

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 10 JANUARY 2013** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

Present: 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

In attendance: Mrs. C. Irwin (Clerk)
Mrs. S. Kolien (RFO)

The meeting commenced at 8.00 p.m.

199. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.

199.1 All Members were present.

200. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST / DISPENSATIONS GRANTED.

200.1 Councillors Allen, Amor, Henton, Blunden, Gomme, Pickett and Upton declared personal and potentially prejudicial interests in item 12 (Budget and Precept 2013/14) as residents of the Lindfield Parish. It was **NOTED** that, with the authority delegated to her by paragraph 12 (a) and 15 of the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 21 June 2012, the Clerk had granted dispensations as requested on the grounds that otherwise the number of Councillors prohibited from participating in such business would be so great a proportion of the Committee as to impede the transaction of the business..

201. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

201.1 There were no members of the public present.

202. MINUTES OF THE ADDITIONAL MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 20 DECEMBER 2012.

202.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the additional meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 20 December 2012. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

203. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

203.1 There were no Chairman's announcements.

204. ACTION LIST.

204.1 The Action List was **NOTED**.

204.2 Public toilets on the Common (Minutes 186.2). Councillor Amor asked for clarification regarding Rupert Browning's (MSDC) response to the suggestion of a trial using portaloos on the Common (Minute 186.2). Councillor Blunden explained that Mr. Browning had not been in favour of this proposal, pointing out that this would not be a like-for-like comparison and that small ones would be easily overturned and larger ones would be very expensive.

204.3 Further actions arising from meeting on 20 December were also reported as completed:

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

- the draft email to Hedleys approved under minute 197.1 had been sent
- orders had been placed for work at Clock Tower House (197.2).

205. GRANTS AND DONATIONS:

205.1 Remaining available funds. **NOTED:** that to date the total of grants paid was £250.00 and that £1,250.00 remained in the budget for grants, with one meeting left before the end of March. The Lindfield Arts Festival Director had telephoned the Parish Office earlier in the day and it was understood that she would be submitting an application for consideration at the March meeting.

205.2 To consider grant applications received

- Outset Youth Action. This Charity had worked across West Sussex for over thirty years, encouraging and supporting young people aged 13 – 25 to take part in safe and secure volunteering activities. Councillor Allen reported on behalf of the Grants Panel that this was considered to be a sensible application and that the organisation had recruited and found volunteering placements for eight young people from Lindfield during the last school year. It was **AGREED** that a donation of £100 should be made.

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 Outset Youth Action.

- Open Spaces Society – “The Attack On Greens”. Councillor Gomme, on behalf of the Grants Panel, reported that the Open Spaces Society regularly sent out circular letters to all their members requesting financial support for various campaigns, many of which were not local to this area. The Council already paid a yearly subscription to this society and the F&GP Committee had rejected a number of these requests in recent years. It was **RESOLVED** that Committee’s policy should be that the Clerk, in consultation with the Grants Panel should decide whether or not such requests should be put onto the F&GP Agenda.

206. PARISH OFFICE - NEW PREMISES AT CLOCK TOWER HOUSE: UPDATE ON PROGRESS.

206.1 Councillor Plass reported that orders had been placed for all agreed work and that some had been completed. All work was scheduled to be finished by 31 January and the Working Group would be meeting shortly to consider the move and agree the effective moving date. It was **NOTED** that a Fire Risk Assessment had been carried out by a professional company and that this had brought to light certain other requirements that the Council would have to address, particularly in view of its legal obligations to the tenants and the Working Group would be considering these matters.

Members of the Committee expressed their appreciation for the considerable amount of time and work Councillor Plass had done as Project Manager.

206.2 Councillor Blunden proposed that the Committee should apply to WSCC’s Central Mid Sussex County Local Committee for a grant of up to the maximum to purchase equipment, including a computer and display stands to provide public facilities at the Clock Tower House. This was **AGREED**.

207. BUDGET 2012/13.

207.1 Finance and General Purposes Committee - to review payments made up to 31.12.12. **NOTED:**

- the F&GP Committee’s budget progress to 31 December 2012 showed that from a total budget of £93,925.00, the sum of £55,233.21 had been spent.
- a further £14,243.50 had been spent from the designated reserve for the new premises.
- the new Capital Project heading for Clock Tower House showed expenditure of £286,371.30 from the net amount of the loan which was £299,895.00.

207.2 Analysis of the Administration Budget up to 31.12.12. **NOTED** that the Administration budget breakdown to 31 December 2012 showed that from a total of £78,925.00, the sum of £51,446.74 had been spent. This budget should more or less break even by the end of the Financial Year.

207.3 Overall Council Budget 2012 – 13: to review expenditure up to 31.12.12. **NOTED:**

- The Environment and Amenities Committee had spent £35,233.53 from the in-year budget of £66,050.00
- The Planning and Traffic Committee had spent £1,442.31 from the total in-year budget of £10,200.00, in respect of the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire and exhibition expenses.
- From the total in-year budget figure of £170,175.00, the sum of £91,909.05 had been spent
- From Outstanding Projects and Reserves of £469,521.20, the sum of £310,342.10 had been spent.

