

**The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> February 2013 at Beeson House, Lintot Square, Southwater commencing at 7.30 pm.**

**Chairman: Mr.P.Buckley**

**Councillors: Mr.L.Apted Mr.A.Bull  
Dr.A.Cash Mrs.P.Flores-Moore  
Mr.A.Prosser-Snelling Mr.B.Sunderland**

**County: Apologies provided by Cllr B.Watson OBE**

**District: Apologies provided by Cllrs.I.Howard, Dr.J.Chidlow**

**Clerk: Mrs. C. Tobin**

**Press: Not present**

**Public: 6**

**Police: Apologies received.**

**FG164/02/13 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

**The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting and then highlighted the housekeeping rules and also the fact that mobile phones should be switched off during the meeting, members of the public not being permitted to tape or film meetings of the Council.**

Dr.Cash said that he was delighted to inform the Committee that with the pressure the Clerk's office had maintained in relation to potholes and road repairs some of the repairs have been carried out. However, the pothole outside of the village hall was growing ever bigger. The Clerk stated that she had been informed that this was to be repaired, but that she would chase the County Council Highways Department on this matter.

Mrs.Flores-Moore said that whilst she knew the Clerk's office was reporting the matter of flooding in Blakes Farm Road, she too had telephoned the County Council in relation to this matter. As a local responder the fact that when it rained this area was out of action, put minutes on her journey to attend an incident. The Clerk indicated that she had been informed by the County officer responsible for Southwater that this was due to development causing a problem with changes to the water table in the area, especially since Oakhurst Part II had been completed; this also being the lowest point in that area. However, only today another resident had contacted the Clerk's office to contradict this information, she having heard from the County that it was after all drainage problems. The Clerk would be contacting the County Council the next day to get a definitive answer to what was causing the flooding at this point.

Mrs.Flores-Moore also reported the every increasing mud on the road from the various developments both at the Golf Park and to the north and south of the village. **At this point in the meeting Mrs.Flores-Moore declared an interest in this matter due to the fact that she was a shareholder of Barratts.**

Mr.Bull said that in defence of the Highways Department they had a mammoth task in trying to keep up with the potholes. The one he thought was particularly bad was the hole outside of the District Council offices in North Street. Dr.Cash said that if they did a better job in the temporary fills in the first instance, then perhaps they wouldn't reoccur so shortly thereafter.

**It was RESOLVED by all present that standing orders be suspended in order to allow members of the public to speak.**

Mr.Chapman, Chairman of Southwater Action Team thanked the Committee for allowing him to speak, and indicated that he would like to speak on two items, Items 11 and 12 on the Agenda. Mr.Chapman wondered whether it was appropriate to deal with this at that point or later in the meeting. The Chairman of the meeting felt that he would rather take this at the appropriate point in the meeting and he would suspend standing orders to ensure that members of the public could speak.

Mrs.Tydd indicated that she too had come to discuss her concerns about the proposals under Item 11, but that she would like to be away from the meeting at 8.30pm due to child care arrangements. The Chairman felt that this would be possible.

**Standing Orders were reinstated.**

**FG165/02/13**

**APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Mr.R.Jackman, and Mrs.C.Vickers.

**Members noted the apologies.**

**FG166/02/13**

**DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

No declarations at this point, with the exception of Mrs.Flores-Moore who had reported issues in relation to developers. Mrs.Flores-Moore being a shareholder in one of the developers concerned.

**FG167/02/13**

**CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman indicated that there still remained a vacancy on the Parish Council for a Councillor.

The Clerk referred members to general correspondence received and asked whether Members wished to comment on any particular item. The Councillors present had no matter they wished to raise.

Lintot Square, Bicycle Stands

The Clerk informed Members that the metal bicycle stands which had been removed had been returned. The Estates Manager is asking that these not be put back in front of the vacancy double unit. The Clerk would like to suggest that a suitable sport would be outside Beeson House, close to the seating and notice board.

**It was RESOLVED that the Council would like to suggest to the District Council's Estates Manager that these bicycles be repositioned outside of Beeson House. The Clerk to hold a site meeting with the Estates Manager.**

Horsham District Council Draft Green Space Strategy 2013/2023

The Clerk referred to the District Council's Draft Green Space Strategy which was out for consultation with Parish Councils and other community groups.

Having read the document whilst there were some excellent elements and proposals, there were a number of concerns or issues which should be addressed from within the document:-

Page 16 – Management Proposal states “the management of a green space by a management company is not recommended however, if it is the only option, then arrangements should be set up to ensure that the same standards of inspection and maintenance are adhered to, and a bond required from developers to protect the Council against the demise of the management company.

