditure for authorization. A member of Council stated that she had questioned some of the expenditure and suggested that the expenditure in relation to the Lardner kitchen be delegated to the Chairman, Vice Chairman of Council and the Clerk.

A short discussion took place on the shortage of storage within the leisure centre facility and in relation to general repairs.

**It was proposed by Cllr Cole, seconded by Cllr Flores-Moore and AGREED by all present that the costs indicated for repairs and maintenance within the report should be APPROVED with the exception of the works to the Lardner which will be delegated to the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Clerk to the Council.**

#### **FG90/10/18 SOUTHWATER STREET BUS SHELTER (WORTHING ROAD)**

The Chairman stated that this matter had been delegated to the Chairman of Council and the Clerk to look into.

Two councillors indicated that they had looked at this, following remarks by the Chairman and they disagreed that this provision would be difficult due to sightlines. The Councillors both suggest a potential sponsor, the Clerk stated that if that were the decision then her office would pursue. The Clerk indicated that whatever the window she would not be recommending a glass window but would look at alternatives.

**It was proposed by Cllr Flores-Moore, seconded by Cllr Timson and AGREED by all present that the Clerk should investigate a small window and seek to obtain sponsorship for the work, but alternatively seek a contribution from the resident who had made the request.**

#### **FG91/10/18 SOUTHWATER VILLAGE HALL**

**At this point in the meeting Cllr Whitear declared an interest in that he was a Management Trustee of the Village Hall along with Cllr Watkins, and would therefore not vote on this matter.**

The Chairman informed Member's that two areas of land were to be transferred to Parish Council as Custodian Trustee's in terms of the Village Hall. One area would provide for a new play area and the other associated car parking for the Village Hall.

**At this point in the meeting the Chairman suspended Standing Orders to allow members of the public to speak on this topic.**

A general discussion ensued about the responsibilities of the Council who would be the landowner in terms of Land Register but would not as Custodian Trustees. A resident and Clerk indicated the process should the Management Trustees fail.

**Standing Orders were reinstated.**

Cllr Scoon asked who would pay the costs, a suggestion which had been rejected by the Village Hall. The Clerk stated that the legal costs which would affect the current budget would be that of the Council. The proposed solicitor's costs

being in the region of £250 per hour, but that the lead solicitor was experienced in matters relating to Village Halls.

The Clerk would suggest that the Council appoint as its solicitors Surrey Hills Solicitors in relation to this matter as the lead solicitor was experienced in such local authority matters and village halls. The Clerk indicated that she would also be applying for assistance from the District Council in relation to these fees via the New Homes Bonus/CIL applicable to Southwater but currently held by District Council but was not hopeful of this therefore the cost would be borne by the Council. The Clerk indicated to Council that the Council would not be liable for ongoing maintenance costs that would fall to the Village Hall Management.

**It was APPROVED by all present with the exception of Cllr Whitear, that the Council should adopt two areas of land which was subject to a Section Agreement with Berkeley Homes as Custodian Trustee of Southwater Village Hall.**

#### **FG92/10/18 SOUTHWATER LEISURE CENTRE**

The Clerk referred to the analysis provided to Members in relation to the total number of gym customers in terms of PAYGO and Direct Debit. These figures were confidential and therefore should members wish to discuss any particular area, they should contact the Clerk.

A marketing campaign would be commencing prior to Christmas to promote the services available at the Leisure Centre including the gym.

**Members NOTED the information provided by the Clerk.**

#### The Future of Southwater Leisure Centre

The Clerk reported that the Working Party had met to discuss the future proposals to be put forward to the community these will include the outsourcing the Leisure Centre and also an extension to the existing facility. It is hoped to issue drawings of the proposals during the public consultation.

In order to progress the proposals, the Working Party also propose that a Consultant be employed to progress both the business plan and ultimate plans for the facility including staffing. A remit for this consultant is still to be progressed but approval for this is required in order to proceed in this matter.

Secondly, the Council will be required to appoint solicitors, and the Clerk would recommend Surrey Hills Solicitors in relation to this matter for the lead solicitor Ian Davison was involved in the original land transfers from the Piper Trust. The Council would not be using their usual solicitors CooleBevis as they had declared an interest in the matter.

