



## **SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL**

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**Minutes of the Finance & General Purpose Committee meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2019 in the Council Chamber, Beeson House, Southwater, West Sussex, RH13 9LA commencing at 7.30pm.**

**Present:**        **Councillors:** M Neale (Chairman), P Flores Moore (Vice-Chairman), G Watkins, G Cole, G Scoon, D Moore, N Knott and H Timson

**Members of the Public:**    17

**Clerk:** Dawn Spouge

**Press:** Not Present

### **ACTIONS**

*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 Chairman. In the event of a fire alarm sounding, everyone should evacuate the building via the exits indicated.*

*The Chairman advised that the meeting was being recorded.*

**1. Public Forum – (maximum 3 minutes per person with an overall limit of 15 minutes). All parishioners wishing to speak, must make their name known to the Clerk prior to the commencement of the meeting.**

Mr Colin Young asked the Council whether they planned to take any enforcement action against Easteds Barn for failing to retain the permitted number of parking spaces. The spaces are causing traffic issues due to the increased number of parked cars on the road. He referenced the Council's action against the Cock Inn Pub for breaching listed building rules. The Chairman responded stating that the Council had, indeed, notified the Enforcement Team at Horsham District Council about the Cock Inn Pub. However, Little Barn Owls, the current tenant of Easteds Barn had submitted a travel plan; as a result, Horsham District Council was prepared to allow an amendment to the original scheme for the car park and this could be regularised by a retrospective planning application.

Mr Kevin Hanneby spoke regarding the grant application for a speed gun submitted by the Christ's Hospital Community Speed Watch Group. He informed members that the Group are currently borrowing one from Sussex Police but only for six months when they would need to purchase one. Mr Hanneby enquired whether the Parish Council could help with the purchase. The Chairman responded that it was an item on the Agenda and would be discussed later.

*Mr Hanneby and others that had attended with an interest in the speed gun left the meeting, Councillor Timson had then gone to ask if they wished to stay for the Agenda item. They expressed that they did not wish to stay.*

**2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Vickers

### **3. Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Watkins, Moore, Timson and Flores Moore, all declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 13

### **4. Minutes**

Councillors noted the Minutes from the last meeting held on 2 August 2019 were approved at the last Full Parish Council meeting that was held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

### **5. To deal with matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 2 August 2019 not covered elsewhere on the agenda**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of 2 August 2019.

### **6. Chairman's Report**

The Chairman advised the Committee that Councillor Whitear had resigned due to other work commitments. Councillors expressed their regret and stated that he would be very much missed.

The Chairman thanked the WI for the work that had been carried out on the garden and surrounding area at the War Memorial in preparation for Remembrance Sunday.

The Chairman updated members on the advice for receiving tenders and quotes for expenditure. Tenders do not have to be sought unless the expenditure is over £60,000. However, as already current practice, three quotes would need to be sought for the works required. If of course not all quotes come back, then the Council would need to decide on either making a decision on the quotes received, or seeking further quotes with consideration given of time scales.

If the expenditure is over £25,000, the Parish Council would need to publish the quote accepted on the Public Contracts Database, which would be done by the Parish Office.

### **7. Correspondence**

There was no correspondence to be considered by Members.

### **8. Accounts**

Following the advice given by the Internal Auditor, a new accounts information report would be published on the Council's website for the public to access.

There had been some questions in the past from Councillors receiving the Accounts information because the month had not yet been closed and this had created queries. It was decided that in future only the previously closed month would be sent to prevent this and allow clearer information to be circulated to Councillors.

#### **(i) Bank Reconciliation**

Councillor Flores-Moore proposed approval of the bank reconciliation of 30<sup>th</sup> September, seconded by Councillor Moore and **AGREED** unanimously.

#### **(ii) Debtors and Creditors**

The Clerk updated the committee regarding a long outstanding debt from one of the hirers, Bumpy Jumpy, of Southwater Leisure Centre. A number of attempts had been made to create a payment plan with Bumpy Jumpy but, to date, no response had been received so the Council would be taking legal action.

Councillor Flores-Moore proposed to approve list of debtors and creditors of 16<sup>th</sup> October 2019, seconded by Councillor Moore and **AGREED** unanimously.

