

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 5th March, 2014 at Beeson House, Lintot Square, Southwater commencing at 7.30 pm.

Chairman: Mr P. Buckley

**Councillors: Mr L. Apted Mr G. Cole
Mrs.P.Flores-Moore Mr.D.Nagy**

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: 1

FG160/03/14 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.

Mrs.Flores-Moore expressed concern about the amount of litter emanating in and around the Hop Oast garage and depot some of which is along the A24 and Worthing Road. The Clerk stated that she would report this matter to Horsham District Council.

Mrs.Flores-Moore stated that she would like to bring up the question yet again of the provision of a new footway/cycleway in Blakes Farm Road from the RSPCA roundabout to Hangman's Hill. The Clerk stated that this matter had been identified within West Sussex County Council, and that perhaps Mrs.Flores-Moore could lobby the County Councillor, Brad Watson.

Mr.Apted stated that he had reported yet again the continued parking down Station Road adjacent to the Country Park, mainly due to the fact that the overflow car park was closed due to this being too wet. The Clerk stated that she would speak to the relevant Head of Department at Horsham District Council.

FG161/03/14 APOLOGIES

There were apologies received and noted from Dr.Cash, Mr.Diamond, Mrs.J.Hutchings. Mr.M.Neale, Mr.G.Watkins, Mrs.Williamson and

Mrs.Vickers.

Members noted this.**FG162/02/14****DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

The Clerk referred Member's of Council to correspondence issued in relation to the Member's Code of Conduct and Standing Orders. The reason behind the information being recirculated was due to proper concerns raised by a Member of Council as to procedures and protocols in relation to the Code, as it was felt that these may have been breached at the last Full Council Meeting. The information contained a flow chart which should assist Members in reach their decision this not being overly complicated.

The Clerk informed Members that as previously indicated her role was to provide impartial information and advice in relation to such matters, but that it was for the Member concerned to decide whether or not to declare an interest and what the nature of that may be. The Clerk referred Members at this point to the Nolan principles setting out standards of behaviour required by Members of a Council.

Members are advised to consider the agenda for the meeting and determine in advance if they may have a personal, prejudicial or Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any agenda item. If a Member decided they do have a declarable interest, they are reminded that the interest must be declared at the commencement of the consideration of the agenda item; or when the interest becomes apparent to them. Details of the interest will be minuted.

Where you have a Prejudicial Interest (which is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest) Members are reminded that they must now withdraw from the meeting chamber after making representations or asking questions.

If the interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, Members are reminded that they must take no part in the discussion of the item at all; or participate in any voting; and must withdraw from the meeting chamber; unless they have received a dispensation.

Mr.Buckley declared a personal interest in that he carried out the audit for the Allotments Society who had applied for a grant. Mr.Buckley stated that he would for the sake of transparency be withdrawing from the chamber.

FG163/03/14**CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman indicated that it was important for Members to comply with all Council policies, Code of Conduct and Standing Orders. Not to do so would leave Members open to complaints being received.

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

Arun and Rother Connections

This is an innovative landscape scale project being delivered in partnership made up of the RSPB, Environment Agency, Sussex Wildlife Trust, South Downs National Park Authority, Natural England, West Sussex County Council and the Arun and Rother Rivers Trust.

A community booklet with free events, activities and volunteering opportunities has been produced.

Facebook

The Clerk referred to various communications via the Facebook site to which a response has been given.

Post Office – Position of Post Box re Relocation of the Post Office to Londis

The Post Office have written asking the Parish Council for their views as to whether it would be appropriate to move the post box from outside of The Cock Inn to closer to the new post office, the question being the exact position as the pavement at that local is narrow.

The Clerk indicated that the area thought possible by the Post Office was actually owned by a private individual and this may not be possible as the Parish and County Councils had originally investigate a bus shelter at that location.

The Chairman suggested that the corner of Andrews Lane where the barber currently has an A-board; members agreed stating that this was the most logical place. Mr.Cole stated it was not clear whether the old box outside the Cock Inn was to remain and that in Lintot Square. The Clerk stated that she believed that the one outside of the Cock would be repositioned whilst the one in Lintot Square retained; she would check the position when writing.

The Clerk to write to the Post Office in response to their consultation on the repositioning of the post box outside the Cock Inn, Worthing Road.

Sussex Heritage Trust Awards 2014

The Council have received again the application and awards criteria for nominations. The Clerk would suggest that perhaps this be passed to the Parochial Church Council for their consideration in relation to the Church building.

FG165/03/14 MINUTES

It was RESOLVED by all present that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5th February, 2014 be approved as a true and correct record of the meeting.