Whilst the Clerk feels that this is a step in the right direction, a response that this option should only be taken following the rejection of adoption of the land and commuted sums by the parish council. In addition any such agreement should have no connection with the developer and that the management company be constituted of those living in the development.

Page 19 – Sports Facilities states “The Councils preferred approach is to encourage sports clubs to take direct responsibility for the ongoing management and maintenance of these areas wherever possible”. The Clerk would advise that any public open space should be firstly offered to the parish council for that area, who could then let to the sports club concerned at a peppercorn rental thereby not incurring any additional costs to the public purse but safe guarding such land for the benefit of the inhabitants of a location should the sports club not succeed and dissolve.

Page 65 – Community Facilities Contributions – it is “recommended that a list of open space, sport and recreation needs and projects which would address this need is created per parish over a ten year period, to include location, funding required and timescale of delivery.”

There is considerable mention about Southwater Country Park and partnership work with the Parish Council.

The Clerk would like the views of members in relation to this document enabling her to respond to such matters prior to the deadline of 5<sup>th</sup> March there being no Full Council meeting in February.

**It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should respond on behalf of the Council itemising the concerns raised with the hope that these comments will be taken on board by the District Council when formalising their strategy, this being one of the documents which will then be built into the new planning regime.**

Community Engagement

The Clerk reported that having attended the District Council’s Cabinet Meeting she had written to the District Council raising concerns about the proposals for the District and County Councils in writing the draft Memorandum of Understandings between Town and Parish Councils and their respective community partnerships. The Clerk has informed on behalf of the Council that any such discussions should include the Director of the Sussex Association of Local Councils, for he had only recently assisted Southwater Parish Council in relation to the existing agreement between the Parish Council and Southwater Action Team. Unfortunately, this document is awaiting comment from the Action Team at the present time, but it will be interesting to note any significant changes being proposed in any new document and what the remit of the partnerships is to be. The District Council will require such partnerships to have such a memorandum of understanding in order that both partners will work towards the benefit of local inhabitants.

At the meeting the Clerk also heard that the District Council were intending to earmark in their reserves the New Homes Bonus, and that unless she was mistaken there could be a proposal that some of these monies be put towards the new Broadbridge Heath Leisure facility. The Clerk has written again on behalf of the Council to remind the District Council, that the Governments intention is that there should be a discussion where such monies are received with the local community (parish council where it exists) as to what such monies should be spent on in that locality. The Clerk has asked for a breakdown on the sum received in relation to New Homes Bonus for Southwater and awaits a response to this question.

WSSC Consultation on Highways and Transport Draft Works Programme

The Clerk referred to the schedules provided previously and asked for clarification in relation to any addition items that the Parish Council wish to have considered in relation to this consultation other than:-

- Extension to pedestrian footway – Blakes Farm Road
- Provision of a footway/cycleway over A24

The Clerk referred members to the previous parish plans which indicated the need for a circular walkway around the parish and also the provision of cycle ways to encourage children and others to cycle. The Parish Council may also wish to discuss whether or not they would like to have a 20 mph speed restriction on roads within Southwater.

Dr.Cash stated that he thought it was the aim of the Parish Council to have 30 mph throughout the village the exception being outside of the schools, and that the Statutory authority responsible should be providing information and advice on this. The Clerk suggested that the Southwater Road Safety Partnership would be the best forum, as it was to receive back comments on the concerns of residents within the next few weeks; a meeting would then take place.

Dr.Cash felt that the contract standards were poor and this in turn meant that the County Council were having to spend even more time and effort in then carry out repairs.

Members felt that the Clerk should put forward a cycleway project forward something which would enable local residents and children to cycle in and around the parish.

**The Clerk to respond to the West Sussex County Council consultation reaffirming those items which did not currently appear on the listing, eg., A24 walkway/cycleway bridge, extension to the Blakes Farm Road pedestrian footway to Hangman’s Hill and the provision of a cycle path in Cedar Drive/Worthing Road.**

Southwater Parkour

An email had been received from a group of young people providing links to their ‘parkour’ activities within Horsham; this being considered an extreme street sport. The Clerk believes that the Youth Project had engaged with some of these young people from Southwater and that these individuals had attended a course on how if they can do some of their moves safely.

The Clerk has limited knowledge of such venues and facilities around the country but would suggest that this was more a District wide need and should be referred to the District Council for progression.

Mrs.Flores-Moore said that she had been horrified when she had seen the footage, with one young person jumping into the road and jumping from various buildings and obstacles in the Carfax. The young people should have more respect for the property owners as she was sure that some of this could be illegal especially if they trespassed onto private land.

