

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 5 MARCH 2015**, at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting began at 8.00 p.m.

Present:

Parish Councillors: Mr. R. Plass (Vice Chairman and Chairman for this meeting)
Mr. M. Allen
Mr. M. Amor
Mr. W. Blunden
Mr. R. Pickett

Also present: 1 member of the public

In attendance: Mrs C. Irwin

Not present: Councillors Mr. S. Henton and Mrs. V. Upton

In the absence of Councillor Henton, Councillor Plass, as Vice Chairman of the F&GP Committee, chaired the meeting. The Chairman welcomed those present and announced the emergency procedure for the King Edward Hall.

446. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.

446.1 Apologies were received from Councillors Henton and Upton and the reasons were accepted.

447. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

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

448. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

448.1 A resident of Hickmans Lane had come to the meeting to express concerns about the new street lighting being installed by WSCC/SSEC PFI. Although this matter was not on the agenda, and did not come under the remit of this Committee, the Chairman exercised his discretion to allow the resident to speak.

The brightness of the new lights was having an adverse effect on his wife, particularly as they shone into their bedroom. The contractors had said they would lower the height, but so far had not done so. Further lights near their house were still to be changed, which would make the situation worse. The effect of glare on people was well documented and for some it was very serious.

The Chairman thanked the resident for his comments and added that WSCC was the lighting authority and there was little that the Parish Council could do other than note these concerns and pass them on to WSCC.

449. MINUTES AND CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 JANUARY 2015 .

449.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 8 January 2015. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes and Confidential Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

450. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

450. There were no Chairman's announcements.

451. ACTION LIST.

451.1 The Action List was **NOTED** without comment.

452. GRANTS AND DONATIONS.

452.1 Grant budget : available funds. **NOTED:** that the balance in hand was £400 which equated to the amount carried over from the previous year as a reserve.

452.2 Letters of thanks for grants received. Letters of thanks had been received from St. Peter and St James Hospice and the Mid Sussex Older People's Council for donations of £200 and £50 respectively.

452.3 Grant request from St Catherine's Hospice. Councillor Allen declared a personal interest in this item as his wife was a member of the fundraising team. He remained present as the recommendation was for deferral to the next meeting.

As this Hospice had already received a grant of £200 during the current financial year, it was **AGREED** to defer this request for consideration at the F&GP Committee meeting on 28 May.

453. BUDGET 2014/15.

453.1 The reports for February 2015 were not yet available.

453.2 Finance and General Purposes Committee - payments made to 31.01.15. **NOTED:** that the F&GP Committee's budget progress to 31.01.15 showed that a total of £100,520 had been spent from the budget of £123,020 – a variance of £22,499 which was 18% underspent at ten months. There had been no expenditure on the capital projects.

453.3 Analysis of Administration Budget to 31.01.15. **NOTED:** that the breakdown of the Administration Budget showed that to 31.01.15, £89,922 had been spent from the budget of £108,520 - a variance of £18,597 (17% underspent).

453.4 Overall Council Budget 2014 / 15: to review expenditure to 31.01.15. **NOTED:** that £121,297 had been spent from the total in-year budget of £263,220 – a variance of £141,922 (54% underspent). Of this, the Environment and Amenities Committee had spent £20,758 from the budget total of £70,000 (a variance of £49,241 (70% underspent) and the Planning and Traffic Committee had spent £18 of the budget of £40,200 at the end of January, however a payment had been made in February for professional fees in respect of the Neighbourhood Plan. From the reserves, £1,000 had been spent from the total of £259,152

454. ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INTERNAL AUDIT AND INTERNAL CONTROL PROCEDURES.

454.1 It was **NOTED** that Full Council was required to confirm a statement in the Annual Return that a review had taken place and that according to the guidance this should be done ahead of the meeting at which the Annual Return was due to be signed. A working draft had been tabled for consideration. The final report would be presented to Full Council on 12 March.

It was **AGREED** to confirm the report as drafted for submission to Full Council with a recommendation for approval.

455. PROPOSED PUBLIC CONVENIENCES ON THE COMMON.

455.1 MSDC had been asked for their views on the alternative site to the other side of the Bowls Club Car Park. David Harper had requested an electronic plan as he was seeking an informal view from the Planning Department. He had inspected the site with colleagues and they had noted that the root zone of a nearby Oak would limit the size of the building to the very edge of the bowls car park on the northern side.

455.2 A scale model, including delivery, would cost in the order of £1,250 plus VAT. This would be at 1:75 scale (which would make the toilet block 99mm x 78mm) and baseboard parameters of 500mm x 400mm. The price included a full colour representation of the new building and surrounding landscape and existing buildings in block form. It was **AGREED** that the scale model would be necessary for the consultation, but that it should not be ordered until MSDC had responded with their views on the new location.

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455.3 It was also **AGREED** that the public consultation should be deferred until after the May local election as Councils were advised not to enter into anything potentially controversial from the start of the nomination period until the new Council came into being.

456. PARISH OFFICE.

456.1 Replacement of the front door. This had been completed the previous week and a closure with handle had been added. It was **NOTED** that a cement filler on the floor had broken up and would need redoing.

456.2 Roof. Councillor Plass would be contacting the roofing company shortly as Spring was the best time for repainting the roof.

457. TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING AND CONFERENCE EVENTS.

457.1 It was **AGREED** to authorise attendance at appropriate events for the new RFO. **NOTED:** forthcoming SSALC events included: New Councillors events in different locations; Legal and Finance day on 20 October; Clerks' Networking Day 3 November; Chairs' Networking and Chairmanship Briefing.

458. RISK MANAGEMENT: RISK ASSESSMENT FOR FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT.

458.1 It was **AGREED** to approve the risk assessment for Financial Management as drafted.

459. POLICIES.

459.1 Equality Policy. It was **AGREED** to recommend the Equality Policy, as drafted, to Full Council for approval.

459.2 Dignity at Work / Bullying and Harassment Policy. **NOTED:** this policy was an adjunct to the Equality Policy. It was **AGREED** to recommend the Dignity at Work / Bullying and Harassment Policy, as drafted, to Full Council for approval.

460. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

460.1 No other items of business were raised.

The public part of the meeting ended at 8.27 p.m

461. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [AND PRESS.

461.1 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 was desirable in the public interest that the public [and press] be excluded.

462. LICENCE FEE 21 DENMANS LANE

462.1 Licence 2015/16. Councillor Allen declared a personal interest in this item as an acquaintance of the licensee. It was **AGREED** to renew the licence for 2015/16 and the fee agreed the previous year was **CONFIRMED**.

462.2 Licence 2016/17. It was **AGREED** that the licence fee for 2016/17 should not be increased, which was in line with the decision made by the Environment and Amenities Committee in respect of allotment tenancy fees.

463. LGPS CONTRIBUTION BANDINGS FOR 2015/16

463.1 The contribution banding thresholds for 2015/16, as provided by the Local Government Pension Scheme Administrators, were reviewed by matching pensionable pay to the appropriate band in the contributions table. Members **NOTED** that there was no resultant change to the contribution rate applicable to the Lindfield Parish Council staff member who was in the Local Government Pension Scheme.

464. STAFFING.

464.1 Responsible Financial Officer. Members received an update on the recruitment process for the new RFO.

The meeting concluded at 8.33 p.m.