

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 03 MARCH 2016**, at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting began at 8.00 p.m.

Present:

Parish Councillors: Mr. S. Henton (Chairman)
Mr. M. Allen
Mr. W. Blunden
Mr. A Gomme
Mr. S. Shortland
Mrs. V. Upton

In attendance:

Mrs C. Irwin (Clerk)
Mrs. T. Ely (Responsible Financial Officer)

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

89. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.

89.1 Apologies were received from Councillors Pickett and Plass and the reasons were accepted.

90. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

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

91. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

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

92. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 07 JANUARY 2016.

92.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 07 January 2016. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

93. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

93.1 There were no Chairman's announcements.

94. ACTION LIST.

94.1 The Action List was **NOTED**.

95. GRANTS AND DONATIONS.

95.1 Grant Budget. It was **NOTED**: The unspent balance on the grants register currently stood at £1,050.00.

95.2 Councillor Allen reported on behalf of the Grants Panel as follows:

Grant request from Outset Youth Action.

NOTED: It had been agreed at the last meeting that further information about how the organisation's activities would benefit the local community, should be sought from Outset Youth Action before this grant request could be considered. An emailed request and subsequent reminder had been sent, but no information had been provided.

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As this was the last F&GP Committee meeting of the financial year, it was **AGREED** that Outset Youth Action would need to submit a new request for consideration in the new financial year.

95.3 Grant request from Lindfield Arts Festival

NOTED: The Arts Festival board of trustees and managing committee had requested a grant to support their 2016 event which would be taking place over the weekend of the 17 and 18 September 2016. In particular a financial contribution had been requested towards the funding for a collection of workshops that would be led by professional actors, musicians, artists, dancers, authors and designers who would like to provide free vocational learning access to their professions. These workshops would be offered free of charge to participants.

It had been disappointing to note that Lindfield Parish Council had not received any public acknowledgement in respect of the grant that had been awarded in the previous year for the 2015 event.

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant of £250 to the Lindfield Arts Festival 2016 under the powers granted by Section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972 to contribute towards expenses related to entertainment and the arts. It was **AGREED** to request acknowledgement in the Lindfield Arts Festival publicity in respect of the 2016 event.

95.4 Letter of thanks received. A letter of thanks had been received from 4Sight for a grant of £150.

96. **BUDGET 2015/2016 (Budget Progress Reports to 31 January 2016).**

96.1 It was **NOTED** that the budget progress reports to 31 January 2016 had been circulated.

96.2 Finance and General Purposes Committee: to review payments made to 31 January 2016.

NOTED: That the F&GP Committee's budget progress to 31 January 2016 showed that from a budget of £128,020 a total of £97,579 had been spent.

96.3 Analysis of Administration Budget to 31 January 2016.

NOTED: That analysis of the Administration budget had showed that to 31 January 2016, from the budget of £112,520 a total of £88,053 had been spent.

96.4 Overall Council Budget 2015 / 16: to review expenditure to 31 January 2016.

It was **NOTED:**

- From the overall total budget of £456,840 the total spent had been £168,978.
- £49,658 had been spent from the total Environment and Amenities Committee budget of £75,400. An additional £26,250 had been spent from the Outstanding Project heading in respect of York paving.
- Nothing had been spent from the total Planning and Traffic Committee miscellaneous budget of £200 and designated reserves of £35,000.
- Expenditure from the General Reserve had included virements agreed by Full Council in respect of the overspent budget heading for Street Lights and paving work. It had also included a payment of fees to the Architects for the cost plan in respect of the Public Toilets on the Common project which could not be taken from the Capital Reserve.
- From the total designated reserves of £170,670 the total spent had been £17,714.

97. **TO CONSIDER REVIEWING THE INVESTMENT OF THE COUNCIL'S FUNDS.**

97.1 It was **NOTED** that the RFO had circulated a paper to initiate a discussion to consider reviewing the investment of the Council's funds.

