

SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday 26th April 2017 at 7.30pm, in the Council Chamber, Beeson House, Lintot Square, Southwater.

Present Were:	Cllr G. Watkins (Chairman)	
	Cllr L Apted	Cllr G Cole
	Cllr P Davies	Cllr R Dye
	Cllr J Hutchings	Cllr M Neale
	Cllr C Pearce	Cllr B Varley
Co-Opted Non-Voting*	Mr D Moore, Mrs H Timson	
Clerk:	Mrs C Tobin	
Special Guest:	Mr Chris Carey MRICS, Chartered Surveyor	
County Councillor:	Not Present	
District Councillors:	Not Present	
Members of the public:	5	
Press:	Not Present	

AP01/04/17 WELCOME AND CHAIRMANS REPORT

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave out the housekeeping rules for the meeting including that relating to fire, asking whether anyone present wished to record the meeting. The Chairman informed those present that the meeting was being recorded by the Parish Council.

No one wished to record the meeting.

The Chairman thanked those present for coming along to the Annual Parish Meeting.

The Chairman said copies of his Annual Report were available and he would be circulating after the meeting should anyone wish to speak with him afterwards.

He explained a primary role of Southwater Council was to meet with ministers and MPs to make sure the views of the parish were heard. Challenges worthy of note relate to a significant decrease in revenue received from the government. Unfortunately, that cost will need to be born by the community, especially with regard to buildings maintenance and as such, working parties are reviewing assets to ensure best value is received from them.

He took the opportunity to thank all of the Parish Councillors, Council staff and volunteers for all their support and hard work throughout the year.

The Chairman specifically thanked his predecessor, Mr Peter Buckley and the previous Vice Chair, Cllr Pauline Flores-Moore for their efforts over the years. Special thanks went to Cllr Michael Neale who has taken over the role of Vice Chair and Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee for his hard work regarding the Southwater Youth Project.

Thanks were also extended to the community policing team for their efforts in Southwater to keep the area safe.

The Chairman commended the efforts of Angie Choat, Martin Minton and the staff in relation to the Youth Project and the Friday Night Club and then referred to the rest of the items listed on the attached document regarding the Parish Council, Community Groups and Visioning; Skateboard Park; Christmas in Lintot Square; Development; Council Website; Working in Partnership; Grants and the Neighbourhood Plan at which point Mr Chris Carey was invited to speak.

AP02/04/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Flores-Moore, Greening, O'Toole-Quinn, Vickers and Whitear.

AP02/04/17 GUEST SPEAKER – Mr Chris Carey MRICS, Chartered Surveyor speaking on the Neighbourhood Plan for Southwater

Mr Chris Carey provided a brief history of his 27 year background in both public and private sector.

Mr Carey explained officially what a Neighbourhood Plan is, as read from the Chairman's report, and then explained that Neighbourhood Plans were introduced as part of the Localism Act 2011. They represented a sea change that now provides an opportunity to the parish to influence the planning of their locality. They are important as decision makers need to give due weight and accord to any Neighbourhood Plans in existence when making planning decisions.

Neighbourhood Plans will normally consist of an allocation of sites for development including housing, commercial use, transport, heritage, education, leisure and green space. It is not a carte blanche document to prevent all development and cannot be used as such. It must reflect national policy and planning from district bodies and adopt approval from the district governing body who are the ultimate decision makers.

Horsham District Council has dictated the scale of development considered in the Neighbourhood Plan. For example, they will retain the rights to make decisions regarding developments of over 200 residential units and as such, the Neighbourhood Plan may only

reference developments smaller than this.

The Neighbourhood Plan needs to be evidence based. Southwater conducted a Parish Survey two years ago and received over 30% return with local parishioners' views. This survey will form a significant part of the evidence base for the Neighbourhood Plan.

Southwater has experienced a huge amount of change in the last 20 years. There is no legal requirement to complete a Neighbourhood Plan. However, it is an opportunity for local people to influence future development, especially important as Southwater (along with Billingshurst and Horsham) is seen as a sustainable place for development and relatively unconstrained. The demand for housing will increase as the population increases and the area will be expected to pick up slack from other areas that are more constrained.

There is a financial benefit to be gained from having a neighbourhood plan. For all future developments, under the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) developers are required to pay a flat rate of circa £135/m² which goes into a pot available for use by local authorities. Parishes with a neighbourhood plan will automatically receive 25% of this pot for capital funding.

Once the plan has been approved by the inspectorate, the plan will then go to referendum for final approval (set at 50% plus one of those who vote).

The Chairman explained that meeting minutes are available on the parish council website for anyone who would like to review the decision making processes so far.

Mr Chris Carey then opened the floor to questions specifically related to the Neighbourhood Plan.

Mr Derek Moore thanked Mr Carey for the information and said it was valuable to have the plans available and important that the concept and consequences of sustainable development were understood by the community. Especially in response to the current demands for development. He asked how the design statement fitted into the Neighbourhood Plan. It was confirmed that the design statement fitted into the Neighbourhood plan as long as it satisfied the criteria previously laid out (It must reflect national policy and planning from district bodies and adopt approval from the district governing body who are the decision makers).

Thanks were offered from the Chairman to Mr Carey for his presentation.

AP03/04/17 QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q. A local resident, referred to persistent and troublesome anti social behaviour by a small portion of local youth in the square in the evenings often until the early hours of the morning. Is there any knowledge of any police plan regarding this? A. The Chairman acknowledged the problem appeared to worsen following the removal of the dedicated Police Community Support Officer for Southwater. Once the Inspector is appointed, a public meeting will be scheduled to highlight problems and invite local residents to comment. In the meantime, local residents are encouraged to report any anti social behaviour and crimes to the police service.

Q. A local resident, asked if bids had been received for the s106/CIL monies or would the pot be used to reduce the council tax precept. A. It is not permitted to be used to reduce council tax as it has to be used for capital funding. Mr Young also clarified that leisure is an important part of the Neighbourhood Plan and will be included within. One final question from Mr Young related to the new skate park in the Berkley's development. Is there a cast iron guarantee for the building of the new skate park? It was explained that it is included in the planning application and a section 106 document has been signed off regarding it.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm.