

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 07 SEPTEMBER 2017** 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. R. Pickett  
Mr. R. Plass (Vice Chairman)  
Mrs V Upton

**Also present:** 3 members of the Lindfield Bonfire Society (until conclusion of Minute ref 260.1).  
1 member of the public

**Not present:** Mr W Blunden

**In attendance:** Mrs. C. Irwin (Clerk)  
Mr A. Funnell (Clerk Designate)  
Mrs. T. Ely (RFO)

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

**246. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.**

246.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mr. W. Blunden and the reason was accepted.

**247. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

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

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

248.1 Mrs Box had referred to the request for a grant which had been submitted by Lindfield Bonfire Society in their letter dated 9 July 2017. Members were advised that the Society was formed in 1894, and had held bonfire celebrations each year. A sum of £10,063 had been spent to date in relation to organising the 2017 celebration which had included the cost of insurance, Red Cross services and road closure costs. Additional expenditure was anticipated which would include the cost of purchasing fireworks and supporting materials. The Chairman advised that this matter would be considered under item 7.ii of the Agenda.

248.2 Mr Kerslake had expressed a wish to receive an update on the matter concerning the proposed Toilets on the Common.

**249. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 06 JULY 2017.**

249.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 6 July 2017. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

**250. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

250.1 The Chairman made no announcements.

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

### 251. ACTION LIST.

251.1 This was **NOTED**.

### 252. GRANTS AND DONATIONS:

252.1 Grants budget: available funds. It was **NOTED** that there was a balance of £1,500 in the grants and donations budget.

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

Grant request from Lindfield Bonfire Society.

**NOTED:** A letter of request had been received dated 9 July 2017 from Lindfield Bonfire Society Limited seeking financial assistance towards expenses of staging the Bonfire Night celebration. This had included organisation of the fancy dress competition, procession, bonfire and firework display which were free to attend by the public. The objects of the Society were to raise money for children's charities. Despite numerous fundraising events being carried out throughout the year, increasing costs were making it difficult to continue this tradition. It was understood that the Bonfire Society was a Private Limited Company in order to be licensed for pyrotechnics.

**RESOLVED:** to award a grant of £250 to the Lindfield Bonfire Society Ltd under the powers granted by Section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972 to contribute towards expenses related to Bonfire Night celebration.

252.3 Grant request from Citizens Advice Horsham.

**NOTED:** A letter of request had been received from Citizens Advice Horsham dated 12 July 2017, on behalf of Central and South Sussex Citizens Advice. They were a registered charity with 7 office centres and 18 community outreach locations across West Sussex, and had delivered specifically from their Haywards Heath office. Independent, confidential and impartial advice was provided to members of the public on matters including debt, relationship breakdown, homelessness, domestic violence and welfare benefit advice. A grant had been requested towards the financial cost of ensuring that these services continued free of charge.

**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 towards the work of the Citizens Advice Horsham.

252.4 Grant request from Victim Support.

**NOTED:** A letter of request had been received from Victim Support dated 1 August 2017. They were a registered charity seeking a contribution towards their work in supporting people in Sussex who have been affected by crime. A free and confidential service was provided by a volunteer workforce, which included offering information, emotional support and practical help. A Young Witness Service was also operated in Sussex. Trained volunteers had been allocated to support victims in the Parish of Lindfield.

**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 towards the work of Victim Support.

252.5 Letters of thanks received. No letters of thanks had been received.

252.6 To confirm donation for Remembrance Sunday Wreath. The Chairman reported that a request for a donation for the Parish Council wreath had been received. It was **AGREED** to make the same donation as in 2016, and that this would be met from the Chairman's Fund.

### 253. BUDGET PROGRESS 2017/18.

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

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Finance and General Purposes Committee: a total of £38,251 had been spent from the budget of £139,130.

Analysis of Administration Budget: a total of £34,989 had been spent from the budget of £123,130

Overall Council Budget 2017/18: a total of £52,342 had been spent from the budget of £197,080, of which £11,819 had been spent from the Environment and Amenities Committee's budget of £47,750. A total of £2271 had been spent from the P&T Traffic Study budget of £10,000.

Reserves: £181 had been spent from the Clock Tower House sinking fund reserve.

**254. WATER AND WASTE WATER SERVICES: TO CONSIDER A REPORT FROM THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER REGARDING THE CHANGE TO WASTE WATER SERVICES AND TO CONSIDER THE PLACEMENT OF A CONTRACT.**

- 254.1 The Chairman referred to a report that the RFO had circulated headed Competitive Open Retail Water Market for Water and Wastewater Services commencing April 2017, dated 7 September 2017.

It was **NOTED** that a competitive open retail market had been created with effect from 1 April 2017 in relation to the supply of water and wastewater services to businesses. Southern Water had announced that they would no longer be providing retail services to non-household customers, and customers with wastewater services would be transferred to Business Stream with effect from 1 April 2017. This would affect accounts held by Lindfield Parish Council in relation to Clock Tower House and the Public Toilets at Denmans Lane. South East Water had announced the availability of a new dual billing service for water and wastewater supplies commencing 1 April 2017 reflecting the new market. A new entity, South East Water Choice would operate from 1 October 2016. Experience with Business Stream had been disappointing, contact was difficult and they were unable to provide a dual billing quotation. South East Water Choice had provided a quotation for the supply of water and wastewater services in respect of a fixed term contract ending 3 August 2020 for Clock Tower House and the Public Toilets at Denmans Lane. This would guarantee that the wholesale volumetric cost of water will not increase by more than 3.6% during the fixed period. Comparison of the water standard tariff and water offered contract would provide a reduction in respect of the standing charge rate from £42.20 per annum to £28.84 per annum.