A summary that had been prepared in respect of the Barclays Bank Business Saver Account which had indicated that on average a balance of between £270,000 and £300,000 had been held each month for the period April 2015 to January 2016. The Barclays Bank Business Current Account had held on average a

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balance of £2,500 each month for the same period. Credit ratings for both Barclays Bank Plc and Barclays Plc had been circulated for the period 21 January 2016, 15 November 2015 and 30 September 2015.

On the 3 July 2015 the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA) had announced changes to depositor and policyholder protection provided by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS). After 31 December 2015 the level of deposit protection had been reduced from £85,000 to £75,000.

- 97.2 Consideration had been given towards the fact that four separate bank accounts would need to be in place in order to secure £300,000 protection under the FSCS. This would be impractical to maintain on a day-to-day basis and many banks were no longer accepting new business. Accessibility to another bank would be essential. Concern was raised regarding the difficulties in setting up and administering more than one bank account. General opinion had not been in favour of changing the Council's existing arrangements.

It was **AGREED** that Councillor Henton would talk to the HSBC Bank Plc to ascertain their credit rating and practicality in being able to open an additional account. He would report his findings at the next Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting.

98. ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INTERBAL AUDIT AND INTERNAL CONTROL PROCEDURES.

- 98.1 It was **NOTED** that as Councillor Henton had responsibility for carrying out quarterly internal audit checks, Councillor Plass had offered to undertake this review and would submit a report to the Full Council meeting on 10 March.

99. PROPOSED PUBLIC CONVENIENCES ON THE COMMON.

- 99.1 To receive the notes of the meeting of the Working Group held on 3 February 2016.
The Working Group had met on 3 February 2016 to discuss the strategy for the public consultation. The notes of the meeting, which had been circulated with the agenda were received. 99.2 To note any matters raised at the meeting with MSDC Officers on 24 February 2016 (verbal report).
The Clerk had provided a verbal report and it was **NOTED** that David Harper and David Terry had requested that a meeting be held on 24 February 2016 with the Clerk and Chairman to discuss the various projects involving the Common. The village map and beacon, and possibly the school footpath, would have to be treated in the same way as the public toilets in terms of formal permissions. MSDC had suggested that these items be covered under one application for planning and consent under the Commons Act 2006. The E&A committee had agreed not to progress the beacon project but would be considering the matter of the map.

It was further **NOTED** that the Clerk had been advised to check with the Legal Officer at MSDC as to whether a notice had to be published in the press, to advertise the public consultation.

- 99.3 To consider recommendations of the Working Group regarding arrangements for the public consultation, including Village Day stall.
Councillor Blunden reported that exhibitions would take place at the Parish Meeting on 28 April, followed in May at the King Edward Hall and Community Room at Lindfield Primary Academy, subject to receiving their agreement. It was intended that a stall be arranged for Village Day to hold a final exhibition provided there would be a sufficient number of staff to manage this.

100. LINDFIELD PARISH DIRECTORY AND YEAR BOOK: TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVE COVER.

- 100.1 A short report which had been circulated with the agenda was **NOTED**. In response to a suggestion from a resident for the covers to be recyclable, this had been investigated and found to be more expensive and impracticable. It was therefore **AGREED** to confirm the order for the 2017 Directories with the present covers.

101. TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING AND CONFERENCE EVENTS.

- 101.1 The Chairman had reported that SSALC had published a list of forthcoming events in their latest bulletin which had been circulated, and confirmed that a full list was displayed on the SSALC website.

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These had included Chairmanship training on 7 June 2016, a New Councillor event on 23 June 2016, HR training on 30 June and a Legal & Finance Day on 14 July 2016. .

It was **AGREED** to authorise bookings on these courses for any Councillors and members of staff who wished to attend.