Mr.Prosser-Snelling said that he felt that whilst it was unacceptable to damage other people's property this was a growing problem not only in Horsham but also Southwater and perhaps a venue would be the answer. Mr.Prosser-Snelling also had limited knowledge of what such a venue could look and feel like but may give the young people a safer environment where they could practice. It was obvious to him having spoken to someone who had travelled from Brighton to use the Southwater Skatepark, that young people were coming into the village and would take park in such activities.

Mr.Buckley felt that the Clerk's suggestion that this firstly be considered by the District Council would be appropriate, the Parish Council having little by way of knowledge or expertise in such activities; other members agreed with this point of view.

**At this point it was RESOLVED by all present that Standing Orders be suspended to allow members of the public to speak on this matter.**

Mr.Brown stated that he was a tenant in Lintot Square, and he was concerned about the young people's activities in the Square, they were indeed trespassing on private land including the wall of the Lintot Public House. The main problem was that when spoken to there was little respect from the young people themselves; this matter should therefore be reported to the police.

The Clerk stated that she had brought this matter to the attention of the Southwater Youth Worker and local PCSO.

**Standing Orders were reinstated.**

Members of Council asked the Clerk to report the resident's comments to the local police team and youth worker.

**It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should write to the District Council passing on the information provided by the young people, asking that Leisure Services consider the request, the local authority being better positioned to provide such activities within the District.**

**The Clerk to write to the young people thanking them for forwarding the information, and that the Committee having considered the matter was to ask Horsham District Council to look at the young people's proposal.**

Church of the Holy Innocents

The Rev.Kesari Godfrey has written to enquire whether the Parish Council would like to hold a Civic Ceremony in the Parish Church.

The Clerk stated that the District Council held such a service at St.Mary's; this normally fell around the election of the new Chairman. The service would give thanks for the Council, Councillors, Staff and those who worked within the community.

Dr.Cash felt that the Council should take up this kind offer, and suggested a possible date around Sussex Day (16<sup>th</sup> June). Mr.Buckley said this would be appropriate as it followed the Council's Annual Meeting where the Chairman of Council was elected.

**It was RESOLVED by all present, with the exception of Mrs.Flores-Moore who abstained that the Council would like to take up the Church's offer of a Civic Ceremony in the Parish Church on or around Sussex Day (16<sup>th</sup> June 2013).**

Public Sector Show 2013

The Clerk asked if any member wished to attend these FREE to attend seminars and presentations to be held in London on 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2013. Dr.Cash indicated that he would be willing to attend on behalf of the Council.

**It was RESOLVED by all present that Dr.Cash represent the Council at these seminars and presentations. The Clerk would ensure that Dr.Cash was booked on the day.**

**FG169/02/13**

**MINUTES**

**It was RESOLVED by all present that the Minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2013 be approved as a true and correct record of the meeting, with the following appendix to FG154/01/13 in relation to the Local Plan this being correspondence received from the DCLG provide information to the planning authorities outline the position.**

**FG170/02/13**

**ACCOUNTS & FINANCIAL MATTERS**

The Clerk presented to Members the Bank Reconciliation Information, Income and Expenditure and Debtors Listing to the 13<sup>th</sup> February 2013 and asked if Members had any questions.

**It was RESOLVED by all present that the documents as listed and provided by the Clerk represented a true and correct reflection of the Council's financial affairs as at 13<sup>th</sup> February 2013.**

**FG171/02/13**

**ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

The Clerk presented a payment schedule to 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2013 in the sum of £11576.13.

Mrs.Flores-Moore questioned the figure payable to the Bowls Club. The Clerk responded that this matter related to the repayment of the difference in the grant provided to carry out works to the Bowls Club Annexe.

**It was RESOLVED by all present that the payment schedules dated 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2013 be approved in the sum of £11576.13.**

**SPONSORSHIP OF COUNCIL WEBSITE**

**FG172/02/13**

The Clerk stated that she was delighted to confirm that in conjunction with Zurich Insurance Company, Tennyson Insurance had offered to sponsor the Parish Council's website in the sum of £300. This would include the signposting of an advert on the Council's website and newsletter and the hosting of one risk day. The proposed sponsorship price also offers an additional uncapped revenue stream with commission payment on any sales generated through signposting a charity or community group to Tennyson, any charity or community group also benefiting by a 5% discount.

Tennyson would also wish to place an advertisement in our newsletter.

With regard to the risk days, the Parish Council would supply a room free of charge whilst Tennyson would organise a training risk day with buffet lunch for those charities and village organisations who wished to take part and based on an agenda raised by them.

Dr.Cash stated that he had discussed the website with the Clerk and knew that there were modifications being discussed with the provider, he would rather use such monies in creating a new website; he did not believe that the current website delivered.

Mr.Prosser-Snelling was of the opinion that having budgeted for the cost, it was not imperative that the Council received income but rather maintained an independent website for the community. Mr.Bull felt that it would remain independent, and that the Clerk had merely tried to obtain sponsorship rather than use the budget allowed; this money could be used elsewhere to benefit the community.

