

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **EXTRAORDINARY MEETING** of LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL held on **THURSDAY 26 MAY 2016** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting commenced at 8.00 p.m.

**Present:**

Parish Councillors: Mr. W. Blunden (Chairman)  
Mr. M. Allen  
Mr. S. Henton  
Mr. S. Hodgson  
Mr. R. Pickett  
Mr. R. Plass  
Mr. S. Shortland  
Mr. C. Snowling

**In attendance:** Mrs. C. Irwin (Clerk)  
Mrs. T. Ely (Responsible Financial Officer)

**Not present:** Parish Councillors Mrs. J. Durrant, Mr. A. Gomme, Mrs. M. Hersey and Mrs V. Upton..

**171. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.**

171.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Durrant, Gomme, Hersey and Upton and the reasons were accepted.

**172. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

172.1 There were no declarations of interest from Members in respect of any items on the Agenda.

**173. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.**

173.1 There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

**174. CONSIDERATION OF THE FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL.**

174.1 The report on the review carried out by Councillor Plass had been received by Council at the meeting held on 10 March 2016. In accordance with the instructions received from the External Auditors, PKF Littlejohn, Members considered the findings of the review and the recommendations:

- To undertake a review of Internal Auditors, to ensure that the current provision was adequate for the Council's needs and cost effective.
- To undertake a review of existing accounting procedures to ensure that accounting was being carried out in the most efficient and up-to-date way
- To carry out further work on Risk Assessment, aiming to deliver during the current year.

It was **AGREED** to refer these recommendations to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for action.

**175. REPORT OF THE INTERNAL AUDITOR FOLLOWING HIS INSPECTION ON 21 MAY.**

175.1 The Internal Auditor had carried out his inspection on 21 May following which he had completed the Internal Audit section of the Annual Return, with no matters reported "by exception" and he had submitted his written report the same day. These had been circulated to all Members and were duly **NOTED**. Two items had been reported for the Council's consideration:

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- 1) Risk Assessment: there are a few areas where the responsibility for monitoring certain issues should be added. It was **CONFIRMED** that this should be referred to the F&GP Committee, as stated under Minute 174.1)
- 2) Insurance – Hirer's Liability / Indemnity. This provides cover to Councils where Premises are let. It is usual to have this in a Council's Insurance Schedule and it is recommended that arrangements are made with the Insurer. It was **NOTED** that the Clerk had followed this up and a reply had been received from the Council's Customer Account Manager at Zurich Municipal, advising that Hirer's liability would cover against damage to other property and compensation for injury to third parties where they were at fault, in situations where the hirers would not be expected to have their own insurance in place (e.g. wedding reception / birthday parties etc). Formed groups and associations would be expected to have their own insurance in place. The Council's tenants at the Clock Tower House should have their own insurance in place to cover their activities/liabilities and the Council should seek proof of this and keep a record.

The Hirers liability section of cover had been added to the Council's insurance schedule at no extra cost for the forthcoming year and a revised schedule had been issued.

### 176. ANNUAL RETURN 2015/16 SECTION 1 (ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT).

- 176.1 It was **NOTED** that Members were required to acknowledge their responsibility for ensuring that there was a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. It was also **NOTED** that the Annual Return had been redesigned following a change in the Regulations (Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015): from this year the Council was required to approve the Annual Governance Statement (now Section 1) before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and that both approvals must be decided by resolution.

The Council having given due consideration to the Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Control and to the report of the Internal Auditor (Minutes 174.1 and 175.1 above), the Chairman took Members through each of the statements listed in Section 1 (Annual Governance Statement). Members considered their responses and confirmed the statements to the best of their knowledge and belief.

It was **AGREED**: to enter YES to each of Statements 1-8 and N/A to Statement 9 (which related to trust funds).

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED**: to **APPROVE** Section 1 of the Annual Return (Annual Governance Statement), duly completed, and that it should be **SIGNED** by the Chairman of Council and the Clerk.

### 177. ANNUAL RETURN 2015/16 SECTION 2 (ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS).

- 177.1 Members had all received, in advance of this meeting, a copy of the Accounts documentation and Section 2 of the Annual Return (the Accounting Statement). It was **NOTED** that:

- Section 2 of the Annual Return, Supporting Notes and Balance Sheet had been completed and signed by the Responsible Financial Officer before presenting it to the Council, as required
- Because payments made during the year had exceeded £200,000, the Council automatically met the requirements for Intermediate Level procedures and additional information had to be provided: a copy of the Bank Statements for each balance on the Bank Reconciliation and details of any loans outstanding at year end (including copies of the detailed budgets for 2015/16 and 2016/17 as evidence that the repayments were correctly budgeted for).
- The Accounts were presented in the form of Receipts and Payments rather than Income and Expenditure.
- The Receipts and Payments account recorded receipts of £185,922.59 and payments of £238,561.46
- The closing balance, as at 31 March 2016 was £216,851.96 which included petty cash in hand of £231.90 .

There were no queries from Members on the accounts.

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It was **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Accounts for 2015/16 and that Section 2 of the Annual Return, together with the Supporting Notes for the Statement of Accounts and the Balance Sheet, should be **SIGNED** by the Chairman of Council.

### 178. EXERCISE OF ELECTORS' RIGHTS: DATES FOR THE PUBLIC INSPECTION PERIOD.

178.1 It was **NOTED** that under the new regulations, the appointed auditors no longer had the authority to set the dates for the public inspection period. PKF Littlejohn had, however, offered suggested dates and the Council was required to confirm that these had been adopted or to notify Littlejohn of alternative dates chosen.

It was **AGREED** to confirm to PKF Littlejohn that the Parish Council had adopted their suggested dates of Monday 6 June to Friday 15 July 2016 inclusive as the public inspection period.

### 179. ANNUAL REPORT.

179.1 The draft Annual Report for publication in the July edition of the Lindfield Life Magazine had been circulated. It was **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the Annual Report as drafted.

### 180. EXPRESSION OF THANKS.

180.1 Members acknowledged with thanks the considerable amount of work entailed in producing the Annual Accounts.

The meeting concluded at 8.14 p.m.