208. PUBLIC TOILETS ON THE COMMON: UPDATE.

208.1 The Chairman reported that a copy of a letter from a company of Chartered Surveyors, had been circulated, in which they had set out a fee proposal for their professional services for the project, which was considerably less than that of the first company to quote. The services they would provide included:

- drawing up plans;
- attending meetings with MSDC;
- submitting plans for planning permission, Commons Act consent and building regulations approval;
- preparing a specification for the building works;
- dealing with the tenders;
- contract administration and monitoring the building stage
- and acting as Health and Safety Co-ordinator and Construction, Design and Management Regulator.

Arrangements were being made for the Working Group to meet a representative of the second firm to discuss the proposal further and to clarify certain points, including the request for a written estimate of the actual building work to confirm a verbal estimate previously given during a telephone conversation.

It was **NOTED** that Financial Regulations did not require three quotations or a tendering process for professional services, but the Committee had previously agreed to obtain a second quotation as good practice. It was **AGREED** (by 7 votes to 1), subject to a satisfactory meeting with the firm's representative, to authorise the Clerk, in consultation with members of the Working Group, to engage the second company for the first stage as set out in their proposal, prior to further consultation with the public. It was also **AGREED** that the process for securing S 106 money should be researched and that other sources of funding should be looked into.

It was suggested that consultation with the public should be through Lindfield Life as well as a public exhibition with questionnaires. It was suggested that the financial proposal to the Village should include an estimate of annual maintenance costs.

209. LINDFIELD PARISH DIRECTORY AND YEAR BOOK– UPDATE ON PUBLICATION OF THE 2013 EDITION.

209.1 It was **NOTED** that the delivery of the diaries had been delayed due mainly to the stitching machine breaking down and a long wait for a part to be delivered from Japan. The Printers had given the Parish Council a discount of £750 – the total amount payable now being £3,500. However as the machine part was to cost £2,000 they had requested 50% in advance. This had been paid in good faith to ensure the delivery of the diaries. **AGREED** to endorse this action. It was understood that the part had been installed and the diaries should be delivered in a few days. A full written report would be presented to the March meeting of the Committee.

The Thank You Party had been postponed and would be re-arranged for the first suitable Saturday morning after the arrival of the diaries.

210. BUDGET 2013/14.

210.1 The Council's budget for 2013 / 14

Members considered the budget paper prepared by the RFO and expressed their appreciation to the RFO for this document which set out in detail how the budget was constructed. In response to a Member's questions, it was confirmed that the budget and precept were published in the Annual Report and in the Minutes of the meeting and that the reason that the budget could be set higher than the precept was because the Council's reserves were considered to be sufficiently healthy.

The figures had not been altered since the F&GP meeting held on 20 December, other than to amend an error. It was **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council the following Committee budgets, making up a total of £242,025.00, as set out in Sheet 1 of the budget pack:

- F&GP - £119,675.00, of which £104,675.00 was under the Administration budget.
- E&A - £64,150.00
- P&T - £20,200.00

The Designated Reserves came to a total of £96,356.68.

Sheet 1 showing the full final draft budget is appended to these minutes as Appendix A.

210.2 The Precept.

From the Calculation of the Funding of the Budget Requirement (Sheet 8) it was **NOTED** that the funding requirement was £214,166.00, having subtracted anticipated income from the total of the in-year budget and reserves. It was **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that, because the reserves were considered to be sufficiently healthy, there should be no increase in the current precept of £152,000.00 for the coming year.

It was **NOTED** that forthcoming changes to the Council Tax Base calculations meant that, in order to maintain Band D at the 2012/13 levels, Councils would have to reduce their precept in proportion to the reduction in the taxbase for their parishes. However MSDC were able to distribute a grant this year to make up the potential shortfall. The RFO would be seeking further clarification from MSDC but it was anticipated that the precept would therefore have to be expressed as £148,600.00 and the grant of £3,400.00 would make this up to £152,000.00.

211. TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING AND CONFERENCE EVENTS.

211.1 **RESOLVED:** to authorise attendance for those staff and Councillors who wished to attend the Regional Conference of the Society of Local Council Clerks on 6 February at the Amex Stadium. (£69 for SLCC members, £69 for first guest and £59 for subsequent guests.

NOTED: SALC had published their training schedule for the coming year on their website and it was **RESOLVED** to authorise bookings for those who wished to attend any of these events.

212. LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME

212.1 The Chairman reported that the Parish Council was a member of a Small Scheduled Bodies Pool within the larger WSCC Local Government Pension scheme. Employers had been asked to consider their options regarding membership of the pool and whether or not to take out ill health insurance. Recent changes in the regulations meant that ill health retirement agreed by one employer in the pool would have an impact on the contribution rate of the rest of the pool. WSCC had arranged a meeting for pool members on 18 January. Having read the paper circulated by the scheme administrators, the Chairman felt that the Council should stay in the pool but not take out the extra insurance. Further discussion was deferred until Full Council on 17 January and the paper would be

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

circulated to members of the F&GP Committee. Meanwhile, the clerk would make enquiries about the nature of the other bodies in the pool.