Mr.Buckley stated that he felt that it was an opportunity which the Council should take advantage of both in terms of the finance it would bring in towards the cost of the website and potential revenue stream. Dr.Cash felt that the Parish Council would be obliged to the insurance company concerned, this being the insurance company used by the Action Team. The Clerk stated that there was no contractual element other than the sponsorship

and that the Council's insurance company were Zurich Insurance. This contract having been tendered during the last year using the agreed tendering processes, three companies had been approached with two having tendered; the Clerk reminded Members of that discussion.

There would be added benefit to the community in terms of local charities and community groups accessing the free information/risk day which would be held in Southwater. The Council would obtain revenue from any subsequent insurance bought through the website.

**At this point a vote on the question of sponsorship took place, Mr.Bull proposed that the Committee approve the sponsorship of the website by Tennyson Insurance, this was voted in favour by, Mr.Sunderland, Mrs.Flores-Moore, Mr.Buckley, Mr.Bull and Mr.Apted. Against this motion were Dr.Cash and Mr.Prosser-Snelling. The Vote was carried in favour of the sponsorship arrangement.**

**It was RESOLVED that the Council would enter into a sponsorship arrangement with Tennyson Insurance for the period of one year. The Clerk to make the necessary arrangements.**

**FG173/02/13****COMMUNITY EVENTS**

The Clerk advised Councillors that with such a budget and deadlines to be met this financial year, it would not be possible for her office to manage any summer community event with all personnel fully occupied on differing projects all of which must be achieved this financial year if budgets are to be met.

The Clerk indicated however, that it would be possible to facilitate the annual skatejam which due to the condition of the skatepark the previous year had been postponed. Having discussed this potential event with colleagues at the District Council, it would be possible to put on a joint event on the Sunday of the second week in September. The Clerk would therefore like permission from the Committee to discuss this matter further with colleagues and the other community partners who assist in such activities.

**It was RESOLVED that the Clerk would organise through her office the annual Skatejam and that she should liaise with colleagues at the District Council.**

**The Big Lunch – Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2013**

Following the success last year of the Big Lunch Jubilee Event, it is proposed to hold another The Big Lunch organisation is promoting another event in communities on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2013. Details of the proposals can be found on facebook, twitter etc., and via the Big Lunch website ([www.thebiglunch.com](http://www.thebiglunch.com)).

Should local communities wish to organise such events on Parish Council owned land, the Clerk would like to know the position of the Council in order to discuss this further with residents should they enquire. For example written permission should be sought, risk assessments completed and insurance taken out by the organisers for the days events in order to protect the interest of the parish council.

**It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council would allow local residents to apply to hold such events free of charge on their land. Any request to be received in writing and subject to the organisers having the necessary risk assessments and insurance for the event.**

**FG174/02/13**

**RURAL CAR PARKING**

The Clerk informed Members that the Council had received an invitation from the Cabinet Members and Director to attend a meeting to discuss rural car parking in Southwater, one car park being noted although not identified. As such the Chairman of Council had suggested that as it was the Council the District Council Member and Director wished to have a meeting with that the committee decided whether or not to meet with them.

The Clerk stated that prior to the development of Lintot Square, it had been stressed to the District Council both then and since, that having made the £25M investment, the Parish Council would not wish to see imposed car parking charges, as this would have a detrimental affect on the local economy of the village centre. The Clerk reminded those present that the Lintot Square development was owned by the District Council. It is believed that no charge can be imposed on the area by the Co-Operative and Lintot car park area because of clauses in their agreements.

The Clerk reminded Members of the recent survey carried out on behalf of the District Council by Southwater Action Team, which if she recalled indicated that only 10% of those visiting the square did so from outside the area, therefore charges would be made against local residents of Southwater if imposed.

The Clerk asked Members whether they wished to meet with the District Council Cabinet Member and Director, and if so did they have a preferred date and secondly did Members wish the Clerk to reaffirm the Council's policy in that it would resist any parking charges within Lintot Square.

The Clerk further informed members that the Southwater Infant Academy had expressed concerns in that they thought that it was the Parish Council considering imposing such charges. The Clerk has telephoned to speak to the Headteacher and has explained that this is not the case and that any decision would be that of the District Council, who own the land if indeed this proposal was taken forward. The Clerk explained the current policy of the parish council. The Headteacher is concerned that local parents who park in the car park would be penalised by such a move putting increased pressure

on the car parking in and around the school.

Other local residents having noted the agenda item would also like to state that they would support the parish council in objecting to any proposals to impose parking charges on Lintot Square.

