

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 02 NOVEMBER 2017** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting began at 20:00

Present:

Parish Councillors: Mr. S. Henton (Chairman)
Mr. R. Pickett
Mrs. S. Richmond
Mrs. V. Upton
Mr. W. Blunden

Also present: 1 member of the public (who left after item 282)

Not present: Mr. M. Damsell
Mr. M. Allen
Mr. R. Plass (Vice Chairman)

In attendance: Mr A. Funnell (Clerk)

The Chairman opened the meeting, welcomed those present, and announced the emergency procedure for the King Edward Hall.

266. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.

266.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Allen, Damsell & Plass. The reasons were accepted.

267. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

267.1 Councillor Blunden declared a personal interest in item 274.1 A-Administration – Christmas Boxes as he is the Chairman of the King Edward Hall Management Committee. He advised that he would not take part in the discussions about the item.

268. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

268.1 A member of the public made two points:
Proposed toilets on Lindfield Common – The Council had for 12 years looked at the issues of public toilets on the Common. A large number of sites have been dismissed as not feasible. There seems little point in continuing this project. There are two separate departments within Mid Sussex County Council that will be concerned with the proposed toilets on Lindfield Common (Leisure Services, and Planning). The two departments are therefore likely to have separate views and the Parish Council cannot expect Mid Sussex District Council to have a common view.

Budget 2018/2019 – The Council's Committees should set their objectives first before considering the budgets. Once the objectives are set then they can prioritise. A rigorous approach is needed in setting the budget.

The Chairman **NOTED** the comments and advised that a lot of behind the scenes work goes into preparing the budget.

269. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 07 SEPTEMBER 2017.

269.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 7 September 2017. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

270. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

270.1 The Chairman made no announcements.

271. ACTION LIST.

271.1 This was **NOTED**.

272. GRANTS AND DONATIONS:

272.1 Grants budget: available funds. It was **NOTED** that there was a balance of £950 in the grants and donations budget.

272.2 Councillor Upton reported on behalf of the Grants Panel as follows:

Grant request from West Sussex Mediation Service

NOTED: A letter of request had been received dated 31st August 2017 from West Sussex Mediation Service. The charity operates in the local area and have advised that they have assisted residents who reside in Lindfield. The charity specialises in conflict resolution, particularly between neighbours in dispute, and among family members.

It was **AGREED** to donate £100.00

272.3 Letters of thanks received. It was **NOTED** that letters of thanks had been received from 4Sight, Victim Support (Sussex Area), Central and South Sussex Citizen Advice, and Lindfield Bonfire Society Ltd.

273. BUDGET PROGRESS 2017/18.

273.1 The budget progress reports in respect of payments made to 30 September 2017, which had been circulated, were **NOTED** as follows:

Finance and General Purposes Committee: a total of £52,416.73 had been spent from the budget of £139,130.

Analysis of Administration Budget: a total of £48,159.80 had been spent from the budget of £123,130

Overall Council Budget 2017/18: a total of £69,012.82 had been spent from the budget of £197,080, of which £13,873.46 had been spent from the Environment and Amenities Committee's budget of £47,750. A total of £2271.88 had been spent from the P&T Traffic Study budget of £10,000.

Reserves: £181.50 had been spent from the Clock Tower House sinking fund and reserve. £176.25 had been spent from the Denman's Lane Toilets maintenance sinking fund.

274.1 BUDGET 2018/2019 - TO NOTE THE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, CLERK, & RFO. TO CONSIDER THE BUDGET PAPER.

It was reported that discussions had taken place between Committee Chairman, Clerk and RFO regarding the budget. The Chairman presented the paper and the following was agreed, subject to review at subsequent meetings

Provisional Finance & General Purpose Budget

	2017/18 Allocation	2018/19 Proposed	Comments
A. Administration			
1 Salaries (inc Admin charges)	58,000.00	58,000.00	Keep. Within target.
2 NIC paid by Parish Council	5,000.00	5,000.00	Keep
3 Pension paid by Parish Council	12,000.00	10,500.00	Reduce. Calculated to included pension for 3 members of staff employed on current terms.
4 Insurance	2,500.00	2,500.00	Keep
5 Postage	600.00	500.00	Reduce. Within target
6 Stationery	500.00	500.00	Keep.

