

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 8 December 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. R. Plass (Vice Chairman)
Mr. S. Shortland
Mrs. V. Upton

In attendance: Mrs. C. Irwin (Clerk)
Mrs. T. Ely (RFO)

160. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.

160.1 Apologies were received from Councillor Pickett and the reason was accepted.

161. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

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

162. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

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

163. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 29 September 2016.

163.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 29 September 2016. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

164. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

164.1 There were no Chairman's announcements.

165. ACTION LIST.

165.1 Minute Reference 208.1 Public Toilets on the Common.
It was **NOTED** that a meeting was still to be arranged with the Planning Department to consider a suggestion that the log car park be used as a suitable site on which to place the public toilets.

166. GRANTS AND DONATIONS.

166.1 Grant budget.
It was **NOTED** that the budget for the current financial year was £2,000 and that the total spent to date was £800.00.

166.2 Councillor Blunden suggested that consideration be given towards an article being placed in Lindfield Life next year, to raise public awareness regarding availability of donations that the Parish Council is able to consider making for the benefit of the local community.

The above was **NOTED** and **AGREED**.

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

Grant request from 4Sight.

NOTED: 4Sight was a registered charity, which enabled visually impaired people of West Sussex to continue to live with confidence and independence, after diagnosis of sight loss. 4Sight are currently only able to support 5,000 of the 31,000 severely sight impaired or partially sighted people in West Sussex which has the largest incidence of age related sight loss in the UK. The charity's vision is for every person in West Sussex to be aware of, have access to and experience 4Sight's support. Work must continue with their members to develop and deliver these services of which there are 16 active 4Sight members living 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 £150 towards the work of 4Sight.

166.4 To consider the recommendation from the Environment and Amenities Committee to make an appropriate donation to the British Heart Foundation as consideration for taking ownership of the former Zipper Club notice board in Denmans Lane.

Councillor Blunden reported on behalf of the Environment and Amenities Committee following their meeting held on 1 December 2016. It had been agreed to accept an offer that had been made by the former Chairman of the Zipper Club, which was no longer active, for the Parish Council to take over their notice board for use by the Parish Council and the community. It had been suggested by the former Chairman that a donation be made to the British Heart Foundation. The Environment and Amenities Committee had suggested that a donation of £75 be considered.

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 £75 towards the work of the British Heart Foundation.

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

167. BUDGET PROGRESS 2016/17.

167.1 The overall total expenditure to 31 October 2016 was £93,780, of which:

- £70,524 had been spent from the F&GP budget of £131,780, including £66,613 from the Administration budget total of £115,780.
- £23,206 had been spent from the E&A budget of £51,600.
- £50 had been spent from the P&T Miscellaneous budget of £200.
- A total of £93,780 had been spent from the Budget Total of £183,580.
- £1,341 had been spent from the General Reserve fund of £53,452.
- £4,125 had been spent from the Traffic Study Designated Reserve fund of £20,000.

168. ADMINISTRATION SUB COMMITTEE: TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9 NOVEMBER 2016.

168.1 The Chairman reported on the Minutes of the meeting that had been held on 9 November 2016 by the Administration Sub Committee.

It was **NOTED** that the main item of business had been the Administration Budget for next year, which would be discussed later on the Agenda (Minute 170).

169. INVESTMENT OF FUNDS: REPORT FROM COUNCILLOR HENTON.

169.1 The Chairman had circulated copies of his report headed Cash Funds: Security/Investment dated 2 December 2016 by email and had wished to draw attention to 5 areas that he felt required consideration. A summary had

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also been circulated providing details of the Barclays Bank Business Current Account and Barclays Bank Business Premium Account statements for the period December 2015 to November 2016.

The above was **NOTED** and after having given the matter careful consideration, the following was **AGREED**:

- i) A considerable amount of money had been sitting dormant therefore a percentage of these funds should be placed into interest bearing savings accounts.
- ii) £85,000 should be invested with the Nationwide Building Society, and £85,000 should be invested with Santander. The existing arrangement with the Barclays Bank Business Current Account and Barclays Bank Business Premium Account should remain unchanged.
- iii) It was felt that a third investment vehicle was not required.
- iv) In proceeding with the above, there would be the need to monitor cash flow closely. Consequently, the RFO should have 'view only' online access to both Barclays Bank accounts.
- v) Consideration would subsequently need to be given towards moving to full online banking, which would require amendments to the Parish Council Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. The RFO should be granted authority to speak to Barclays Bank on the telephone; at present only the Parish Clerk and Councillor signatories currently had this authority.

It was **AGREED** that a recommendation be put to Full Council. Councillor Henton would draft a report to be considered and agreed at the next Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting due to be held on 12 January 2017.

170. **BUDGET 2017/18: TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ADMINISTRATION SUB COMMITTEE AND THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE, AND TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE AND THE PLANNING AND TRAFFIC COMMITTEE.**

170.1 Administration Sub Committee

The Chairman reported that the Administration Sub Committee had agreed recommendations for consideration by F&GP at a meeting held on 9 November 2016. Details had been provided on a spreadsheet. It was **NOTED** that the main increases had related to the introduction of auto enrolment of the pension scheme as well as the cessation of the contracted-out pension scheme arrangement, these had resulted in increased National Insurance Contributions and pension scheme contributions. Salaries would rise in April 2017 and consideration would need to be given towards possible staff changes. It was **AGREED** to increase the Salaries budget to £58,000, the National Insurance Contributions paid by Parish Council budget to £5,000 and the Pension paid by Parish Council to 12,000.