Mr.Bull said that he was very concerned in that should the Parish Council agree to such a meeting this was effectively giving the District Council the green light that the Council were open to discussions, his view was that there simply should be no charges imposed on the Lintot Square car park.

Mr.Buckley reminded Members of the current policy in place in that the Parish Council currently oppose any parking charges in the Square. Dr.Cash stated that in his view the policy was quite clear and that the Parish Council should advertise this fact so that there can be no misconception from the general public. Mrs.Flores-Moore asked whether or not the District Council could impose such parking charges. Mr.Buckley stated that the District did own the land and could effectively charge if they so wished, but this Council should strenuously defend against this. Mrs.Flores-Moore felt that if such a proposal were to go ahead, the District Council would be shooting themselves in the foot, due to the fact that this would deter shoppers and residents from using the square, leaving even more empty shops there being one currently empty. Mr.Apted agreed that it was imperative that there be no charges imposed.

Mr.Buckley highlighted the issue in that the District Council had much to lose by such a proposal both in terms of rental and service charges from the retailers, who would undoubtedly lose business if charges were imposed, they had after all invested £25M in the development only some 7 years ago.

**At this point in the meeting the Chairman suspended Standing Orders to allow Members of the Public to speak on this matter.**

Mr.Chapman stated that he had been surprised to hear of this proposed meeting because having attended a recent Rural Towns Forum it had been made clear to him by the car parking officer at District Council that there was no such move afoot as they would need to employ a Rural Car parking Manager. Mr.Bull said that this had also been reiterated at a meeting with the Chief Executive Officer who at a recent meeting had stated he had no knowledge of such a proposal! It was more important that if there was an issue, which this Council did not believe there was that regular parking enforcement took place, this could resolve the problem.

Mr.Chapman stated that he believed that the residents/retailers in Lintot Square already paid service charges which included repairs to the car parking, surely then if this proposal by the District Council took place this could be 'double dipping'. Mr.Chapman also indicated that the Clerk's recollection of the recent survey had been correct, indeed the majority of those using the car park came from within 1 Kilometer of the RH13 9 post

code; these were local people who would be penalised. If indeed the charges were made, this would have a much more dramatic affect on Southwater which was slightly different than the other market towns which had a High Street. Many of the retailers told him that they were struggling and such a proposal would only increase that struggle.

Mrs.Tydd and another local resident said that she would also like to add her voice in that she and other parents would be opposed to any parking charges within the Square, it would have a detrimental affect not only on the Square itself but on parking outside the schools in the Worthing Road. Many of the parents parked in the square at school drop off and pick ups alleviating the problems in the Worthing Road.

Mrs.Priebe, Vice Chairman of Southwater Action Team, said she recalled the time when her children were younger and there had been a major traffic problem in the Worthing Road at such times. This proposal would obviously just bring added chaos to the current situation, which to an extent the Square alleviated.

**At this point Standing Orders were reinstated.**

Mr.Buckley proposed that the Council should respond to the District Council in relation to the proposed meeting that they would vigorously oppose any parking charges within Lintot Square and therefore do not consider a meeting necessary. The Council should ensure that this message was relayed within the community, ensuring that the community get behind this matter.

**It was RESOLVED by all present that the Clerk should respond to the District Council's Cabinet Member stating that it was the Parish Council's policy to vigorously oppose any parking charges within Lintot Square, as this would affect not only the local economy but also the social environment of the village.**

**FG175/02/13**

**SOUTHWATER STREET**

The Clerk reported that following the Council's resolution that the Parish Council would object to the District Council's abandonment of the Compulsory Purchase Order proceedings on land adjacent to Blakes Farm Cottage in Southwater Street, a meeting with the Chief Executive Officer had been arranged.

The Parish Council representatives had attended this meeting in the belief that a proposal on how the funding of any litigation could be addressed, this being one of the concerns of the District Council in the present economic climate. In turn the District's Chief Executive had thought that the Parish Council were willing to fund this possible litigation.

The Chairman informed Members that it had been necessary to inform the Chief Executive that the Parish Council could not fund such litigation, it

having no ownership on the land and that the Parish Council had a fiduciary duty to the entire electorate of the parish. The Parish Council's policy was that it would provide £25k to purchase the land should the District Council be successful in acquiring the land through compulsory purchase processes.

Dr.Cash referred to the Parish Council's powers and duties in relation to the acquisition of land. The Clerk stated that she had sought advice on this matter, and the fact was that whilst the Parish Council could use its power to acquire land, it did not have the power to enter into what could be effectively an open litigation situation as it had no ownership of the land at the present time. If this matter appertained to Council owned property etc., then this would be a different matter. The Council had only one duty and that was to consider the provision of allotments. The Council would still meet its obligations in relation to the local residents and its resolution, but only subject to the District Council being successful in applying for a Compulsory Purchase Order.

