

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 7 MARCH 2013** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

Present:

Parish Councillors: Mr. S. Henton (Chairman)
Mr. M. Allen
Mr. M. Amor
Mr. W. Blunden
Mr. A. Gomme
Mr. R. Pickett
Mr. R. Plass (Vice Chairman)
Mrs. V. Upton

Also present: Mr. B. Prior (Haywards Heath Food Bank) – until conclusion of Minute 224.

In attendance: Mrs. C. Irwin

The meeting commenced at 8.00 p.m.

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

218. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.

218.1 All members were present

219. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST / DISPENSATIONS GRANTED.

- 219.1 Councillor Gomme declared a personal interest in item 7 (ii) – grant request from Haywards Heath Food Bank – as his wife was one of their volunteers.
- 219.2 Councillor Upton declared a personal interest in item 7 (ii) - grant request from Mid Sussex Older People's Council - as she was the Parish Council's representative on that body.
- 219.3 Councillor Blunden declared a personal interest in item 7 (ii) – grant request from Lindfield Bonfire Society – as he had a connection with the Society.
- 219.4 Councillor Amor declared a personal interest in item 7 (ii) – grant request from Lindfield Arts Festival - as he was a member of the organising Committee.
- 219.5 Councillor Allen declared a personal interest in item 7 (ii) – grant request from St. Catherine's Hospice – as his wife was a fundraiser for the Hospice.

220. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

220.1 There were no questions or comments from members of the public.

221. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 10 JANUARY 2012.

221.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 10 January 2013. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes and Confidential Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

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222. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

222.1 New Parish Office. The Chairman expressed thanks on behalf of the Committee to Councillor Plass for the superb job he had done as project manager in preparing the new premises for occupation; the new office looked splendid. Councillor Blunden added that he understood Councillor Plass to have spent in the order of 70 hours on this.

223. ACTION LIST.

223.1 The Action List was **NOTED**.

224. GRANTS AND DONATIONS.

224.1 Available funds. It was **NOTED** that £1,150.00 remained in the budget for grants and donations and that this was the last meeting of the current Financial Year.

224.2 Grant applications received. As there were six applications under consideration, it was **AGREED** that the Members of the Grants Panel should report on each one, proposing a recommendation but that the decisions would be made at the end. For the purposes of these Minutes, the decisions are recorded under each application heading. Councillors Allen, Amor, Blunden, Gomme and Upton, having declared personal interests as recorded at Minute 219 above, remained present throughout this item. Councillor Allen reported on behalf of the Grants Panel:

- Lindfield Arts Festival (10 – 12 May 2013). The Lindfield Arts Festival, now a registered charity, was committed to providing opportunities for the whole community to access the Arts in all forms and to provide a platform for artists and creative individuals to showcase their work. Funding was sought for one of two projects: a large marquee on the Common to provide cover for craftspeople, or a project involving nursery schools to decorate the King Edward Hall for the Festival. It was **NOTED** that substantial financial information had been provided with the application and that the application met the Parish Council' criteria.
- **RESOLVED:** to award a grant of £500 from the 2012/13 budget, to the Lindfield Arts Festival towards the 2013 event (Section 145, LGA 1972 - power to contribute towards the expenses for the provision of an entertainment of any nature).
- Haywards Heath Food Bank. The Haywards Heath Food Bank had been established by a group of local volunteers for the purpose of providing emergency relief to local people in crisis. It was governed by a Trust Deed and gained full charity status in March 2012. Councillor Allen had circulated a paper proposing that this application be supported. At the invitation of the Chairman Mr. Prior thanked the Committee for the donation of £500 the previous year and spoke on behalf of the Food Bank which had issued approximately 8000 meals in the year since it opened and which now needed suitable storage space in the town centre. The Food Bank was looking for continued support for its work supporting local people. It was **AGREED** to award a grant of £500 to the Food Bank.

RESOLVED: that the Council, in accordance with its powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, should incur the following expenditure, which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure: a grant of £500, from the 2012 / 13 budget, towards the work of the Haywards Heath Food Bank.

- 4Sight. 4Sight (West Sussex Association for the Blind) was a fully registered medical and social welfare charity supporting blind and partially sighted people in West Sussex. It was **NOTED** that there was no doubt that the work of this charity benefited residents of this parish. It was **AGREED** to award a grant of £100 to 4Sight.

RESOLVED: that the Council, in accordance with its powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, should incur the following expenditure, which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure: a grant of £100, from the 2012/13 budget, towards the work of 4Sight.

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- St Catherine's Hospice. The Hospice specialised in end of life care to patients with terminal illness, including community-based care in patients' own homes. It was **NOTED** that St. Catherine's Hospice supported people in this locality. It was **AGREED** to award a grant of £200 to St. Catherine's Hospice.

RESOLVED: that the Council, in accordance with its powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, should incur the following expenditure, which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure: a grant of £200, from the 2013/4 budget, towards the work of St Catherine's Hospice.

- Lindfield Bonfire Society. Lindfield Bonfire Society was officially formed in 1894. Its members organised the Bonfire Night celebrations, which were steeped in tradition, and supported local children's charities from money raised by collections on the night. The Bonfire and fireworks cost approximately £8,000 but due to the necessary cancellation of the 2012 Bonfire celebrations, the Society had lost revenue. It was **NOTED** that other Bonfire Societies in the area were supported financially by their Town and Parish Councils and that the Lindfield event had attracted in the order of 17,000 people in 2011.

RESOLVED: to award a grant of £200 to the Lindfield Bonfire Society. (Section 145, LGA 1972 - power to contribute towards the expenses for the provision of an entertainment of any nature).