It had been proposed that the current budget heading for Office Equipment be split into two new headings being Purchase of Office Equipment and Maintenance of Office Equipment to reflect spending more accurately. It was **AGREED** that the current budget heading be split into Purchase of Office Equipment £1,500 and Maintenance of Office Equipment £1000.

The item for repayment of the loan for Clock Tower House had been reviewed since the Sub Committee meeting and it had been recommended that this be reduced to reflect more accurately the repayment of principal and interest which was on a fixed rate basis. It was **AGREED** to reduce the PWLB: Repayment of loan budget to £25,500.

The photocopier item had also been reviewed since the Sub Committee meeting given that a new contract had been agreed with lower rental charges. It was **AGREED** to reduce the Photocopier: Rental/charges budget to £1200.

170.2 Finance and General Purposes Committee

It was **NOTED** that the annual subscription to SSALC/NALC will increase by £23 however this would not affect the overall Annual Membership and Subscriptions budget of £2,500.

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It was **NOTED** that the cost to print the Lindfield Parish Directory and Year Book 2017 had reduced from £5,395 to £5,145 due to 8 pages less being printed. However due to increases in paper costs, the Printers had advised that there would be a small price increase next year, and it was therefore **AGREED** to maintain the existing budget of £6,500 in respect of the Village Directory.

It was **NOTED** that no further additional changes had been proposed in respect of the F&GP budget. It was **AGREED** that the F&GP Committee would meet again in early January 2016 to consider calculations for funding the budget and to agree the precept.

170.3 Environment and Amenities Committee Budget.

It was **NOTED** that the budget recommendations of the Environment and Amenities Committee for consideration had been received in the form of a spreadsheet following a meeting held on 1 December 2016. Councillor Blunden reported on behalf of the Environment and Amenities Committee and advised that a number of cutbacks had been proposed. The recommended budget had totalled £51,450 which had included proposed new budget headings in respect of the Pond Floating Island, Wilderness Field, Common Footpath Contribution – joint project with MSDC and Reprint of the Lindfield village leaflet. It was **AGREED** to accept all budget recommendations.

170.4 Planning and Traffic Committee Budget.

It was **NOTED** that the Planning and Traffic Committee would be considering budget recommendations at their next meeting due to be held on 20 December 2016. With regard to the Traffic Study that was ongoing, the consultant had been asked to provide estimates of fees in respect of the remaining work and trial of the traffic lights for the current year.

170.5 It was **NOTED** and **AGREED** that the RFO would prepare budget papers for 2017/18 ready for the next F&GP Committee meeting due to be held on 12 January 2017, to consider calculations for funding the budget and to agree the precept.

171. **TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING AND CONFERENCE EVENTS.**

171.1 It was **NOTED** that the RFO had booked to attend a SSALC training day relating specifically to Year End Finance and Meeting Procedures to be held on 23 February 2017.

171.2 The Chairman reported that a new training programme booklet had been published by SSALC and that a copy was available on the SSALC website. The Committee **AGREED** to give advance approval for attendance by Councillors and Staff at appropriate training days.

171.3 The Chairman reported that Zurich would be holding a half-day Seminar regarding insurance and risk assessment on 18 January 2017 in Crowborough. This included an item on the agenda relating to Managing Events Safely. The council had been offered one place free of charge and that additional delegates could attend for a cost of £30 each.

The above was **NOTED** and it was **AGREED** that Councillors Blunden and Plass would attend.

172. **RISK MANAGEMENT: TO ALLOCATE COUNCILLOR RESPONSIBILITIES FOR REVIEWING RISK ASSESSMENTS.**

172.1 It was **AGREED** that responsibilities for reviewing risk assessments would be undertaken by the following Councillors:

Parish Office	Mr Mr Allen, Mr R Plass and Mr S Shortland
Employees	Mr M Allen and Mr S Shortland
Governance	Mr R Plass and Mr S Henton
Financial Control	Mr S Henton and Mr R Plass

Councillor Blunden reported that he had attended an Emergency Planning and Liaison Group meeting organised by the MSDC on 8 December 2016. A 90 minute session headed 'What If' was available for information and it had been recommended that Councillors in conjunction with the Clerk produce an emergency plan. The current Lindfield Emergency Plan was out of date and it was suggested that this should be reviewed taking into consideration legal responsibility.

The above was **NOTED**.

- 172.2 Concern was raised regarding the possible financial risk that was being presented in respect of the Lindfield Parish Directory and Year Book. Recent years had seen a decline in the number of advertisers and an increase in the cost of production.

The above was **NOTED** and it was **AGREED** that the Village Directory Working Group should meet in order to review the matter as a whole.

173. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

No other items of business were raised. The Chairman wished everybody a Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The meeting concluded at 8.44 p.m.