Mr.Bull stated that it was quite evident that the District Council did not intend to take this action and had taken legal Counsel on this matter. It was a matter of record that the District Council had resolved to undertake this process, but had failed to do so in the interim years. The District state that this was because of the two appeals on the land, but in his opinion there had been opportunities and people had been let down. The fact is that the Parish Council could not gamble with tax payer's money, when this affected so few residents.

Mr.Buckley said that the District effectively feel that they could withstand future applications, due to the two appeals being upheld by Planning Inspectors. Mrs.Flores-Moore said that then mean that there could be no future development on the site. The Clerk stated that it was not possible to do so, as each application received would have to be considered by the Planning Authority on its own merits.

Mrs.Flores-Moore said that she had thought that originally the land had been owned by the District Council, so why did they sell this to another when they knew about the bund which had been subject to a planning condition. The Clerk stated that so far as she was aware, the owner at one time had been Southwater Properties who had in turn sold this to the current owner. Other areas of land had been sold to AXA Insurance. It may be that Mrs.Flores-Moore's recollections were correct.

**At this point in the meeting it was RESOLVED by all present to suspend Standing Orders to allow members of the public to speak on this matter.**

Mr.Chapman said that this matter had been discussed by the Action Team Committee and the acquisition of this land had been identified within the Parish Plan, therefore not by just a few people in response to Mr.Bull's comments. This plan had been adopted by both the Parish and District

Council's. Mr.Bull said that it was unfair to blame this on the Parish Council who had continued to support the residents in their endeavours and provide monies should the land become available.

The Clerk in response to Mr.Chapman stated whilst he was correct that the Parish Council had adopted the Parish Plan, the Parish Council did not have the power to process the Compulsory Purchase Order, nor pay for such litigation this was the responsibility of the District Council. The Parish Council's policy did ensure that if the land were acquired then £25k would be used to purchase the land from the District Council. The Parish Council had therefore subject to the District Council acquiring the land ensured that they had complied so far as possible with the adopted plan. Advice had been sought and given to the local residents in that their course of action would be through the Local Government Ombusman. The Parish Council has written to the District Council expressing their dismay at the decisions and delays which were caused in this matter, leading to community aspirations not being realised through the inactivity of the District Council.

**It was RESOLVED that the Clerk respond on behalf of the Council to the Chief Executive Office of the District Council stating that should the District Council progress the compulsory purchase order process then the Parish Council would commit £25k towards the purchase of land from the District Council. The Parish Council would not pay towards any litigation costs incurred by the District Council. The Parish Council would reiterate again the Parish Council's strong concerns that having resolved to take forward the matter, the District Council had not undertaken this in accordance with that resolution.**

**Two members of the public left the chamber at this point.**

**FG176/02/13**

**COUNCIL PREMISES & LAND**

Church Lane, Southwater

The Clerk informed members that an approach had again been received from Shayler's Funfair in that they Funfair would like to visit Southwater from 31<sup>st</sup> May until 3/4<sup>th</sup> June 2013. The preferred site again being Church Lane playing fields. The Clerk stated that she had received no detrimental reports for the previous two years either from residents or police and therefore had no objection to this proposition, subject to the rent being agreed and permissions sought from the Council's landlords and tenant (Southwater Football Club). The relevant risk assessments and insurance documentation would also be supplied prior to any event taking place.

**It was RESOLVED by all present that the Council let to Shayler's Funfair land in Church Lane between the 31<sup>st</sup> May until 3/4<sup>th</sup> June 2013, at a rental to be formally agreed, but subject to the necessary permissions being sought and obtained.**

Easteds Barn

The Clerk indicated that she was currently awaiting the Council's consultants report on noise attenuation, when this was received it would be submitted to the planning department, who require to approve this prior to full permission being provided to the Parish Council.

Members were reminded of the slight amendment to the proposed plan to provide an additional fire exit; this being based on the Parish Council's consultants view in terms of building control. However, the plan provided does not match that submitted for planning permission in that a set of double doors has not been shown; this will be rectified. Dr.Cash on reviewing the premises in terms of fire safety does not feel that the additional fire exit will be required should these doors be shown and with the proposal by the Council to install a small fire safety and alarm system within the barn.

Irrespective of the error in the drawing provided, in the Clerk's opinion and subject to building regulations the Clerk would consider that the Council should include this additional fire exit in order to ensure the safety of any person using the barn, by providing an additional exit, which whilst may not be required under regulations may be appropriate.

Dr. Cash stated that he had looked at this in terms of the Building Act 1954 and felt that it was not necessary with the correct plan and fire systems put in place, the Council wanted to maximise the potential use. This was his professional opinion having been in the fire industry for over 25 years and a member of the Instiute.

