

SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL

The Minutes of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE meeting held on Wednesday 12th April, 2017 in the Council Chamber, Beeson House, Southwater, West Sussex commencing at 7.30 pm

Present: Chairman: Cllr M. Neale

Cllr L. Apted	Cllr G. Cole
Cllr K. Diamond	Cllr R. Dye
Cllr P. Flores-Moore	Cllr C. Pearce
Cllr G. Watkins	Cllr N. Whitear

Mr. Derek Moore, Co-Opted Non-Voting Member of Council

Clerk: Mrs C. Tobin

County Councillor: Not present

District Councillors: Not present

Press: Not present

Members of the Public: None

FG01/04/17 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman asked those present to turn off their mobile phones for the duration of the meeting, unless in an emergency, when they should go through the chair. In the event of a fire alarm sounding, everyone should evacuate the building via the exits indicated.

The meeting was not recorded due to malfunctioning equipment.

FG02/04/17 APOLOGIES

There were apologies noted and agreed from Ms H Timson, Cllrs Greening and Vickers.

Members NOTED and APPROVED the absences.

FG03/04/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Clerk referred Members of Council to information issued in relation to the Member's Code of Conduct and Standing Orders and asked whether any Member had at anything of note to declare at this point in the meeting.

No declarations were received.

FG04/04/17 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman indicated that he had no announcements.

FG05/04/17 CORRESPONDENCE

The Chairman indicated that there was no correspondence for consideration at this meeting other than that previously circulated.

FG06/04/17 MINUTES

It was RESOLVED by all present having been proposed by Cllr Watkins and seconded by Cllr Cole that the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday 8th March be accepted as a true and correct record of the meetings.

FG07/04/17 ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Chairman referred Members to the meeting pack containing current income and expenditure, cash and investment reconciliation, debtors listing and payment schedules.

The meeting pack containing the financial information relating to the current financial position of the Council was APPROVED by all present.

Proposed Closure of the Parish Council Business Account

The Clerk proposed that the Council close the Lloyds Business Account for Southwater Parish Council (SPC) since there are only funds in the account of £301.73 as at 20 March 2017 and it incurs a monthly charge of £5.

It was AGREED by all present that this account with Lloyds be closed.

Broken mirror in gym

The Clerk confirmed the council have been reimbursed £280.00 from Zurich Municipal and the £100 excess by the gym member for the broken mirror.

Members NOTED the information.

Year End Audit

The Clerk confirmed that the year end audit was to be conducted once again by Littlejohns. A deadline for the accounts having been set being the 12th June, by which time the accounts must be received.

Members NOTED this information.

Eversfield Play Area – Health & Safety Expenditure

The Clerk confirmed that due to the poor condition of the play area in Eversfield immediate action had been required to make safe the play area, by removing trees, raising the canopy around the play area, removal of moss etc, together with jet washing of the equipment and area. The contract had been issued to TEM, the Council grass

cutting contractor in the sum of £700+VAT.

It was AGREED by all present that the sum spent in relation to health and safety measures in the Eversfield Play Area should be APPROVED; the sum being £700+VAT, which would be deducted from the ring-fenced public open space funds available.

Insurance Premium Renewal

The Clerk stated that the insurance quote for renewal had been received from Zurich Insurance Group, a sum of £13,458.65 and has been checked against assets held.

Members APPROVED the renewal cost of £13,458.65.

FG08/04/17 PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The Clerk presented to Members payment schedules to 12th April 2017 in the sum of £5926.46. With regards to the petty cash, no cheques have been received.

It was AGREED by all present that the payments schedule dated 12th April in the sum of £5,926.46 be APPROVED.

FG09/04/17 PURCHASE OF IPADS FOR USE BY PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS

The Clerk referred members to the purchase of iPads for use by Council members. Three quotations were sought for the lease of the iPads and the clerk proposed that the council accept the quote from De Lage Landen Leasing Ltd for a three year lease at a cost of £324.76 quarterly rent in advance and a total cost of £3897.00. Derek Moore asked why the iPads were being leased rather than bought. It was explained that cash flow was the primary consideration and this way there was an option to renew the equipment in three years rather than be left with obsolete or outdated equipment. It was agreed the iPads would be trialled initially by Cllrs Apted, Neale, Watkins, Flores-Moore and the Clerk. If the trial was deemed successful then the iPads would be issued to all Councillors and at that point, it was agreed that all communication going forward would be electronic.

Members APPROVED this recommendation in relation to an operating lease with De Lage Landen Leasing Ltd to be taken under delegated powers invested in the Clerk, Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council in relation to the lease of the equipment in the sum of £3897.00+VAT.

FG10/04/17 LEISURE CENTRE GYM PROVISION

The Chairman acknowledged the hard work of Cllr Whitear and referred members to the delegated decision to purchase the existing gym equipment on lease from De Lage Landen Leasing Ltd at a purchase cost of £5,895 + VAT.

The Clerk enquired should Council wish to pursue this matter and how it wished to fund the acquisition, eg., through Section 106 funding if possible, from the leisure centre allocated budget or directly from the Council's general reserves at the end of April 2017

having then received the first instalment of the Precept from Horsham District Council.

Members APPROVED the recommendation to purchase the existing gym equipment with De Lage Landen Leasing Ltd taken under delegated powers invested in the Clerk, Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council in relation to the lease of the equipment in the sum of £5,895 + VAT and suggested that the s106 option be pursued in the first instance and from the leisure centre budget in the second.

