

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 4th March, 2015 at Beeson House, Lintot Square, Southwater commencing at 7.30 pm.

Chairman: Mr P. Buckley

**Councillors: Mr G. Cole Mrs.P.Flores-Moore
Mr.M.Neale**

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: Not present

FG25/03/15 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting and then highlighted the housekeeping rules and indicated that should anyone wish to film/record the proceedings could they make themselves known.

It was reported that a property in Blakes Farm Road was advertising that they were operating beauty business. The Clerk was asked to check this and report to planning enforcement.

The Clerk was asked whether the rubble left by SSE had been reported. The Clerk stated that it had. Mr.Cole suggested that should they fail to collect this rubble, then the Parish Council arrange for clearance and then invoice. The Clerk would ask her office to enquire as to current position.

FG26/03/15 APOLOGIES

There were apologies received and noted from Mr.Apted, Mr.Francies and Mr.Watkins.

Members NOTED AND APPROVED the apologies received.

FG27/03/15 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The Clerk referred Members of Council to information issued in relation to the Member's Code of Conduct and Standing Orders. This information contained a flow chart previously issued should assist Members in reaching their decision this not being overly complicated.

There were no declarations made at this point in the meeting.

Members NOTED the Clerk's comments and advice.

FG28/03/15 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman had no announcements.

FG29/03/15 CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk referred members to general correspondence received and asked whether Members wished to comment on any particular item.

Members NOTED the correspondence received.

Operation Watershed

The Clerk reported on meetings and conversations held with WSCC in relation to both Phase 1 of the Watershed grant provided and the proposed second grant application. The Clerk had discussed this with the County Councillor and would be pursuing this matter further.

Members NOTED the comments made by the Clerk and asked that she discuss this issue with the County Councillor to see whether he can find a solution.

FG30/03/15 MINUTES

It was RESOLVED by all present that the Minutes of the meeting held on 4th February 2015 be approved as a true and correct record of the meeting, following the change to the number sequencing which was incorrectly noted. The Clerk informed Members that the final sequence number was incorrect and should be amended according.

FG31/03/15 ACCOUNTS & FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Clerk provided Members with information on the current financial position of the Council to 4th March, 2015 including Income and Expenditure, Bank Balances and Trade Debtors. The Clerk stated that she was pleased to confirm that since the figures were issued both she and the new accounts assistant had closed February's accounts.

Members NOTED and APPROVED the Member's Financial Pack produced by the Clerk dated 4th March, 2015.

Cash Flow

Concerns were raised by the Clerk in that she was concerned that she may be required to transfer further funds on behalf of the council from deposit accounts. Mrs.Flores-Moore asked why this may be necessary, the Clerk responded that some budget items in relation to income had not achieved target mainly in relation to functions income. Mr.Cole said that perhaps the Council had over estimated the potential. Mr.Buckley stated that if necessary then he agreed that funds should be

transferred in accordance with existing delegated permissions, this being to himself, the Vice Chairman of the Committee and the Clerk. The Clerk indicated that there would be a number of vires required from ring-fenced at the end of year to cover costs in relation to public open space.

It was RESOLVED that the transfer of funds be made as and when required ensuring that sufficient funds remain in the Co-Operative Instant Account.

AiRS Employment Services 2015/16

The renewal fee for the HR Handbook will be £125 + VAT. Members were provided with the hourly rates proposed for advice from the AiRS HR Manager. The Clerk stated that this organisation continued to provide invaluable advice to the Council over various staffing matters.

It was APPROVED by all present that the Council should continue with the advice and HR Handbook provided by Action in Rural Sussex.

Southwater Neighbourhood Plan

The Clerk informed Members that a final draft document was to be reviewed by a number of people after which the preferred distributor/printer would be asked to evaluate the document to see whether the data collection required is feasible in terms of cost and time.

In order to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan timelines are met, it would be necessary to approve delegated decision to the Chairman of Finance & General Purposes, Vice Chairman of Finance & General Purposes who is also the Vice Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan and the Clerk.

Various differing costs have been received and the intention would be that these be evaluated and a contractor chosen to print, distribute and subsequently collect the data and provide this to the Steering Group of the Neighbourhood Plan in order that they may devise the Draft Neighbourhood Plan Policies and other materials required as evidence in the process. The Clerk would intend that the expenditure and decision making process would then be discussed at Full Council where formal approval for the expenditure would be given.

It was APPROVED that the appointment of a contractor to print, distribute and provide data would be DELEGATED to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee and the Chairman of the Planning Committee/Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

FG32/03/15 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

The Clerk presented a payment schedules to 4th March, 2015 for approval in the sum of £4,938.55 including the additional payments proposed under delegated powers. The Clerk apologised for the error in producing the first schedule and asked that the authorisation be given to the revised schedule amounting to £31,245.46. The Clerk informed Members that whilst within the approval batch was a payment to BT this

had been authorised and sent on 26th February as BT only allow 10 days payment terms. The Clerk would be writing to BT on this and other matters. Therefore the batch being submitted to the bank will be £3768.76, although the total payments remain the same at £4,938.55.

