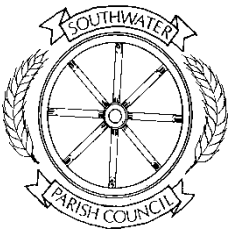


**(DRAFT) Finance and General Purposes Meeting
Minutes**

Wednesday, 20th February 2019, 7.30pm
Beeson House
Lintot Square
Southwater
Horsham
RH13 9LA

Committee Members

Cllr Michael Neale (Chairman)
Cllr Geoff Cole (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Ross Dye
Cllr Pauline Flores-Moore
Cllr Derek Moore
Cllr Geoff Scoon
Cllr Hayley Timson
Cllr Claire Vickers
Cllr Graham Watkins
Cllr Neil Whitear



Clerk: **Mrs.C.M.Tobin**
FSLCC.,

SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL

Beeson House,
26 Lintot Square,
Fairbank Road,
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RH13 9LA



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MINUTES

The Minutes of the FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE meeting held on Wednesday, 20th January, 2019 in the Council Chamber, Beeson House, Southwater, West Sussex, RH13 9LA commencing at 7.30pm.

Present: Chairman: Cllr M.Neale

**Cllr G.Cole
Cllr G Scoon
Cllr N Whitear**

**Cllr D.Moore
Cllr H Timson
Cllr G.Watkins**

Clerk to the Meeting: Mrs.C.Tobin, Clerk to the Council

County Councillor: Not present

District Councillors: Not present

Press: Not present

Members of the Public: 2

NOTE: - All relevant papers to this meeting were circulated to all Councillors with the Agenda.

FG155/02/19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

(Maximum of 2 minutes per person with an overall limit of 15 minutes)

The Chairman asked those present to turn mobile phones to silent for the duration of the meeting, unless the phone call was deemed urgent in which case phone calls could be received with permission from the Chairman. If a member of the public wished to tape the meeting could they please indicate. In the event of a fire alarm sounding, everyone would be directed to evacuate the building via the exits indicated.

The members of the public present did not want to address the Committee.

FG156/02/19 APOLOGIES

Apologies received on behalf of Cllr Ross Dye, Flores-Moore and Vickers.

Councillors NOTED and APPROVED the absences.

FG157/02/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

The Clerk stated that there were no declarations of interest received at that point.

FG158/02/19 MINUTES

The Chairman indicated that the Minutes had been approved at Full Council however the Minutes were then ratified by the Committee being proposed by Cllr Whitear and seconded by Cllr Moore, that the Minutes of the Finance and General Purpose meeting held on the 16th January 2019 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

FG159/02/19 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman had no announcements.

FG160/01/19 CORRESPONDENCE

Elections

Whilst the Clerk intended to fully brief members in relation to the forthcoming elections in March 2019, she would urge members and public alike should they wish to stand in the May elections for the Parish Council then they should contact elections@horsham.gov.uk and ask that they send at the appropriate time nomination papers. Nominations must be delivered between 10am and 4pm Monday to Friday between 26th March and 3rd April. The Clerk's office does retain a full electoral register for voting registration numbers.

Cllr Watkins asked what arrangements were the District Council putting in for the disabled in terms of being able to pick up and return nomination papers. The Clerk stated that she was unaware of any arrangements but would enquire and report back in March 2019.

Cllr Whitear asked whether nominations had to be supported by ten electors of the parish, for having previously stood for District Council this had been the criteria. The Clerk stated that she did not believe that in the past this was the case, but full guidance would be provided along with nomination papers.

The Clerk to check with the District Council's Elections Officers as to what arrangements were being made for the collection and return of Nomination Papers re the local council elections, the Clerk reporting back in March 19.

Members NOTED the information and the fact that further information will be forthcoming in March 2019.

Correspondence has been entered into in relation to a planning application during the Clerk's absence, effectively objecting to the application on a variety of differing grounds. The Council has asked that this matter be taken to the District Council's Planning North Committee for further debate. Correspondence has also been entered into in relation to Licensing with no planning permission to date having been approved. This application is outside the consultation period, the Parish having asked for a site visit.