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

7 Photocopier: Rental/Charges	1,200.00	1,400.00	Increase.
8 Travel Expenses (Staff)	200.00	200.00	Keep.
9 Training	2,500.00	3,000.00	Increase. New Councillors & staff plus data protection
10 Room Hire	800.00	800.00	Keep.
11 Auditor	1,700.00	1,500.00	Reduce.
12 Councillors' Travel Expenses	300.00	300.00	Keep.
13 Catering/Cleaning	450.00	450.00	Keep. Investigate cleaning.
14 Christmas Boxes	30.00	30.00	Keep.
15 PWLB: Repayment of Loan	25,500.00	25,000.00	Reduce. Capital reducing year by year
16 Business Rate	2,500.00	3,500.00	Increase. Keep as a contingency.
17 Electric	900.00	1,000.00	Increase.
18 Water	250.00	250.00	Keep.
19 Telephone	1,500.00	1,700.00	Increase.
20 Security System	400.00	400.00	Keep.
21 Fire Extinguishers / Fire Alarm system	300.00	300.00	Keep.
22 Purchase of Equipment	1,500.00	2,000.00	Increase. Various purchases need to be made
23 Maintenance of Office Equipment	1,000.00	1,000.00	Keep
24 Service charge: Lindfield Enterprise Park	650.00	650.00	Keep
25 Health & Safety	250.00	250.00	Keep
26 Publications	200.00	200.00	Keep
27 IT & Website Maintenance	600.00	2000.00	Increase. Email accounts, software & hardware upgrades.
28 Miscellaneous	200.00	200.00	Keep.
29 Additional Staffing costs	1,000.00	1,000.00	Keep.
30 Rental: Upstairs Room Clock Tower House	600.00	650.00	Increase.
B. Chairman's Fund	£500	£500 No change	Clerk & Deputy Clerk retirement gift.
C. Grants/Donations	£2,000	£2,350 Increase of £350	The Parish Council had a policy with laid-down criteria for making grants and donations to organisations that in some way benefit the residents of Lindfield. Most of these payments fall within the provisions of S.137.
D. Annual memberships / subscriptions	£2,500	£2,600 Increase of £100	A list of annual membership and subscriptions is considered each year at the Annual Meeting. The remaining outstanding subscriptions are not expected to exceed the budget. Increase covers inflation.
E. The Lindfield Village Directory and Year Book	£6,500	£6,500 No change	Although the production of the Village Directory now runs at a loss, there is still evidence of sufficient interest for it to be continued. For the 2018 edition 3800 copies have been ordered at a cost of £5,240.00 plus VAT. The current supplier had advised that the anticipated cost for next year is as follows: £5320.00 plus VAT for the same 72pp, or £5,590.00 plus VAT for an increase up to 80pp. Lindfield Rural Parish Council will be invited to contribute towards the cost of providing copies of the Directory to their residents and the calculation will include the new housing.
F. Newsletter / Annual Report	£2,000	£2,000 No change	Ideally one annual report and four newsletters should be published each year and the cost of printing etc. be budgeted for. The newsletter and the annual report are published in the Lindfield Life magazine. The current rate is £100 per page. Newsletters are usually four pages each and the Annual Report this year was five pages.
G. Members' Allowances	£2,500	£2,500 No change	The sum of £2,500 was allocated in the budget for 2015/16. The uptake continues to be modest, although each elected Member is entitled to claim a basic allowance of £516 per annum, with the Chairman entitled to an enhanced allowance of £774 (Full Council – Minute 355.3 – 16.01.14, since when there had been no increase.) It is for individual Members to decide whether or not to take all or part of their allowance.

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Finance & General Purpose Reserves		
Capital reserves	£84,170.00	includes toilets on the common
Clocktower house	£2,236	ongoing project
Clocktower house sinking fund	£4,818.50	ongoing maintenance

F&GP BUDGET TOTAL, AS PROPOSED:

Administration (A) £124,780.00 £1,650 increase from last year

Overall (A-G) £141,230 £2,000 increase from last year

During discussions on the above it was **AGREED** that the Clerk will investigate cleaning options for the office. The potential need for new office equipment was discussed (Projector, Laptop Wi-fi Dongle). It was also acknowledged that there may be an increase in grant applications next year.

