

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 08 NOVEMBER 2018** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting began at 20.02 hours.

Present:

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

In attendance: Parish Clerk
Mrs T. Ely (RFO)

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

408. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.

408.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mr. M. Damsell and his reason was accepted.

409. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

409.1 Councillor Upton declared an interest in item 7. ii) To consider grant requests on the Agenda, having attended a Governance Training Day on 08 November 2018 which had included representatives on behalf of the West Sussex Mediation Service.

410. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

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

411. TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 05 JULY 2018.

411.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Thursday 06 September 2018. It was **NOTED** that item 392.2 ii) To consider Grant Requests b. Kent Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance Trust. required amendment to be read as follows:

RESOLVED: that the Council, in accordance with its powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, the following expenditure should incur 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 £250 towards the work of Kent Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance Trust.

The Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Thursday 06 September 2018 were subsequently **AMENDED** and **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

412. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

412.1 The Chairman made no announcements.

413. ACTION LIST.

413.1 This was **NOTED**.

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414. GRANTS AND DONATIONS.

414.1 i) Grants budget. It was **NOTED** that £350 remained in the budget of £2,350 which had included return of a cheque for £250.00 by the Lindfield Branch of the Royal British Legion.

414.2 ii) To consider Grant requests.
Councillor Allen reported on behalf of the Grants Panel as follows:

a. West Sussex Mediation Service.

It had been recommended that a grant of £100 be paid. An application had been received from West Sussex Mediation Service dated 22 August 2018, who were a registered charity, seeking a grant of £100 towards the cost of recruiting and training volunteer mediators. Mediators visited clients in their homes specialising in helping to resolve neighbour disputes and conflicts within families. Four families had received help since April 2018 in the Lindfield Parish.

RESOLVED: that in accordance with the recommendation of the Grants Panel and the Council's powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, the following expenditure should be incurred 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 be made towards the work of West Sussex Mediation Service.

414.3 iii) To note Letters and Emails of thanks received.
It was **NOTED** that letters and emails of thanks had been received from:

- Victim Support
- Kent Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance Trust

414.4 iv) To confirm donation for Remembrance Sunday Wreath (Chairman's Fund).
The Chairman asked members to confirm their agreement towards a donation being made for the Parish Council wreath.

It was **AGREED** to make a donation of £75.00, and that this would be met from the Chairman's Fund.

415. BUDGET 2018/19.

415.1 The budget progress reports to 30.09.18 were **NOTED**:

Finance and General Purposes Committee: a total of £66,476.10 had been spent from the budget of £159,230.

Analysis of Administration Budget: a total of £61,061.77 had been spent from the budget of £142,780.

Overall Council Budget 2018/19: a total of £87,249.60 had been spent from the budget of £216,330. of which £15,584.75 had been spent from the Environment and Amenities Committee's budget of £46,600. A total of £5,218.75 had been spent from the Planning & Traffic Committee's budget of £10,500.

Reserves: a total of £9,481.67 had been spent from the Designated Reserves of £143,338.28.

416. BUDGET 2019/20: UPDATE.

416.1 The Chairman invited members to give consideration towards the draft Administration and F&GP Budget for the forthcoming year, referring to spreadsheets numbered 2 and 3 that had been circulated. These had been drafted following a discussion that had taken place between the Committee Chairman, Councillor Plass, Clerk and RFO. It was not yet possible to consider the overall budget and precept calculation until the Environment and Amenities Committee and the Planning & Traffic Committee had had time to consider their budget proposals.

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Spreadsheets 2 and 3 were given full consideration and the proposed total spend under each budget heading was **AGREED** as per the attached appendices numbered 1 and 2. These would be subject to further review at forthcoming meetings.

It was **NOTED** that an additional meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee would be held Thursday 13 December 2018 at the United Reformed Church to consider the full Budget in its entirety.

417. ANNUAL RETURN: UPDATE.

- 417.1 The Chairman reported that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending March 2018 had been received from the new external auditor. The process of obtaining this had regrettably not run as smoothly as had been anticipated.

418. INTERNAL AUDITOR: TO NOTE VISIT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR IN NOVEMBER.

- 418.1 It was **NOTED** that a visit had been arranged with the Internal Auditor to carry out an Interim Review on Wednesday 28 November 2018.