A short discussion ensued with a briefing from the Chairman of Council, Cllr Watkins and it was agreed by the Committee that the Clerk should inform the relevant Planning Officer that the Council would like this application to go to the Planning North Committee of the District Council in order that the Council could object to this.

The Clerk to ensure that the Planning Officer be advised that the Council wish to have this application referred to the Planning North Committee as it maintained its objection and would like to speak at the Committee.

Freedom of Information Requests

The Clerk reported that she had received in the intervening time between meetings a Freedom of Information request in relation to Easteds Barn; this has been dealt with. Another from the same person has recently been received in relation to the same subject, and will be actioned.

Councillors NOTED the information provided.

FG161/01/19 ACCOUNTS

7.1 BANK RECONCILIATION

To consider and approve the Bank Reconciliation as at 31st January 2019 as a true reflection of the current financial position of the Council at the end of Month 10 dated 31st January 2019. The information provides information in relation to the Income & Expenditure of the Council showing the percentage against budget as requested along with the trial balance for Month 10.

Cllr Watkins informed the Clerk that he had not received either a hard copy of the Information and Accounts Pack and therefore he could not comment the contents and would refrain from any vote on financial matters.

7.2 RECOMMENDATION

It was proposed by Cllr Moore, seconded by Cllr Whitear, and APPROVED by all present, with the exception of Cllr Watkins, that

the documentation reflected the true financial position of the Council as of the end of Month 10 (31st January 2019).

7.3 DEBTORS & CREDITORS

The purpose of the report provided to all members of Council is to approve the Debtors and Creditors as at 12th February 2019 as a true reflection of the current position of the Council.

The Chairman stated that having gone through the Debtors listing with the Clerk, he could confirm that the outstanding balance in the name of Lambert Smith Hampton had now been paid leaving only small minor items to be addressed but most of these had credits on the accounts.

The Clerk stated that she was extremely pleased with her Accounts Team in bringing down the debtors.

7.4 RECOMMENDATION

It was proposed by Cllr Moore, seconded by Cllr Whitear, and APPROVED by all present with the exception of Cllr Watkins, that the Debtors and Creditors Listing dated 12th February 2019 be approved.

FG162/02/19 PAYMENTS SCHEDULE

8.1 To consider and approve the payments schedule to 20th February 2019 in the sum of £14,435.86 with other payments of £43,767.62 having been approved since the last meeting a total of £52,203.48.

8.2 RECOMMENDATION

It was proposed by Cllr Whitear, seconded by Cllr Moore, and APPROVED by all present, with the exception of Cllr Watkins, that the payments schedule to 20th February 2019 in the sum of £14,435.86 with other payments of £43,767.62 having been approved since the last meeting a total of £52,203.48.

FG163/02/19 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

9.1 Cllr Watkins indicated that a meeting had been held on the 19th February at which the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group when various documents were reviewed and approved. The timelines had slipped slightly mainly in relation to the Viability Assessment which is one of the main requirements of the Plan. The Steering Group had to regrettably authorise a new consultant to conduct this vital work and would like the Finance & General Purposes Committee to authorise this due to the timescales involved. The company being appointed being

Three Dragons at a cost of £3,900 plus VAT; this company was known to the other retained consultant Enplan.

Cllr Watkins stated that there would be two more Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meetings e.g., 26th February and 5th March 2019 in order for the Parish Council at an Extraordinary Meeting on 13th March 2019 to approve the Plan being submitted under Regulation 15 to the District Council.

9.2 RECOMMENDATION

Councillors NOTED the information and slight extension to timescales and all APPROVED additional expenditure in relation to the production by 5th March 2019 of the Viability Assessment, the contract awarded to Three Dragons C/O M.E.D., Planning Limited in the sum of £3,900+VAT.

FG164/02/19 OPERATIONAL MATTERS

- 10.1** The Operations Report had been distributed with the Agenda. The Chairman stated that the report covered all operational aspects of the Council's estates/assets, including expenditure taken under delegated powers, health & safety and proposed future expenditure authorisation.

