



SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL



Clerk: Mrs. C.M.Tobin
Cert.Ed.L.Pol.,
FSLCC.,

NEWS RELEASE

Having read with interest the Community Village Facebook Page, and the misinformation from many, again it is thought helpful that the Parish Council provide some guidance.

All Parish Council meetings can be attended by members of the public, with members of the public having the ability to speak on any agenda item, subject to informing the Clerk's Office to ensure that there is sufficient time for them to do so at the meeting.

Agendas for meetings of the Council and its Committees are posted on our website and ten community notice boards. This includes information on the Budgets, which again are uploaded to our website (www.southwater-pc.gov.uk).

All Councillors have to sign a Code of Conduct and declare their interests in the local community, this is accessible via the Parish and District Council websites. Should members accept a luncheon or any invitation or otherwise from anyone and especially developers in line with their councillor duties, they have to complete and sign for our files a document indicating the cost of this. The Parish Council's Clerk would also have to be informed. No individual member has direct access to the Council's financial or banking systems. Members decided on policy, and officers carry out the day to day financial and administration of the Council.

If the individuals who have expressed views that Councillors are taking "back handers" would like to ring Sussex Police; this is the body which would deal with such allegations. Please ensure that both the Clerk to the Council as Proper Officer, and the District Council's Monitoring Officer receives a copy of such an allegation. These are serious allegations and not taken lightly by Councillors, please ensure that your comments are accurate, proportionate and not of a defamatory or libellous nature. Please remember that such indiscriminate statements can have an adverse effect on the employment of individual Members of Council, who have not retired and have positions which require high public standards.

All Councillor contact details are also on the website and notice boards to enable residents to contact them, and all have an email address to which residents can write. The Parish Council also holds a joint surgery on the first Saturday of each month along with colleagues from both District and County Councils. These are held in Beeson House, Lintot Square, Southwater.

The Council also has a duty of care towards its staffing team and will take harassment and bullying of such staff extremely seriously, reporting if appropriate to Sussex Police. The Parish Council will monitor the current situation, but should further serious allegations appear in relation to either individual members of staff which are considered by solicitors to be either libellous or slanderous

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to an individual(s) then the Council may take further action to protect its staff. Please note that staff may also have the opportunity where it is considered to be harassment, of reporting this directly to Sussex Police.

Finally, please note that it is the Council as a corporate body who make the decisions in relation to policy etc., it is not down to individual councillors nor officers. Individual councillors cannot make decisions on behalf of the Council. If you want further information on this the Clerk's Office would be happy to supply the information, although much of this is available on the internet. All Councillors live locally and are volunteers with many having given years of service to the community of Southwater.

Should any individual resident wish to make an appointment to see both the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council to express their concerns, then they should make an appointment with the Clerk's Office on 01403 733202 when a suitable appointment will be made.

About Southwater

Southwater is located within Horsham District and is one of the largest rural communities in West Sussex. The Parish has 10,500 residents and includes the village of Southwater, Newfoundout, Christ's Hospital, Tower Hill & Two Mile Ash. At the heart of the village lies Lintot Square with a wide variety of excellent shops, pubs, restaurants, library, post office, youth centre and health centre. Elsewhere within the Parish are two business parks, home to local companies and some of the largest businesses in the District. Recreation opportunities include our very own Leisure Centre, Country Park, and a huge range of sports and community clubs.

End.

For further information contact:

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