275. CLOCK TOWER HOUSE: PROPERTY REPAIRS.

275.1 The Clerk **REPORTED** the following issues that had occurred:

Hot Water Heater

As agreed at Full Council (19th September) the Clerk organised a replacement water heater to be fitted in the office toilets. Unfortunately this had been a protracted situation as we have had two heaters with the same defect and in the end the manufacturer had to supply a working unit. Additionally, the valve under the heater had developed a leak and over one weekend a large amount of water gathered on the toilet floor. The Clerk arranged for the valve to be repaired. This though did not solve the problem and the valve had to be changed. When attempting to change the valve it was noted that the internal stop cock had seized up. The external stop cock could not be located. As a result the plumber had to freeze the pipe in order to change the valve. The company who replaced the valve are going to provide a quote for the internal stop cock.

Toilet leak

The former Clerk made arrangements for remedial work to be carried out on the leaking toilet. This had been completed.

Replacement Toilet Tank

As agreed at Full Council the then Clerk Designate enquired with the plumber about replacing the tank and removing the panelling and tiling the wall. The plumber advised that whilst the tank is old and looks poor it is fact in a good condition. The plumber recommended leaving the system as it is for the time being.

276. DATA PROTECTION: TO NOTE FORTHCOMING CHANGES IN LEGISLATION WHICH MAY REQUIRE A REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.

276.1 The Chairman **NOTED** the Clerk's report. Both the Chairman, and Clerk asked if any Councillors would be willing to assist the Clerk in preparing for the new Data Protection legislation. It was **NOTED** that Councillors Blunden and Richmond agreed to assist the Clerk.

277. PARISH OFFICE: TO AUTHORISE THE PURCHASE OF: A KEY SAFE, & PDF EDITING SOFTWARE THAT ALLOWS THE REDACTION OF CONFIDENTIAL DETAILS.

277.1 The Committee considered the above requests and **AGREED** to authorise the Clerk to purchase the items.

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

278. DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY

278.1 The Chairman advised that in the main he agreed with the draft policy but suggested a couple of changes. These changes were that bank statements should be retained for 6 years and that Job Applications will be retained for 6 months. It was **AGREED** that the draft policy should be amended and presented to Full Council for approval.

279. LINDFIELD PARISH DIRECTORY

The Clerk **REPORTED** that the 2018 diaries had been delivered to the office and that arrangements would be made to organise their distribution. The possibility of delivering a letter regarding the planned Traffic Study Consultation at the same time as the Parish Directory was **NOTED**. It was **AGREED** that this would be a matter for the Planning and Traffic Committee to consider. It was **NOTED** that the Clerk had also queried with the current supplier whether their costs will be increasing next year. We have been advised that; "The anticipated cost for next year is as follows: £5320.00 plus VAT for the same 72pp, or £5590.00 plus VAT for an increase up to 80pp. Please note the above is an estimation of the anticipated costs, and may be subject to change when time comes to produce an official quotation"

280. PROPOSED PUBLIC TOILETS ON THE COMMON: UPDATE.

280.1 No further action had taken place. It was **NOTED** that Councillor Richmond would be joining the Public Toilets on the Common Working Group.

281. INVESTMENT OF FUNDS.

281.1 The Chairman **REPORTED** there was approximately £174,000 of funds that were not protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. It was **NOTED** that the RFO was investigating further investment options. It was **AGREED** that this item be reported to Full Council.

282. TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING AND CONFERENCE EVENTS.

282.1 It was **NOTED** that staff and Councillors had attended the following events:

- Councillors Blunden and Upton have attended the Chairs Network Day
- Councillor Richmond had attended an Introduction to Planning training session
- The Clerk had attended:
 - Clerks Networking Day
 - New Clerks Training
 - The Basics of Being a Clerk
- The Clerk will be attending a further two training courses this month.
- The Deputy Clerk will be attending an MSDC planning application training course this month.

283. RISK MANAGEMENT

283.1 There were no items to address. Councillor Blunden advised that going forward the Deputy Clerk will be able to assist with risk assessment due to his background.

284. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

284.1 No other items of business were raised.

This public part of the meeting ended at 21.04 p.m.

285. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [AND PRESS].

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

285.1 It was **RESOLVED**, in accordance with Standing Order no. 3(d) and the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960 section 1(2), to exclude the public and press from the following part of the meeting, by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons (staffing matters).

286. Clock Tower House: Lease.

286.1 It was **NOTED** that discussions were continuing.

The meeting concluded at 21:11