Council should consider and authorise the expenditure required within the report.

Cllr Watkins stated that he did not feel that the bi-fold doors unless a major health and safety hazard should be repaired until decisions in relation to the Leisure Centre had been taken; Councillors agreed with this stance.

Beeson House

The Clerk reported that in relation to Beeson House, the Council have a long standing contract with Schindler Lifts in relation to the lift within Beeson House. Under the head lease the Council is required to maintain the lift, whilst the District Council are responsible for its replacement. As such the Council's contract covers all maintenance, call outs and parts; much of this cost is recoverable from tenants of the building. It is thought prudent to retain the 'gold' cover as replacement parts could be expensive with the lift having been in place since 2006.

The Clerk's view was that based on the lift being in excess of 13 years in age and with the Council having no budget for major repairs/parts for the lift, then her advice would be to continue the contract with Schindler Lifts. The Clerk gave an example of how much for example a small bulb in the main lift might cost.

Cllr Scoon stated that he did not believe this and stated that he had spoken to the Operations Manager who had agreed that were other costs to be saved with four differing price bands ranging from £550 per annum (basic cover no parts) to £1389.00 per annum for quarterly services, 24/7 breakdown cover but no parts. Alternatively, the Gold Standard Cover recommended by the Clerk would be £2057.47. Cllr Scoon stated that the existing contract was for five years and had been previously rolled forward and expired in 2021.

The Clerk indicated that her view was that the best option for the Council was the Gold Cover. Cllr Neale stated that all the charges to Beeson House were recharged through service charges, the Council's element being the larger portion of those costs. Cllr Scoon did not believe that this additional cost to be cost effective. Cllr Watkins stated that dependent on what was in the sub-lease the Council may have limited options. The Clerk informed the Committee that to date Horsham District Council had not provided as per the original agreement the tenant's sub-leases, all tenants with the exception of one had tenancies at will and therefore effectively could give one month's notice. Cllr Watkins stated that the way the service charges worked was that the charges were incurred during the financial year and recharged in the next he could see why although Cllr Scoon made a valid point why in this instance the Gold Cover could be the better option.

A further discussions ensued with questions raised as to why the contract was being investigated and secondly the Clerk asked to investigate whether it would be possible to extend the cover by 1, 3 or 5 years and the costs involved in relation to future contracts.

Cllr Moore asked the Clerk whether there was any progress on the water leaks in Beeson House from the roof, the Clerk stated that there were ongoing discussions with the District Council's appointed management company Lambert Smith Hampton. A representative of LSH had implied that it may be that the roof would require replacement although the Clerk had been informed that it may be that it may be appropriate to carry out patch repairs.

Under the terms of the lease the District Council were she believed responsible for the maintenance and repairs of the roof and indeed had a sinking fund to take account of such costs; the Clerk did not therefore expect tenants to incur further costs. Ongoing discussions will continue regarding this.

The Clerk to discuss the matter of Beeson House lift with the Operations Manager ascertaining the potential costs for 1, 3 or 5 year extensions and question the existing contract expiry date of 2021 which would negate the need to change at this point in time.

The Clerk stated that the Christmas Lights had been taken into storage by the Council's contractors, however, it was noted that some of the

components had not worked and that many of these required maintenance to ensure that the lights were fit for purpose in future years. The cost of a full maintenance would be £1402.41+VAT+Delivery Cost, whilst a repair to the broken strings on five of the motifs would be £929.68+VAT+Delivery.

A short discussion took place on the question of the Christmas Lights and it was felt that the Council should delay on the repair until the start of the new financial year and then deduct from the budget for Christmas Lights; Councillor agreed with this. Cllr Watkins also proposed that as and when the Christmas analysis was complete that the balance be provided as previously as agreed to the new Community Partnership.

It was AGREED by all that the Clerk should provide for the next meeting the analysis of the Christmas Event in order that Members can evaluate the amount which the Council wishes to provide to the new Community Partnership as a grant towards their future management of the Southwater Christmas Event.