FG166/03/14 ACCOUNTS & FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Clerk provided Members with information on the current financial position of the Council to 5th March, 2014 including Income and Expenditure and Bank Balances.

Mrs.Flores-Moore questioned outstanding balances on the trade debtors some of which were over 60 days. The Clerk stated that so far as she was aware these accounts were being chased or addressed, she would check again the position and let the member know the position. The accounts assistant was currently working on February's reconciliation.

Mr.Nagy asked whether there were late payment penalty charges. The Clerk stated that the Council had approved such charges and they were applied where applicable. The point was made that West Sussex County Council in not paying within the timescales and then incurring charges were probably not acting in their fiduciary duty to the electorate.

The Clerk to check the position with regard to a number of outstanding balances.

It was RESOLVED by all present that the financial information provided was a true and correct position of the Council as at 5th March, 2014 and should be APPROVED.

FG167/03/14 PARISH COUNCIL COMMUNITY GRANTS

West Sussex Mediation Service £200

The Group have previously been awarded a grant by the Parish Council towards the training of volunteers etc. A general discussion took place in relation to this grant, the group having been awarded grants previously to assist them in delivery mediation within Southwater, something the Committee thought a valuable service.

It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council would grant £200 to the West Sussex Mediation Service as this work involves work within the community of Southwater.

Southwater Allotments Association £350

At this point in the meeting Mr.Buckley declared an interest in that he

acted as the Group's auditor and left the Chamber. Mr.Cole, Vice Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes at this point took the Chair.

Mr.Cole asked whether the Association had been awarded grants previously. The Clerk and Mr.Nagy responded that these mainly related to the good maintenance of the allotment site itself. This was a Parish Council facility but managed by the Association. The Allotment Association who manage the allotment site are requesting the sum of £350 towards the provision of a new lawnmower. Mr.Cole asked who paid the water rates etc. The Clerk stated that this was paid by the Association.

It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council would grant £350 to the Southwater Allotments Association in relation to the provision of a new lawn mower for Easteds Allotment site.

Mr.Buckley returned to the Chamber and took his position as Chairman of the Committee.

FG168/03/14

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

The Clerk presented a payment schedule to 5th March 2014 in the sum of £36,590.77. Mrs.Flores-Moore questioned the petty cash request; the Clerk stated that this was in relation to the council office and leisure centre, the leisure centre requiring this to purchase stock for the café and youth club operated by the parish council. Mrs.Flores-Moore asked whether this included monies for the till floats; the Clerk stated that these were separate.

It was RESOLVED by all present that the payment schedule dated 5th March, 2014 be approved in the sum of £36,590.77.

FG169/03/14

HORSHAM CYCLE LINK "SOUTHWATER"

The Clerk referred to documentation received this being self explanatory. The Group are looking for someone to lead the project, the Clerk made it clear that currently the Parish Council has no funding towards this nor the manpower.

The Group are looking for permission to erect signage on parish council owned land indicating that the footway (red route) is a cycle route and then advertise this. This route is used by dog walkers, horse riders etc., and extremely well used.

The Clerk advised that within the two previous plans it was always envisaged that there be a circular route, this proposal concentrated mainly on those wishing to cycle to work but also those wishing to access Southwater for reasons of Leisure. The proposal did not continue due to the condition of the footway down towards the Country Park and then back towards Station Road and the central area of Lintot Square. Various other possibilities were

discussed.

The Clerk stated that she had been unable to clarify the requirements for such a footway/cycle path with WSCC colleagues, but should the Council support the principles then the appropriate risk assessments should be carried out.

Mr.Buckley stated that he personally had a lot of time for this proposal, as the Hop Oast/Worthing Road was extremely dangerous in relation to cycling. He felt that the Parish Council should be promoting this type of proposal.

Members were informed that a round Southwater network cycle/footway had been envisaged in two Parish Plans; this being one of the reasons why the Council had adopted so much of the public open space within the main village.

At this point the Chairman suspended standing orders to allow the Member of Public to speak and answer Members questions in relation to the proposal.

General discussions took place on the various options and routes which could be considered and on which the Horsham Cycle Network could work with the Parish Council. Mr.Nagy said that he would be happy to walk the various routes identified at the meeting and that the Clerk would pass on the relevant details.

Mr.Nagy asked the Clerk whether her office had heard anything further about suggestions that the old crossing bridge over the A24 be repositioned at Hop Oast. This would in his view give the perfect cross point for those wishing to access leisure opportunities in Southwater and for those from Southwater wishing to cycle and commute. The Clerk stated that the last information she had was that the proposal was not viable due to the cost. If instructed by the Committee she would once again investigate with West Sussex and other partners the possibility of this being repositioned.