419. BARCLAYS BANK: UPDATE.

- 419.1 The Chairman reminded members that consideration had previously been given towards spreading the risk of funds by transferring £50,000 from Barclays Bank to the Nationwide Business Instant Saver Issue 5 account. Whilst this had been considered and agreed in principle, formal agreement had not been confirmed.

The above was **NOTED** and it was **AGREED** to recommend to Full Council to seek approval to transfer £50,000 from Barclays Bank to the Nationwide Business Instant Saver 5 account with a view to spreading the risk of funds.

420. VILLAGE DIRECTORY AND YEAR BOOK.

- 420.1 i) To agree that a leaflet be distributed regarding the future of the Village Directory and Year Book.
The Chairman referred to a report that had been prepared by the Clerk and which had been circulated with the Agenda. Agreement had been made to seek parishioners' opinions regarding production of future editions. Merits for producing the Directory had included promotion of local groups and businesses within the community as well as supporting those members of the public without internet access. The Council had relied on volunteers, its members and staff distributing one copy to each household within the parish boundary. Lindfield Rural Parish Council had now withdrawn their support for this product and concern had been raised in view of the reduction of revenue being received from paid advertisements, increased production costs and the amount of staff time involved. An A5 size Request for Feedback form had been drafted with a view to seeking parishioners' opinions and presented to members for consideration.

It was **AGREED** that a leaflet would be distributed regarding the future of the Village Directory and Year Book seeking parishioners' opinions. It was further **AGREED** to proceed with the draft Request for Feedback form.

ii) To agree Expenditure.

The Chairman advised members the cost for printing 3000 and 5000 copies of the Request for Feedback form.

It was **AGREED** to print 3000 copies for a cost of £98.00 (net of VAT).

421. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.

- 421.1 i) Pension – Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP).
The Chairman referred to a report that had been prepared by the Clerk and which had been circulated with the Agenda. A letter had been received from West Sussex County Council advising that as part of the role of the Parish Council as employer within the West Sussex County Council Local Government Pension Scheme, it was important to have an Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP) in place, specific for pension matters. This was a statutory requirement of The Pension Regulators Code of Practice. A recommendation had been made

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for the Council to instruct the Clerk, in conjunction with the Committee Chairman, to consider this matter and to formulate a policy.

The above was **NOTED** and it was **AGREED** to instruct the Clerk, in conjunction with the Committee Chairman, to consider this matter and to formulate a policy.

ii) Data Breach.

The Chairman referred to a report that had been received from the Data Protection Officer on behalf of Process Matters 2 dated September 2018. This advised that the GDPR had introduced a duty on all organisations to report certain types of personal data breach to the relevant supervisory authority within 72 hours of becoming aware of the breach, where feasible. The relevant supervisory authority would normally be the Information Commissioner in respect of Parish Council data. It was recommended that the Council had a policy in place detailing how a breach should be handled and a draft Information Security Incident Policy had been presented for consideration.

The above was **NOTED** and it was **AGREED** to recommend to Full Council to adopt the draft Information Security Incident Policy.

iii) Lone Working.

The Chairman referred to a report that had been prepared by the Clerk, and circulated with the Agenda, in which it was stated that there was a requirement of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 to impose a 'duty of care' on organisations for all of its employees. This duty was reinforced by various other acts and regulations, such as the Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1999 (MHSWR) which stressed the requirement for risk assessments. The 1999 regulations also imposed a duty on organisations to exchange health and safety information with contractors, particularly where lone workers were involved. Several hazards presented themselves to staff working alone, ranging from personal accident to personal attack. Consideration had been given towards the Village Orderly and members of staff working alone, and a draft policy statement had been recommended to be adopted.

The above was **NOTED** and it was **AGREED** to recommend to Full Council to adopt the draft policy statement.

422. **PROPOSED PUBLIC TOILETS ON THE COMMON: UPDATE.**

422.1 Councillor Plass reported on behalf of the Working Group and confirmed that following advice from the architect, a pre-planning application had been submitted to MSDC.

The above was **NOTED**.

423. **TO AGREE TO REPLACE THE OFFICE COMPUTER SECURITY SOFTWARE WHICH IS DUE TO EXPIRE IN JANUARY 2019.**

423.1 The Clerk informed members that the office computer security software was due to expire in January 2019. It was anticipated that the cost to replace this would not exceed £300 (net of VAT).