Mr.Bull said that he was slightly nervous with only one fire door from the hall, Dr.Cash stated that once the Clerk had spoken to the consultant there would be two doors and one into the kitchen. This was what had been submitted by Brett Associates and fully met with the building and fire regulations in his view.

**It was RESOLVED by all that the Clerk would speak to the relevant consultants ensuring that any plan submitted to the Planning Authority and Building Control complied with the previous permission granted as submitted by Brett Associates.**

Southwater Montessori Lease

The Clerk was delighted to confirm that this matter has now been fully resolved with all relevant legal documentation completed and sent to Mrs.Bredie. The lease running from 29<sup>th</sup> August 2012 until 1st June 2016 at an annual rental of £18,000 per annum.

**Members noted the completion of the lease arrangements.**

Trees - 32 Eversfield, Southwater

The heave report has now been received and forwarded to our insurers. The tenders have been received in relation to the proposed trees works:-

<b>Contractor</b>	<b>Price £ (excluding VAT)</b>
Absolute Arboriculture	480.00
KPS	500.00
Connick Tree Care	759.00
George Potbury	876.00
County Tree Surgeons Ltd	975.00

It was reported that the contractor who had quoted the least was known to one of the Councillors in that they had carried out works to their property. **At this point Mr.Alex Prosser-Snelling declared an interest and took no part in the decision as to which contractor should be appointed.**

Dr.Cash said that he was delighted that this local contractor had met the insurance requirements of the Parish Council and that the Committee should be considering best value.

**It was RESOLVED by all present that the contract be awarded to Absolute Arboriculture in the sum of £480.00.**

Beeson House

The Council's solicitors have returned the sum of £300.08 paid on account in relation to search fees. Whilst it is hoped to progress the lease negotiations during the coming months, the Council's solicitors because of account purposes felt the need to return the monies to the Council due to the fact that this matter may not be progressed during the current financial period.

Members questioned the Chairman in relation to the lease negotiations in relation to the Parish Council's occupation of Beeson House. The Chairman stated that he believed from the Clerk that nearly all the works were complete, the exception being ground works to the front elevation of the car park which still flooded and had no drainage. Once these were complete he would expect the Clerk would enter into further discussions with a view to progressing the lease. The Clerk confirm that this was the situation and once the outstanding works were complete that a meeting would be held with District Council officers to progress matters. The Clerk would then instruct solicitors accordingly and report to Council.

**Members noted the current position with regards to the lease arrangements for Beeson House.**

The Clerk referred Member's to the quarterly return issued by the Community Organiser's Host Organisation.

Two hundred and forty two listenings have taken place, one active volunteer, five practical action projects in development and six campaign action projects in the planning. The Clerk informed members that whilst these projects may be progressing, her office were not aware of the projects or issues/concerns being raised by residents of the parish. The concern remained that at the end of the tenure that having raised the local residents expectations and aspirations that these projects etc., may then rest with the Parish Council, with the expectation that these unidentified projects can be delivered.

A number of residents have also questioned the relationship between the Organisers and the Parish Council, with many with the view that the Organisers are being directed by the Parish Council. The Clerk has made the position clear in this respect and referred those residents to the Organisers website and host organisation, Southwater Community Methodist Church.

The Clerk informed Members that as previously instructed the Clerk had spoken to the Chief Executive Officer at Locality whilst attending the same conference, and expressed the Council's previously stated concerns about information sharing and the need to co-exist, work and act together to bring about the maximum social capital and benefit of this publicly funded organisation. The Chief Executive of Locality indicated to the Clerk that he had received a number of similar requests from other parishes who were also benefiting from such social interaction and that he would ensure that someone contacted the Parish Council to discuss its concerns.

Mr.Bull said that when he and Dr.Cash had tried at previous meetings with the organisers to tease out how the £100k of public funds was to be spent and reported upon, they had not received definitive answers. They had also asked what had happened to the monies following the departure of the fifth worker. The Clerk reported that she had previously informed Members that this money had been returned she believed to Locality, and was not being retained by the Host organisation.

Dr.Cash said that it was interesting to see that three of the workers had spent more than the one who had produced the most and that the money being expended was rather a lot when they had converted only one volunteer. A general discussion then ensued about the report itself. Mr.Prosser-Snelling said that having looked into the project, it was obvious that they were using a well tried out listening technique in order to engage with the general public and if this generated more social interaction this was great. It was however imperative that any projects were sustainable and this was he believed one of the objectives in that local people would be motivated to take these forward. Mr.Prosser-Snelling did however, state that it was also imperative that there

was good communication and exchanges between both the organisers and the Parish Council to make this more effective.