Mr.Buckley felt that the Council should now consider payment of these invoices by Direct Debit, this was seconded by Mrs.Flores-Moore thereby avoiding any future problems in terms of possible disconnection. The Clerk stated that as per the new financial regulations her office would be providing a list quarterly of the Direct Debit Mandates applicable, and had asked the accounts assistant to provide these as notations on the monthly schedules.

Councillors NOTED and APPROVED the action taken by the Clerk and the fact that the BT invoice had been signed off by Councillors on the 26th February. It was RESOLVED by all present that the payments schedules dated 4th March, 2015 amounting to £4,938.55 be APPROVED. The Committee AUTHORISED the payment of British Telecom invoices by Direct Debit.

FG33/03/15 GRANT REQUEST

The Chairman indicated that Royal United Football had applied for a community grant of £1,500. This grant being required to purchase three new sets of goal posts to support the club find a new home at Christ's Hospital this being within the parish.

At this point in the meeting a short discussion ensued as to whether there were sufficient funds within the grant budget. Mr.Buckley proposed that the Club be awarded £1500 towards the provision of the new goal posts thereby assisting a large club providing activity for young people from Southwater. This was seconded by Mrs.Flores-Moore and approved by all present. The Club to attend Full Council to receive the cheque with a press release and photograph. Mrs.Flores-Moore said if possible it would be great to have some young people come along to the presentation.

It was RESOLVED by all present that a grant of £1500 be awarded to the Royal United Football Club. The Clerk to arrange for the Club to attend Full Council in March to receive the award.

FG34/03/15 PHOTOCOPIER

The Clerk indicated that the existing contract was coming to an end not too mention the fact that the existing copier was beginning to breakdown due to the volume of copying undertaken with increased marketing and use by the Council.

The Clerk referred to the report and breakdown issued to Members, and stated that her preference would be to remain with Canon based on both past experience and costs received from the various contractors invited to quote on a like for like basis.

Mr.Cole stated that with the provision of new IT equipment for Councillors in the new financial year, this would greatly reduce the need for much of the paper and copying costs. The Clerk stated that in her opinion the Council would still require

the same specification as indicated due to the potential marketing to be undertaken in relation to services and community events. The Clerk also advised Members that the intention would be upon training being given, to scan all correspondence received.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk place the contract for the replacement Council photocopier with Canon UK.

FG35/03/15 LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME

The Clerk referred Members to the new Local Council Award Scheme. Whilst this scheme was launched in January 2015, the Clerk would propose that the decision as to whether the Council wishes to apply for Gold Plus status this being the level the Clerk would anticipate the Council applying for, wait until the Elections and new Council be appointed.

Members felt that it would be appropriate in light of the workload involved for both the Clerk and Members that this matter be left in abeyance until after the new Council were elected in May 2015.

FG36/03/15 POLICE MATTERS

The Clerk was unable to provide these due to the timing of the meeting being so close to the end of the month cut off dates. PCSO Cecil will provide these for the Full Council meeting at the end of March.

Southwater Crime Figures January 2015

Month	Burglary	Criminal Damage	Drugs	Theft & Handling	Violent Crime	Total
January 15	7	1	2	7	11	28
February 15						

Total Crime Comparisons 2013/2015

Years	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2013	17	8	15	18	15	17	27	10	4	20	21	18	190
2014	22	9	24	14	20	23	34	25	34	28	28	36	297
2015	28												

Councillors NOTED that the police statistics were not available but would be provided at Full Council.

FG37/03/15 COUNCIL PREMISES & LAND**

Beeson House, Southwater

Planning Application DC/14/2760. Council are advised by its consultant surveyor that Horsham District Council's Environmental Services have requested that the Council carry out a noise assessment in relation to the provision of the air conditioning prior to this going to committee. The Council's consultant MSA has

obtained two quotations ranging between £1,250 and £1,300 + VAT.

Mrs.Flores-Moore questioned why this was necessary as did Mr.Buckley, both considering this unnecessary due to the size and location of the units involved. It was not the Council's intention to have such units running day and night and those present asked the Clerk to contact the Head of Environmental Services to find out the precise position.

The Clerk to contact the Head of Environmental Services.

The Sensory Tree

The Clerk indicated that she had held a meeting with this organisation and had had an excellent meeting with the representatives regarding a proposal put to the Council. The Clerk provided a briefing for those present about the proposal and content of her discussions. Members agreed that the additional room on the first floor of Beeson House may not be suitable in that with additional development it was essential to ensure that the Council had additional meeting space for the community to use. The Clerk indicated that she had sign posted the organisation to other organisations in the area who may be able to work with them taking forward their project and should the group require further information or advice this would be available.

Members NOTED the meeting held with the Clerk and advice received.

Easteds Barn

The Clerk informed Members that she would be holding a meeting with a hirer of the Barn who had once again left open the Barn door which had resulted in a complaint from a local resident; this noise was unacceptable in light of previous instructions to the client.

Members NOTED and APPROVED the action to be taken by the Clerk.

FG38/03/15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Finance & General Purposes meeting would be Wednesday, 8th April 2015.

The meeting closed at 8.25 pm.