It was AGREED by all present that the maintenance and repairs to the lights be left until the new financial year.

10.2 RECOMMENDATION

Councillors NOTED and APPROVED the contents and expenditure as contained within the Operational Manager's report but that the bi-fold door repairs be delayed until the new financial year due to the impending changes at the Leisure Centre the caveat being that should this represent a health and safety risk then the Clerk should discuss with the Chairman and Vice Chairman before proceeding.

FG165/02/19 ROMAN LANE, SOUTHWATER

- 11.1** Councillors to receive an update in relation to the formal adoption of the public open space and play area from Bovis Homes together with commuted sums.

The Clerk stated that it was unlikely that the official transfer can be carried out prior to year-end, due to the fact that there are still a number of items outstanding in terms of conditions which Bovis are required to carry out. The Clerk had suggested a pragmatic approach to the planning officer concerned and he will discuss this with his line manager's and Park Services. Horsham District Council's legal services will be sending a letter to the Company Secretary of Bovis Homes.

The Chairman of Council, Cllr Watkins asked why this land transfer had taken so long, the Clerk stated that she had been pushing District Council officers for over five years, the apparent problems being in relation to

planning conditions which the developer had not complied with. A variety of site meetings had taken place but things had not moved on.

The Chairman stated that he would be taking this up at a future meeting with the Directors of Leisure Service and Planning. The Chairman of the Meeting expressed concerned that the deadline for the use of such development gain was fast approaching. The Clerk stated that she had also asked District Council officers whether the legal sums could be transferred to cover the Parish Council's costs in this matter. There was a query as to whether the commuted sums were index linked, but it was thought that possibly not and that the District Council already had the monies awaiting transfers taking place.

The Clerk to check whether the commuted sums in relation to this development were indeed index linked or whether the monies were currently being held by the District Council.

- 11.2 Members NOTED the current position regarding the land and commuted sum transfer.**

FG166/02/19 ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE – SOUTHWATER COUNTRY PARK

- 12.1** To receive an update on the Parish Council's application to the District Council for registration of the Country Park as an Asset of Community Value.

The Chairman stated that this land had now been incorporated in the District Council's Register as an Asset of Community Value. The Clerk was asked what this meant, the Clerk responded that should the District Council every wish to sell the area of the Country Park which had been registered it would first of all have to ask the community as to whether it wished to purchase the land; normally this would be a commercial value.

Members NOTED and APPROVED the information received in that Southwater Country Park had attained the status of an Asset of Community Value.

FG167/02/19 COMMUNITY WARDENS

- 13.1** The Clerk informed members that Cllr Timson and herself had held an interview in relation to one of the posts available in Southwater for a Community Warden; this person had proven extremely satisfactory. District Council would now advertise in order to fill the second vacancy; advertisements were schedule to go out on Friday 22nd February 2019. Members were delighted to hear the news. Cllr Timson was hopeful that the District Council would have lots of applicants for the second position.

Cllr Cole thanked Cllr Timson for her work on the rota.

Councillors NOTED the information received.

FG168/02/19 POLICING MATTERS

14.1 To consider policing matters in relation to the community of Southwater.

14.2 **There were no matters to be reported at the time of the meeting.**

FG169/02/19 EASTEDS BARN

The Chairman proposed, this being seconded by Cllr Watkins that the second part of the agenda item be taken in open session and moved forward.

15.2 To receive a report from the Chairman on the recent reoccurred vandalism at Easteds Barn.

The Chairman indicated that further vandalism by way of graffiti had taken place and had been reported to the police by the Operations Manager.

The Chairman proposed that this section of the meeting exclude the press and public due to the nature of the business to be discussed this being contractual. This was seconded by Cllr Watkins and APPROVED by all concerned.

15.1 “Confidential Minute”

FG170/02/19 PERSONNEL & PENSIONS**

16.1 “Confidential Minute”

FG171/02/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting being Wednesday, 20th March 2019.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.