- Mid Sussex Older People's Council, MSOPC was an independent body representing the interests of older people. It was **NOTED** that this organisation had not applied to the Parish Council for funding before and that although their fundraising was fairly successful, grants received had been ring fenced by the donors, not recognising the significance of running expenses for which funds were now needed. It was **AGREED** to award a grant of £150 to the Mid Sussex Older People's Council.

RESOLVED: that the Council, in accordance with its powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, should incur the following expenditure, which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure: a grant of £150, from the 2013/4 budget, towards the work of the Mid Sussex Older People's Council.

224.3 Grants and Donations budget 2013 / 14. Because £550 had already been earmarked from the 2013/14 budget for the grants agreed above, it was **AGREED** that £500 should be vired from the General Reserve to increase this budget.

225. PARISH OFFICE

225.1 Clock Tower House. Councillor Plass reported that the new office was now occupied. Work to the roof and final connections for the heating system were still outstanding but were due to be carried out during the coming week. Also **NOTED:**

- Burglar alarm – a practical matter had come to light and a solution was **AGREED**, subject to confirmation by the company that had installed the equipment.
- Lease. The Working Group would be arranging a meeting with the tenant in the near future to discuss a number of matters including the lease.
- Insurance. Zurich had been notified of the move and the contents insurance had been increased to take into account the new items of equipment and furniture. The Insurance and Risk Management Sub Committee was due to meet in the next month to review the sums insured prior to the policy renewal date.
- Grant. WSCC's Central Mid Sussex County Local Committee had agreed at their meeting on 4 March to approve the Parish Council's application for a grant of £1,200 under the Parish Initiative Scheme towards setting up a public information hub.

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225.2 Additional expenditure incurred in preparing Clock Tower House for occupation. The following expenditure was

APPROVED retrospectively:

Solar reflective film on the upstairs windows (requested by the tenant as this had been in place on the old windows)	£398.00	excluding VAT		
New glazed door into the reception area	£398.00		“	“
Hinges and seals to fire doors to comply with fire regulations	£583.11		“	“
Removal company	£550.00		“	“
Anti virus software for 2 new computers	£86.94		“	“

A number of items of furniture have been purchased, second hand whenever possible, and these were **APPROVED**. The RFO would prepare a breakdown of expenditure for setting up the new office when all the invoices had been received.

225.3 Rental of additional storage space. It was **NOTED** that all items belonging to the Parish Council had been removed from the rented storage space at Masters and a final invoice had been received. It was also noted that the rent had not been increased in five years the Parish Council had rented this space.

226. BUDGET 2012/13.

226.1 **NOTED:** the reports for February were not yet available.

226.2 Finance and General Purposes Committee - to review payments made up to 31.01.13. **NOTED:**

- The F&GP Committee's budget progress to 31 January 2013 showed that from a total budget of £93,925, the sum of £65,550 had been spent and a further £14,243 from the designated reserve of £20,000 for the new premises.
- The new Capital Project heading for Clock Tower House showed expenditure of £291,923 from the net amount of the loan which was £299,895.
- Significant further expenditure had occurred during February on preparing the new office for occupation.

226.3 Analysis of the Administration Budget up to 31.01.13. **NOTED:** that the Administration budget breakdown to 31 January 2013 showed that from a total of £78,925, £57,615.63 had been spent.

226.4 Overall Council Budget 2012 – 13: to review expenditure up to 31.01.13 **NOTED:**

- The Environment and Amenities Committee had spent £37,238 from the budget of £66,050 and £10,803 from the outstanding projects and reserves of £32,905.
- The Planning and Traffic Committee had spent £1,442 from the budget of £10,200.
- Overall, from the total in-year budget figure of £170,175, £104,231 had been spent and from the Outstanding Projects and Reserves total of £469,521, £316,970 had been spent.

227. PUBLIC TOILETS ON THE COMMON.

227.1 It was **NOTED** that the surveyors had been instructed to carry out the work in stage one of their fee proposal - to conduct surveys of the site and draw up plans. There would then be a public consultation before submitting the plans for planning permission etc. It was also **NOTED** that two people the previous week had contacted the Parish Office to express their objection to the proposed site on account of the memorial hedge on the Bowls Club car park and was also know that a nearby resident was against toilets on that site. It was suggested that photographs should be taken of the hedge and included in the plans so that it would not be deemed to have been missed.

227.2 In response to a question from a Member, the suggestion of hiring portaloos for the summer period as a trial to ascertain the amount of usage was not considered appropriate, particularly as MSDC were not in favour and their permission would be required.

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228. LINDFIELD PARISH DIRECTORY AND YEAR BOOK.

228.1 A report would be considered by Full Council on 14 March. However it was **AGREED** that three quotations should be obtained for the publication of the 2014 edition.

229. ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING AND CONFERENCE EVENTS.

229.1 The Committee had already approved attendance at SALC training and briefing events coming up during the forthcoming year. Councillor Amor had attended the Councillors' Briefing and Update in February and confirmed that it had been very useful.

230. RISK MANAGEMENT.

230.1 The Insurance and Risk Management Sub Committee would be meeting in due course to look in detail at the insurance cover prior to the policy renewal date.

231. LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME.

231.1 The Chairman would liaise with the Clerk on LGPS matters and report to Full Council the following week.

232. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

232.1 No other items of business were raised.

The public part of the meeting ended at 8.35 p.m.

233. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS.

233.1 Although there were no members of the public present, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it was **RESOLVED** under Standing Order No. 1(C) to exclude the public and press during this item.

234. LICENCE FEE 21 DENMANS LANE.

234.1 Licence 2013/14. It was **AGREED** to renew the licence for 2013/14 and the fee was confirmed.