The Piper Trust will be notified as and when appropriate in terms of any outsourcing; for instance the Council cannot enter into a lease for any area but could subject to contracts etc., enter into commercial licences to operate areas.

The committee are therefore asked to consider:-

- To prepare drawings with the view to consulting with the general public of Southwater over the intended changes; further details may need to be provided at a later date;
- The appointment of a commercial contractor to manage and progress the business plan etc., for the Leisure Centre to include outsourcing; this person would work in liaison with the Clerk in terms of tendering and legal matters;
- The appointment of solicitors to act in relation to matters appertaining to the Leisure Centre; namely Surrey Hills Solicitors as and when required;

Cllr Dye questioned whether this was a decision or a recommendation to Full Council. The Clerk stated that in her opinion that whilst matters discussed could be moved on up to a limit of £5k, further expenditure, personnel and legal issues would have to be approved by Full Council via a recommendation from the Committee.

**It was proposed by Cllr Whitear, seconded by Cllr Flores-Moore and AGREED by all present that the Finance & General Purposes Committee would RECOMMEND APPROVAL to Full Council of the items namely, drawings of the proposals, consultation, legal and tendering procedures, the appointment of a commercial contractor to take forward the proposals as outlined and the appointment of Surrey Hills Solicitors as the Council's legal representatives in relation to the Leisure Centre and land, and with the Piper Trust. The Clerk to further progress matters prior to the Council's approval so far as possible to ensure that matters did not stall.**

## **FG93/10/18 CHRISTMAS EVENT**

The Clerk informed Members that the Group assembled were progressing the Christmas event with lots of interest. The purpose of the discussion was to inform members that it is proposed that Cllr Graham Watkins will be the responsible person in terms of the Temporary Events Notice but Cllr Michael Neale will act alongside Cllr Watkins in producing the Risk Assessment for the event. The Council's insurance company have indicated that the event will be insured under the Council's public liability insurance and would include indemnity for Cllrs Watkins and Neale as the main organisers.

Income for sponsorship and stalls will be progressed through the Council's accounts as notified by the organisers. Our thanks to all who have come forward to assist.

Cllr Dye asked about expenditure in relation to the event, the Clerk's response was that any expenditure would reflect the sponsorship received via businesses and also stall income. The event normally whilst not making a profit did break even.

**It was RESOLVED by all present that Cllrs. Neale and Watkins should be appointed by the Council as the organisers of the Southwater Christmas Festival and that the Council's insurance should indemnify them against any claim. Further that the Clerk should monitor the income and expenditure to ensure that there be no deficit to the Council.**

#### **FG94/10/18 POLICING MATTERS**

The Clerk referred to correspondence sent to Members re both the Sussex Association Meeting with the Chief Constable for which she had received one response, but also the fact that the Council could feed back into the Joint Action Group meeting (JAG).

**Members NOTED the information provided.**

#### **FG95/10/18 COMMUNITY WARDENS**

The Chairman indicated that there had been a visit to meet with Pulborough Parish Council's Clerk to obtain their thoughts directly about the scheme in place within that community. The meeting answered he believed most of the questions raised by Councillors. The Clerk stated that having now received responses to the Roles and Responsibilities she would be convening another meeting of the Working Party. Cllr Timson stated that she would be going out with the two wardens the following week, but was concerned that the whole process was dragging on.

**The Clerk to organise a further meeting of the Working Party now that Councillors had met with outside representatives and received comments back from the working party.**

#### **FG96/10/18 PERSONNEL & PENSIONS**

##### WSSC Local Government Pensions Scheme

The Council has been informed that it will require a Grievance Policy regarding complaints in relation to the Pension Scheme in terms of information requested from the scheme. The Clerk stated that of late the Council and its staff were experiencing long delays in the resolution of queries raised.

**The Committee NOTED the comments and asked the Clerk to produce a Draft Grievance Scheme for future discussion.**

**FG97/10/18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018**

**The meeting closed at 8.26pm.**

**Signed.....**

**Chairman – Finance & General Purposes Committee**

**Dated.....**