The Cycle Network representative indicated that it may be possible to use Southwater development gain for some of the intended works. The Clerk stated that the two developments being highlighted could not be discussed by the Parish Council at this point as no applications had been received. The Chairman suggested that the Cycle Network may like to attend the Public Meeting launching the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan on Thursday 20th March 2014 at 7.30pm at Southwater Leisure Centre. It was also highlighted that as some of the proposed route was within Horsham that an approach for Section 106 monies should be directed via Horsham District Council and West Sussex County Council and possibly neighbourhood councils. The representative of the Cycle Network indicated that they would be approaching the County Local Committee to take the project forward but looked forward to working with the Parish Council.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

It was RESOLVED by all present that the Clerk should once again commence discussions with West Sussex County Council in relation to the possibility of the bridge which is to be removed over the A24 being repositioned at Hop Oast. It was delegated to Mr.Nagy and the Clerk to work with the Horsham Cycle Network to progress the ideas contained in their proposal and report back to the Committee.

FG170/03/14

POLICE MATTERS

PCSO Cecil reports that the Crime figures for Southwater for the period January 14 were:-

Burglary 3, Criminal Damage 3, Drug Offences 2, Fraud and Forgery 1, Theft and Handling 8, Violent Crime 5 in Total 22

The Clerk stated that she did not have at this time the previous year's comparisons. Members asked that the Clerk provide these via email.

Members NOTED the figures provided, with the Clerk providing the comparison figures by email to all Members.

FG171/03/14

SOUTHWATER LEISURE CENTRE

Feasibility for New Shower Area within the Existing Area

Due to the fact that the building is now over 30 years of age, it will be necessary to refurbish and alter to comply with new regulations the shower area. This will give a far better facility which can then be offered to the Leisure Centre's clients after exercise, something which many decline to us at the present time.

A general discussion took place in relation to the proposal. Mrs.Flores-Moore said that she would like to see this being a brown water system, although Mr.Cole indicated that this was generally provided for new build not refurbished existing buildings. However the question could be raised with the surveyor when appointed. Mr.Nagy taking up the points raised by Mr.Cole stated that within the overall design there should be an element for disabled use eg., accessible wetroom with toilet facility. The Clerk stated that the project was to design the areas with individual cubicles not as at present.

Members were advised that there development gain had already been identified in this respect.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should instruct Philip Starling of MSA Associates in the sum of £780+VAT to produce designs and plans for further discussion.

Leisure Centre Kitchen Area

The Clerk indicated that the Leisure Centre Manager had obtained two quotations for works to the kitchen ceiling of the leisure centre this having experienced damage to the artex. This again is considered a health risk with the kitchen being used more than in the past due to new services. The Clerk to ensure that the paint specification is appropriate eg., anti condensation paint.

It was APPROVED that the Clerk placed an order with Summers Plastering in the sum of £360 + VAT, to ensure that the aertex ceiling be repaired to the required standard.

FG172/03/14

BEESON HOUSE

The Chairman reported that a Extraordinary Meeting of the Council will be called on Monday, 31st March 2014; this being in connection with the approval of the Lease, sub-tenancies and Licence to Alter the premises thereby enabling the library refurbishment to take place. This meeting being due to the timescales required to commence the building project with the Council needing to commence building works in April 14. The Chairman highlighted the various topics which were discussed and these were duly noted with further discussion at the Extraordinary Meeting.

FG173/03/14

COUNCIL PREMISES & LAND**

Vandalism to the Leisure Centre Bridge connecting to Lintot Square

The Clerk informed Members that despite recent refurbishment to the bridge area, this has twice since the repair been vandalised. Investigations are ongoing in this respect, but the Clerk indicated that she has authorised the necessary works under Health & Safety delegated powers due to this being a well use section of footway to the local shopping area. However, due to the vandalism other major sections of wood would now have to be replaced. The local Police team were investigating and all incidents reported and insurance claims will be submitted. The current contractor Countrywide Grounds Maintenance has quoted £1090 + VAT for the repair and replacement of the five main timbers. At the present time, the bridge is in operation being deemed safe for use.

The Clerk indicted that as and when works took place it will be necessary to close this private right of way for a period of time. Appropriate notice will be given informing local residents of the works to take place.

Members asked the Clerk to investigate the use of further CCTV coverage for this area to assist the local police team in their endeavours.

It was APPROVED by Council that Countrywide Grounds Maintenance be appointed to replace the five main timbers to the bridge

area following recent vandalism in the sum of £1,090+VAT; these works being required under Health & Safety to ensure the continued safety of the public.

FG174/03/14

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Finance & General Purposes meeting would be Wednesday **9th April 2014.**

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.