FG11/04/17 INTERNAL AUDITOR APPOINTMENT AND TENDER FOR 2017/2020

The Clerk reported that after consideration of the responses from the five original companies approached, the Members appoint Mr M Mulbery as their approved Internal Auditor for the period 2017/2020 at a cost of £750 + Mileage £0.45p for 15 hours. It is estimated that two full days are required to complete an audit for the Council size and complexity.

Members APPROVED the recommendation that Mr. M. Mulbery be appointed for a period of three years as the Council's Internal Auditor from 1st April 2017. Councillors NOTED that the current auditors would completed the year end for Year 2016/17.

FG12/04/17 PARISH ONLINE MAPPING SYSTEM

The Clerk outlined the free provision of the Parish OnLine mapping system referenced in the pack to enable the parish council to upload West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) information in relation to highways matters etc. This is subject to attendance on a training session on Friday 19th May 2017, (venue to be announced) at a cost of £120, required to ensure the Council are using the system to its maximum.

Members APPROVED attendance on the training session and the expenditure of on Pear Mapping of £120.

FG13/04/17 LEISURE CENTRE MANAGER'S REPORT TO MARCH 2017

The Clerk referred to the Leisure Centre Manager's report to 12th April 2017 and Appendix 1: Proposed Actions to reverse down turn in Gym use, increase membership and overall use of the centre.

There was a lot of general discussion around the Manager's report included in the pack. It was concurred that items already budgeted for, can be processed with the authority of the Clerk.

There is currently a question mark regarding the actual user figures recorded and how accurate the data is. It was explained that in some circumstances patrons are not swiping in and if the desk is not staffed the entry is not recorded. Or they are swiping in and the key card does not register if user data is not been entered onto the system.

Consideration was put to additional entry recording systems but this was deemed to be not

time effective/too expensive and therefore has been put on hold.

A question was also raised regarding a possible charge for replacement cards of £10. The Clerk will investigate whether this is implied in the joining information.

Members NOTED this information and directed the Clerk to check whether a charge for replacement cards may be implemented.

FG14/04/17 POLICING MATTERS RELATING TO SOUTHWATER PARISH AREA

The Chairman indicated that there were no further updates at this point in time. The Clerk had sent through the County Association two questions to be raised with the Chief Constable of Sussex on behalf of the Southwater Community, one related to PCSO's and anti-social behaviour the general view that anti social behaviour had increased in Southwater within the new policing policy whereby PCSO's were linked to a team who would then look at the issues.

Members NOTED this information.

FG15/04/17 COUNCIL PREMISES & LAND

External Lighting at Easteds Barn

The Clerk advised Members to consider replacing two of the external lighting units at Easteds Barn with LED lights which are more cost effective, offer additional light and will be operated by a corner mounted PIR movement detector. This is required as there is currently insufficient lighting for the main entrance of the barn (and the light is operated from inside the main building). The bookings co-ordinator continues to receive complaints from hirers regarding sufficient lighting and one person had fallen when leaving the premises when in the dark.

Members are asked to approve the works outlined in the report and that CBS Contractors Ltd is appointed to undertake the work required at a cost of £425.00 plus VAT.

Members present APPROVED the works and the appointment of CBS in the sum of £425+VAT.

Easteds Barn Garden Area

The Clerk stated that she was delighted to inform the Committee that members of her team had acquired outdoor plants and had improved considerably the garden area of the Barn. Her thanks were to her team and to the contractor who had kindly donated the planting.

These improvements will it is hoped help the Council to advertise the barn for parties, small weddings etc.

The Clerk informed Members that it is intended that this work will be undertaken by either a gardening company in the future, or if appropriate the existing grass cutting company by extending their contract.

Members NOTED and THANKED the staff team for their efforts and APPROVED

of the intended action to be taken by the Clerk.

Outdoor Maintenance Review

The Clerk's report reviewed the inspection of various Council Sites carried out on Tuesday 14th March 2017 by Council Officers and Mr Derek Moore. It was evident that some areas under the Council remit have not been adequately maintained and remedial works were now required to bring them up to an acceptable standard.

The proposal outlined within her report was for Members to approve the undertaking of a Maintenance Review to explore a single contract for grass cutting to include additional works to the old railway embankment, ponds and hedges. Cutting back of footways and tree works would also be included. Due to the potential value the contract would have to be tendered out but only following the production of a management plan (which had been authorised). It would be hoped that such a plan could be put in place and a tender issued for tree works thereafter. No works can take place until the end of the current bird nesting period. A thank you was issued from the Chairman to all staff involved in the process so far.

A question was asked regarding the alcohol and entertainment licence at Easteds Barn and the possibility of amending it.

Members APPROVED the undertaking of a Maintenance Review and directed the Clerk to review the existing licencing agreement for Easteds Barn.

FG16/04/17 POTENTIAL DISCUSSIONS IN RELATION TO LAND TO BE ACQUIRED FOR THE FUTURE PROVISION OF SPORTING ACTIVITIES

At this point in the meeting the Chairman suspended standing orders to exclude Members of the Public and Press from the meeting due to confidential matters to be discussed.

“Confidential Note”

Members APPROVED the delegation of the Clerk and Cllr Watkins to pursue matters relating to the potential acquisition of land further and report back to the Council in a future meeting to be determined.

Standing Orders were re-instated.

FG17/04/17 PERSONNEL, PENSIONS & TRAINING**

The Clerk reported that unfortunately the litter warden position was now vacant again and was to be re-advertised.

The Clerk is investigating training on appraisals, and would be offering this to members of the HR Committee once arrangements could be made; this training would be during either a morning or afternoon.

The Clerk informed members that P60's and end of year Pension Returns had either been issued or would be completed within the week.

Members NOTED and APPROVED matters relating to staff.

FG18/04/17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is Wednesday 10th May 2017.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.