Dr.Cash reiterated his concerns that with the Parish Council having made inroads into ensuring that residents in Christ's Hospital needs were being met, the fact was that the Organisers do not visit this area but concentrate on the main village of Southwater.

It was suggested that the Parish Council invite the Host Line Manager, Clair Fisher to a meeting in June to discuss the progress of the group; this being prior to the August recess.

**It was RESOLVED by all present that the Clerk should invite Clair Fisher of the Organisers Host Organisation to the June meeting of the Parish Council in order that she may brief the Parish Council on the work of the group at that point.**

**Three members of public left at this point.**

**FG178/02/13**

**HEALTH & SAFETY**

The Clerk informed Members that there had been a football accident resulting in a RIDDOR report being submitted to the Health & Safety Executive.

**Members noted that action taken by the Leisure Centre Manager in this respect.**

**FG179/02/13**

**POLICE**

PCSO Cecil would inform the Council that there are no major issues of which he is aware within the parish. A slight increase in crimes over the same period in January 2012.

Mr.Prosser-Snelling informed members of an incident outside of the Junior Academy in the Worthing Road and commended the actions and advice of the Southwater PCSO Damian Cecil.

It was suggested that the Council should invite the new Chief Inspector for the Horsham District to a future meeting of Council.

Mr.Bull asked whether there was any further movement on a possible replacement PCSO for Southwater. The Clerk stated that other than what had been reported previously, there was none with the Chief Inspector being a temporary appointment. Mr.Bull stated he was concerned about the continuity for it appeared that these appointments of late were only temporary.

Members felt that the Clerk should write to the new Police Commissioner regarding the failure to reappoint a second PCSO for Southwater. The Clerk

asked whether Members also wished to approach Trevor Leggo of the Sussex Association of Local Councils, members felt that they did not at the present time.

**Members noted the police statistics provided.**

**FG180/02/13**

**LIBRARY PROJECT\*\***

The Chairman reported on the continuing negotiations with the County Council in relation to the Library project.

The plans had been agreed and instructions issued to the appointed consultant in order to progress a building control application. The Clerk has written to the District Council to seek formal permissions. The Clerk and the Senior Officer representing the County Council will ensure that the legal agreement in relation to the licence to the Parish Council of the upper library will be commenced; solicitors will be consulted and instructed, once formal permission from the Council's landlord Horsham District Council is received. The Chairman indicated that it was hoped that all going well with the necessary legal process and permissions that this project could be completed by 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2013.

A short discussion then took place about the potential value from volunteers, the Clerk reported that the Library service had their full quota of volunteers to assist the two workers within the Southwater Library. Further discussions on the actual increase in hours would take place as part of the discussions which were on-going.

**Council noted and approved the continuing progress in relation to the Library Project this being to convert the upper floor of the library into the youth facility and create new offices to the existing youth facility.**

**FG181/02/13**

**YOUTH PROJECT\*\***

The Clerk reported that the Youth Steering Group bank account had now been transferred to the Parish Council, pending a decision by the Youth Club's Management Board as to whether they wish to take over the role of the Steering Group. As such the Clerk has instigated procedures in accordance with those of the Council in relation to the youth club petty cash and banking. The youth worker has been advised of the process for ordering and that a discussion on any such expenditure should be held with the Clerk to ensure that there are adequate funds available in the ring-fenced account where the monies are being held. Members will note until transfer out of any monies to the Management Board that a separate Petty Cash account has been raised along with a ring-fenced cost centre which will show income and expenditure.

Dr.Cash questioned the Clerk as to why it had been necessary to disband the

Steering Group and whether the Management Group were best placed to take on this over reaching role. Mrs.Flores-Moore said that she had every confidence in the way the management group and individuals currently operated. It was a fact that the Youth Steering Group had become obsolete for the majority of the role was in the management of the Youth Worker and the provision of the facility.

The Clerk stated that the Management Committee were to consider whether or not they wished to form a Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee, as this would bring increased benefits to the overall youth project. Dr.Cash asked who exactly was on the Management Committee, the Clerk replied that the Parish Council were represented, along with the other church partners and Ian Howard as District Councillor.

**Councillors NOTED AND APPROVED the position with regards to the funds being held on behalf of the Youth Steering Group, this group having ceased to exist.**

**At this point in the meeting it was RESOLVED by all present that the Chairman exclude the press and public due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.**

**FG182/02/13 PENSION DISCRETIONS & POLICY DOCUMENT\*\***

“Confidential Note”

**FG183/02/13 PERSONNEL & TRAINING\*\***

**It was RESOLVED by all present that the Chairman suspend Standing Orders in order to discuss matters relating to personnel.**

“Confidential Note”

**FG184/02/13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next Finance & General Purposes Meeting will be **Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> March 2013.**

**The meeting closed at 9.58 pm.**