<p><b><u>9.Payment Schedule-to approve the payment schedule of Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2019</u></b> Councillors considered the payments, Councillor Cole Proposed approval of the payment schedule of £100,505.21, seconded by Councillor Moore and <b>AGREED</b> unanimously.</p> <p><b><u>10.Bank Accounts</u></b> Concerns were raised about the large amount of funds being held in a single bank account, particularly following receipt of the second instalment of the Council precept. Members suggested opening a second account to secure better protection. It also was suggested that “ring fenced monies” should be allocated in a separate account. It was <b>AGREED</b> that the Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Chairman and Vice Chairman should seek advice from the internal auditor on these issues.</p> <p><b><u>11.Budget and Precept 2020/21</u></b> A workshop will be held on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2019 to discuss and provide input into the budget.</p> <p><b><u>12.DBS Checks including Enhanced DBS Checks for Staff and Councillors</u></b> A discussion took place on whether Councillors and Council employees should be DBS checked and concerns raised about the cost involved and the requisite “check” that would be required. Thereafter by a majority decision the Committee <b>RESOLVED</b> that all Councillors should have advanced DBS checks (four in favour, one against and two abstentions)</p> <p><b><u>13. To receive an update of the Expressions of Interest for the running of the Laurie Apted Building including the specification for the future running of the building</u></b> There were two expressions of interest. The Heads of Terms have been sent to both parties and a meeting will be taking place with one of them on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2019.</p>	<p>Clerk/GW Asst Clerk/MN</p>
<p><b><u>14.To note receipt of the new NALC guidance on model financial regulations 2019</u></b> It was duly noted that the new NALC financial regulations 2019 had been published. The Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Chairman and Vice Chairman would read them to ensure that the Council’s own financial regulations were consistent with the recent published national guidance.</p> <p><b><u>15.To receive and consider a grant application from Christ’s Hospital Community Speed watch Group</u></b> A grant application for £514.40 to purchase a speed gun had been submitted to the Council by the Christ Hospital’s Community Speed Watch Group. Councillor Watkins raised a point of order that the Group was not formally constituted so it could not receive Council grant monies. Accordingly, it was agreed to revisit the matter at the next meeting when consideration would be given to the Council purchasing the equipment and sharing it with the Group. Councillor Watkins indicated that, in the interim, he would speak to the group and enquire whether they would be prepared to contribute to purchasing the equipment.</p>	<p>Clerk/GW Asst Clerk/MN</p>
<p><b><u>16.To receive a report from the Youth Leader on the Old Skate Park and discuss the options</u></b> Members noted that the report indicated that, although some repairs have been carried out to the park, overall it was in a poor state of repair. The report also mentioned the possibility of a “clean up” day for 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019 but no suggestions as to how the repairs could be funded. Councillor Watkins informed members that Ramesh from Budgens was prepared to donate £250 towards the repairs and that he, too, would be prepared to help raise the funds.</p>	<p>Nxt Planning Mtg</p>
<p><b><u>17.To receive, consider and approve the Risk Management Schedule</u></b> Members considered the above, some amendments were agreed upon, Councillor Timson proposed acceptance, seconded by Councillor Moore and it was <b>AGREED</b> unanimously to <b>APPROVE</b> the duly amended Risk Management Schedule before them.</p>	<p>Asst Clerk</p>
<p><b><u>18.Operational Matters- To receive, discuss and approve the Operational Report</u></b> Members received, discussed and duly <b>APPROVED</b> the contents of the Operational Report and in particular: (i) it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to spend £895 on fencing the northern section of the football pitch by the Leisure Centre; (ii) following a survey of the Leisure Centre a leaking roof was</p>	

discovered and urgent electrical work was required. As a consequence Councillors **RESOLVED** to spend £7,188 on repairing the roof. (iii) The Clerk updated Members that the Council may not have to purchase Christmas trees for this year as Horsham District Council may be offering two for free.

**19. Notice boards- to receive an update on notice boards**

Councillor Timson referred to the large number of notice boards in the Parish, their locations and that some were in a poor state of repair. Reference was made also to the request that had been made for public participation for preferred locations but, in the absence of any engagement, Councillor Timson recommended the removal/relocation of some notice boards including; the notice boards at Tower Hill be removed, those at Cedar Drive to remain and that the one at Blakes Farm Road would be relocated to the school. It was **AGREED** that the Assistant Clerk should (i) liaise further with Councillor Timson on the remaining notice boards in the Parish and (ii) enquire with Horsham District Council if grants were available for an electric notice board for outside Beeson House.

Asst Clerk

**20. Remembrance Sunday**

**(i) to consider and approve the Parish Council purchase of a wreath**

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that a wreath should be purchased for Remembrance Sunday

**(ii) to receive and consider a grant application from Holy Innocents Church for £180 to cover the costs of printing the Remembrance Day Service Sheets**

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to pay Holy Innocents Church a grant of £167 to cover the cost of printing the Remembrance Day Service Sheets.

**21. Easteds Barn- to receive an update on Easteds Barn**

Members were informed that, for the third time, a travel plan had been submitted to West Sussex County Council for their approval and a retrospective planning application had been lodged to reflect the changes. To avoid cost implications for the Parish Council, Councillor Watkins would be dealing with the matter and is waiting for a date for a meeting with the Planning Officer. He also advised the Committee that the rent is now up to date and the tenant is paying rent in accordance with the terms of their lease. He will be meeting a contractor about the lights on the path and would give an update on this when more information was obtained.

GW

**22. Neighbourhood Plan- to receive an update and consider any matters on the Neighbourhood Plan**

The Plan is currently undergoing its Regulation 16 consultation and, whilst there have been some objections from developers, most of these have been resolved. The main objection was from West Sussex County Council and the impact that the allocated development would have on Hop Oast roundabout. Responses to the objections and representations would be submitted to the Parish Council and Horsham District Council within the next seven to ten days. Thereafter, the District Council will appoint an Examiner to carry out the Examination of the Neighbourhood Plan and prepare a report. Following a successful examination it is hoped to take the plan to its referendum in February 2020.

**23. Date of next meeting**

The date of the next meeting will be 18<sup>th</sup> December 2019

The meeting ended at 8.45pm.