102. RISK MANAGEMENT (Standing Item).

102.1 It was **NOTED** that a meeting of the Insurance and Risk Management Working Group had still to be arranged.

103. TO NOTE AND CONSIDER LETTER FROM THE SENIOR LICENSING OFFICER AT MSDC REGARDING LICENSING FOR LOCAL EVENTS AND TO NOTE A VERBAL REQUEST FROM THE LINDFIELD ARTS FESTIVAL FOR THE PARISH COUNCIL TO HOLD A PREMISES LICENCE FOR EVENTS TAKING PLACE ON LINDFIELD HIGH STREET.

103.1 It was **NOTED** that the Deputy Clerk had circulated a paper on 3 March 2016 setting out the issues and options relating to the requirement for either a Temporary Event Notices (TENS) or premises licence.

103.2 It was **NOTED** that a letter had been received from Mr Paul Thornton, Senior Licensing Officer on behalf of MSDC dated 1 February 2016 advising that TENS were acknowledged on the basis that less than 500 people would be in attendance at the agreed event. An offence would be committed if alcohol were to be sold or regulated entertainment provided under the authority of a TEN where the numbers at the event had exceeded 499. With immediate effect the Licensing Authority for MSDC would not acknowledge TENS for such events, for example Town Days, Village Carnivals, Festivals, Fairs and Christmas events. It was suggested that an allowance of at least 30 days would be necessary in order to agree a premises licence.

103.4 It was **NOTED** that a verbal request had been received from the Lindfield Arts Festival (LAF) for the Parish Council to hold a premises licence for events taking place on Lindfield High Street. The idea being that this would cover both the annual Village Festival Night and the Lindfield Arts Festival event. It had also been suggested that the premises licence should include a couple of reserve days to allow for one off events that could be planned in the future, such as a royal celebration. The LAF had offered to contribute 50% towards the application fee of £100 and 50% towards the cost of the statutory, prescribed notice procedure fee, up to £200.

Members considered the implications that would result if the Parish Council were to apply for a premises licence. Concern was raised regarding the cost of application, the annual fee that would subsequently be payable and the cost in having to appoint a Designated Premises Supervisor to facilitate the sale of alcohol. A vast amount of responsibility would be placed on the Parish Council.

It was **AGREED** that the Parish Council would not apply for a premises licence. It was further **AGREED** that the Parish Council would write well in advance to stallholders in respect of the Village Festival Night to advise that no alcohol could be sold due to the constraints that had been placed upon the Parish Council by MSDC.

104. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

104.1 Councillor Blunden requested that a meeting of the Administration Sub-Committee be arranged to consider a staffing matter and submit their recommendation to the next F&GP committee meeting.

The public part of the meeting ended at 8.39 p.m.

105. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS.

105.1 The following items of business concerned particular individuals and staffing matters. It was therefore **RESOLVED** in accordance with the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960 Section 1(2) and the Parish Council's Standing Order 3 (d) that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted it as desirable in the public interest that the public [and press] be excluded.

106. RENEWAL OF LICENCE FEE RE: 21 DENMANS LANE AND TO CONSIDER THE FEE FOR 2017/18.

106.1 The Chairman gave a brief background to this item.

- 106.2 Licence 2016/17. It was **AGREED** to renew the licence for 2016/17 and the fee was confirmed.
- 106.3 Licence 2017/18. The licence fee for 2017/18 was reviewed in line with the Environment and Amenities Committee's review of the Allotment rents at the meeting held on 4 February.
- 107. LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME.**
- 107.1 The report circulated with the agenda was **NOTED**.
- 107.2 LGPS Contribution Bandings for 2016/17 (employees' contribution rates).
The contribution rates applicable to Council staff members in the Local Government Pension Scheme were reviewed.
- 107.3 To note employers' contribution rates for 2016/17.
It was **NOTED** that the employers' contribution rate for 2016/17 would be 21.7% of pensionable pay. This would be an increase of 1.2% on the previous year's rate.
- 107.4 Increased employer contributions further to auto-enrolment of additional member of staff to the scheme.
The matters set out in the report were **NOTED**.

The meeting concluded at 8.44 p.m.