It was **AGREED** to place a contract in respect of a dual billing service for water and wastewater services in relation to Clock Tower House and the Public Toilets at Denmans Lane. It was **AGREED to RECOMMEND** to Full Council to accept the contract that had been offered by South East Water Choice, Agreement number SEWC/09070/HH dated 3 July 2017.

**255. ASSET REGISTER: TO CONSIDER REPORT AND DRAFT POLICY FROM THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER.**

- 255.1 The Chairman referred to a report that had been circulated with the Agenda prepared by the RFO titled Requirement for Method of Asset Valuation Adopted which was required to be set out in a Policy Approved by the Parish Council and Recorded in the Asset Register dated 7 September 2017.

It was **NOTED** that in March 2017 Lindfield Parish Council external auditors PKF Littlejohn LLP had advised that the 2016 Practitioners' Guide included a change in guidance regarding asset valuation. The method of asset valuation adopted should to set out in a policy by the authority and recorded in the asset register. A draft Policy and Procedures of the Parish Council for the Asset Management Plan had been presented for consideration. Members of the Committee had also been invited to consider maintaining a Fixed Asset Register of items of value in excess of a specified sum.

It was **AGREED to RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Parish Council maintain a Fixed Asset Register of items of value in excess of £50.00. It was further **AGREED to RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the draft Policy and Procedures of the Parish Council for the Asset Management Plan be adopted.

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

### **256. CLOCK TOWER HOUSE: PROPERTY REPAIRS.**

256.1 It was **NOTED** that Councillor Plass was continuing to progress this matter. A report would follow as soon as possible.

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

257.1 The Clerk reported that the Clerk Designate would be attending a training event on the 13 September 2017 in relation to data protection. It was **NOTED** that a change in regulations was due to take effect from May 2018, and this would possibly have implications on Lindfield Parish Council. A report would follow in due course.

### **258. INVESTMENT OF FUNDS.**

258.1 The Chairman reported that £85,000 had been transferred into the Nationwide Building Society, in a Business Instant Saver Issue 5 – Monthly account.

It was **NOTED** that the Council were looking to maximise protection of funds that was being provided under the FSCS and that an alternative proposal for a third investment contract was being explored by the RFO. A progress report would follow in due course.

### **259. REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY SERVICE AND PARADE: TO CONSIDER AN APPROACH FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE LINDFIELD BRANCH, ROYAL BRITISH LEGION, REQUESTING THE PARISH COUNCIL'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE DIRECTION OF THE STEWARDS AND MARSHALS.**

259.1 The Chairman referred to a letter had been received by email dated 23 August 2017 from the President of the Lindfield Branch, Royal British Legion, which had been circulated with the Agenda.

It was **NOTED** that Lindfield Parish Council had been approached by the Royal British Legion to take over the direction of their team of stewards and marshals in relation to the Remembrance Sunday parade. The Royal British Legion Central Office had advised their Branch that Remembrance Sunday parades were now the responsibility of the local authority. Members had raised concern regarding the current number of serving Councillors, and the minimal resources that were available.

It was **AGREED** to arrange a meeting with the Lindfield Branch, Royal British Legion as soon as possible to seek further guidance and clarification with regard to what assistance was being requested. It was suggested that a Working Group be formed and a report submitted to Full Council.

### **260. PROPOSED PUBLIC TOILETS ON THE COMMON: UPDATE.**

260.1 Councillor Plass reported that no further progress had been made. It was **NOTED** that there appeared to be a conflict of views within MSDC in relation to a suitable site.

It was **AGREED** that Councillor Plass would continue to progress the matter forward and submit a report as soon as possible.

### **261. STAFFING MATTERS: UPDATE ON THE RECRUITMENT OF A DEPUTY CLERK.**

261.1 The Chairman reported that two applications had been received in relation to the Deputy Clerk vacancy. It was **NOTED** that interviews would take place on 20 September 2017.

### **262. TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING AND CONFERENCE EVENTS.**

262.1 It was **NOTED** that the Clerk Designate would attend the following training events organised by SSALC:

13 September 2017 – Data Protection

19 September 2017 – The Basics of being a Clerk

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

18 October 2017 – New Clerks Training

7 November 2017 – How to Manage Your Council in Harmony with Councillors and the Public

23 November 2017 – Motivation at Your Council

The Clerk had reminded members that Action in Rural Sussex would be holding their AGM and Conference on 19 October 2017, at the The Rawson Hall in Bolney.

### **263. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.**

263.1 No other items of business were raised.

This public part of the meeting ended at 8.29 p.m.

### **264. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [AND PRESS].**

264.1 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).

### **265. STAFFING MATTERS.**

265.1 No staffing matters were raised.

265.2 Clock Tower House: Lease.

The Chairman referred to a briefing note that had been circulated with the Agenda prepared by the Planning Administrator dated 16 August 2017, together with a copy letter dated 12 August 2013 from Lindfield Parish Council addressed to Hedleys Solicitors in relation to the outstanding Clock Tower Lease.

It was **NOTED** that Councillor Plass was continuing to progress this matter.

The meeting concluded at 8.35 p.m.