The above was **NOTED** and it was **AGREED** to replace the office computer security software which was due to expire in January 2019.

424. **IT: TO CONSIDER THE PURCHASE OF SOFTWARE.**

424.1 i) Accounting.

The Chairman referred to a report that had been prepared by the Clerk and circulated with the Agenda. Three demonstrations had been seen by the Committee Chairman, Clerk and RFO. Advantage would be gained using specialist software to help streamline day-to-day administration, claims for VAT refunds, budget progress and end of year accounts. This would also minimise the potential for error which the current system of using excel spreadsheets was prone towards and advantage would be gained saving office time. RBS provided best value for money, regular ongoing support, was approved by the Parish Council Internal Auditor and appeared to be the favoured choice with Parish Councils who were already using a software package.

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The above was **NOTED** and after full consideration it was **AGREED** to recommend to Full Council to purchase a software accounting package. It was further **AGREED** to proceed with software package option 2 provided by RBS. This would be a three year contract, for an initial cost of £685.00 which would include the cost of purchase, set up and training as well as first year support and followed by annual support for a cost of £165.00.

ii) Asset Management.

The Clerk report had provided comparative costs to purchase a software package to assist with Asset Management. Again advantage would be gained streamling day-to-day administration and saving office time. RBS had offered better value for money and given that agreement had be reached towards purchasing their accounting software, it made sense to include this package rather than to implement an additional software package with another provider.

After consideration it was **AGREED** to recommend to Full Council to proceed with software package option 2 provided by RBS. This would be a three year contract, for an initial cost of £484.00 which would include the cost of purchase, set up and training and first year support and followed by annual support for a cost of £165.00. Purchase of this package would be deferred until after the accounting package had been set up and was up and running.

iii) Allotment Management.

The Clerk report had provided comparative costs to purchase a software package to assist with Allotment Management. Similar to the accounting and asset management software packages much advantage would be gained streamlining day-to day administration and saving office time. Likewise RBS offered better value for money and provided regular ongoing support.

After consideration it was **AGREED** to recommend to Full Council to proceed with software package option 2 provided by RBS. This would be a three year contract, for an initial set up cost of £685.00 which would include the cost of purchase, set up and training as well as first year support and followed by annual support for a cost of £165.00. Purchase of this package would be deferred until after the accounting package had been set up and was up and running.

425. VILLAGE ORDERLY.

425.1 i) To Note Appointment.

It was reported by the Clerk that a Village Orderly (VO) had been appointed in October 2018. Several tasks around the village had been undertaken which had included showing potential plot holders around the allotments, inspection of parish assets, clearing away of debris in front of the pond as well as litter clearing and leaf sweeping. MSDC had agreed to provide bins for the VO to use, which would be collected by SERCO on a regular basis. The VO was acting as a top up service to the service that was already being provided by WSCC and MSDC, and it should be noted that the Parish Council was not the responsible authority for these services.

The above was **NOTED** and members were pleased to learn that favourable feedback had already been received from members of the public.

ii) To Approve Additional Expenditure for Consumables.

The Clerk had requested to be given authority to purchase additional items as and when required for the VO to carry out his duties.

It was **AGREED** for the Clerk to be given authority to purchase additional items as and when required for the VO to carry out his duties.

426. CLERK'S REPORT.

426.1 The Clerk reported on the following items:

i) Clock Tower House: Replacement of Front Door Mat.

Work had been carried out 8 November 2018 to replace the mat at the front door entrance. Problems were continuing to be experienced with the front door as this was still sticking and would not close easily. The contractor who supplied the door would be contacted for advice and assistance.

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ii) Clock Tower House: Access Ramp.

An access ramp with brackets had been sourced for a total cost of £749.00 including VAT.

It was **AGREED** to purchase the access ramp with brackets for a total cost of £749.00 including VAT.

427. TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING AND CONFERENCE EVENTS.

427.1 The Chairman reported on the attendance of staff at training and conference events as follows:

Staff/Councillor	Attended Event (s)	Forthcoming Training
Parish Clerk	None reported	15 November 2018 SSALC Limited: Operational Management
Deputy Parish Clerk	None reported	None reported
Responsible Financial Officer	None reported	None reported

428. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

428.1 No other items of business were raised.

The public part of the meeting ended at 20.46 hours.

429. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [AND PRESS].

429.1 It was **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.

430. CLOCK TOWER HOUSE LEASE.

430.1 The Parish Clerk reported that progress was continuing to be made.

The meeting concluded at 20.51 hours.

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Appendix 1 - Administration Budget 2019/2020

	BUDGET	AGREED at F&GP Comm	Comments
	2018/2019	Meeting 8 Nov 2018 Budget 2019/2020	
1a Salaries (inc. Administration charges)	54,000.00	66,000.00	Increase
1b NEW Additional Hours	-	3,000.00	New budget heading
2 NIC paid by Parish Council	5,000.00	5,000.00	Retain
3 Pension paid by Parish Council	10,500.00	11,000.00	Increase
4 Insurance	2,500.00	2,500.00	Retain
5 Postage	500.00	500.00	Retain
6 Stationery	500.00	500.00	Retain
7 Photocopier: Rental/charges	1,400.00	See below:	
NEW Photocopier 7a Rental		1,200.00	New budget heading (increase)
NEW Photocopier 7b Charges		800.00	New budget heading (increase)
8 Travel Expenses (staff)	200.00	200.00	Retain
9 Training	3,000.00	3,000.00	Retain
10 Room Hire	800.00	800.00	Retain
11 Auditor	1,500.00	800.00	Reduce
12 Councillors' Travel Expenses	300.00	300.00	Retain
13 Catering/cleaning	2,000.00	3,000.00	Increase
14 Christmas Boxes	30.00	-	Withdraw
tbc NEW Council Elections	-	4,900.00	New budget heading
Clock Tower House			
15 PWLB: Repayment of loan	25,000.00	24,300.00	Reduce
16 Small Business Rate	3,500.00	-	Withdraw
Electricity (original estimate £2000 to end March			
17 2019)	1,000.00	2,000.00	Increase to £2,000
18 Water	250.00	300.00	Increase
19 Telephone/Broadband	1,700.00	tbc	To be checked by RFO/PC
20 Security System (Alarm)	400.00	400.00	Retain
21 Fire Extinguishers/Fire Alarm system	300.00	400.00	Retain
22 Purchase of Office Equipment	2,000.00	-	Withdraw
23 Repair/Replacement of Office Equipment	500.00	500.00	Retain
24 Service charge: Lindfield Enterprise Park Ltd.	650.00	700.00	Increase
25 Health & Safety	250.00	200.00	Reduce
26 Publications	200.00	200.00	Increase
27 IT & Web Site Maintenance	2,000.00	tbc	To be checked by RFO/PC
28 Data Protection	3,000.00	500.00	Reduce
29 Miscellaneous/Sundry	200.00	200.00	Retain
30 Additional Staffing Costs	1,000.00	-	Withdraw
31 Rental: Upstairs Room Clock Tower House	600.00	-	Withdraw
32 Village Orderly & Community Warden	18,000.00	-	To be replaced by separate budget headings
Total:	142,780.00		

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Appendix 2 - Finance & General Purposes Committee Budget 2019/2020

	BUDGET	AGREED at F&GP Comm Meeting 8 Nov 2018		Comments
	2018/2019	Budget 2019/2020	S.137	
Finance and General Purposes Committee				
A Administration	142,780.00	140,150.00		See Admin budget breakdown Appendix 1
B Chairman's Fund	500.00	1,000.00		Increase
C Grants/Donations	2,350.00	2,800.00	2,800.00	Increase
D Annual Memberships/subscriptions	2,600.00	2,600.00		Retain
E Village Directory	6,500.00	6,500.00		Retain
F Newsletter/Annual Report/Advertising	2,000.00	2,500.00		Increase
G Members' Allowances	2,500.00	2,500.00		Retain
Total Budget	159,230.00	158,050.00	2,800.00	
Capital Projects				
None at present				
Sub total				
Designated Reserves				
Capital Reserve including Toilets on the Common	84,170.00	84,170.00		Retain
Capital Project: Repairs and remedial work to Clock Tower House	2,236.67	-		Fully Spent
CTH Sinking Fund	5,000.00	-		To be replaced with new budget heading
NEW Maintenance of Clock Tower House		5,000.00		New budget heading
Total Reserves:	91,406.67	89,170.00		