213. RISK MANAGEMENT.

213.1 **NOTED:** the main focus of risk management was currently the Clock Tower House. A fire risk assessment had been undertaken by a professional company and the Working Group would be considering the report and any further actions that had been recommended.

214. ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COUNCIL'S INTERNAL AUDIT AND INTERNAL CONTROL PROCEDURES.

214.1 **NOTED:** arrangements were being made to carry out the annual review of the effectiveness of the Council's internal audit and internal control procedures, before the end of the Financial Year as recommended in the guidance.

215. ANY OTHER BUSINESS, ARISING AFTER THE PREPARATION OF THIS AGENDA, WHICH THE CHAIRMAN AGREES TO TAKE AS URGENT. SUCH MATTERS WILL BE FOR NOTING OR DEFERRAL TO A FUTURE MEETING ONLY.

215.1 Liaison with Lindfield Rural Parish Council. With reference to "working towards a merger with Lindfield Rural Parish Council", in the 5 Year Plan which had been included in the Budget pack, Councillor Blunden sought approval to approach the Chairman of Lindfield Rural Parish Council to see whether there was any merit in pursuing this. It was **AGREED** that Councillors Blunden, Plass and Gomme should make an informal approach to members of LRPC following the next meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

The public part of the meeting ended at 8.50 p.m.

216. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [AND PRESS].

216.1 The following item concerned staffing and 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 1(c) that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the [press and] public be temporarily excluded.

217. STAFFING MATTERS.

217.1 A decision was made regarding a staffing matter.

The meeting concluded at 8.55 p.m.

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

| LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------|
| BUDGET 2013/2014 - FINAL DRAFT | | | | | | | |
| | Per Budget 2012/13 | Spend to 30.11.12. | Anticipated spend to 31.03.13. | Variance | BUDGET 2013/2014 | S.137 | Comments |
| Finance and General Purposes Committee (Sheets 2 and 3) | | | | | | | |
| A Administration | 78,925.00 | 46,320.19 | 78,925.00 | - | 104,675.00 | 1,898.00 | |
| B Chairman's Fund | 500.00 | 162.42 | 500.00 | - | 500.00 | | |
| C Grants/Donations | 1,500.00 | 250.00 | 1,500.00 | - | 1,500.00 | 1,500.00 | |
| D Annual Memberships/subscriptions | 2,500.00 | 1,955.39 | 2,500.00 | - | 2,500.00 | | |
| E Village Directory | 6,000.00 | 60.00 | 4,500.00 | 1,500.00 | 6,000.00 | 6,000.00 | |
| F Newsletter/Annual Report | 2,000.00 | 1,100.00 | 2,000.00 | - | 2,000.00 | | |
| G Members' Allowances | 2,500.00 | 100.00 | 2,500.00 | - | 2,500.00 | | |
| Sub Total: | 93,925.00 | 49,948.00 | 92,425.00 | 1,500.00 | 119,675.00 | | |
| NEW FOR 2013 -2014 | | | | | | | |
| Capital Projects | | | | | | | |
| H Repairs and remedial work to Clock Tower House | - | - | - | - | 18,000.00 | | |
| I Capital Project: Toilets on Common | - | - | - | - | 20,000.00 | | |
| Sub total | - | - | - | - | 38,000.00 | | |
| Environment and Amenities Committee (Sheet 4) | | | | | | | |
| 1 Street Lighting - Energy/maintenance costs | 6,000.00 | 2,559.47 | 3,050.00 | 2,950.00 | 3,500.00 | | |
| - Upgrading Street lights | 5,000.00 | 5,000.00 | 5,000.00 | - | 6,000.00 | | |
| - Christmas Lights | 9,000.00 | 829.60 | 11,550.00 | - 2,550.00 | 6,000.00 | 6,000.00 | |
| 2 Maintenance | 5,000.00 | 398.98 | 5,000.00 | - | 5,000.00 | | |
| 3 Allotments | 2,500.00 | 1,495.83 | 2,500.00 | - | 3,500.00 | | |
| 4 Gardening | 500.00 | 17.22 | 500.00 | - | 500.00 | | |
| 5 Christmas Festival Night | 1,000.00 | 580.06 | 1,000.00 | - | 1,000.00 | | |
| 6 Village Archives | 500.00 | - | 300.00 | 200.00 | 300.00 | | |
| 7 Mobile Civic Amenity Freighter | 2,000.00 | - | 2,000.00 | - | 2,000.00 | | |
| 8 Denmans Lane toilets - running costs | 12,000.00 | 9,159.79 | 12,000.00 | - | 12,000.00 | | |
| 9 Street map of Lindfield | 5,000.00 | - | 5,000.00 | - | 5,000.00 | | |
| 10 Replacement of litter bins | 2,000.00 | 185.00 | 2,000.00 | - | 2,000.00 | | |
| 11 Digital mapping | 250.00 | 200.00 | 200.00 | 50.00 | 250.00 | | |
| 12 Joint Project with MSDC/WSCC - Post and rail fencing - Pond and Common | 2,000.00 | - | 2,000.00 | - | 2,000.00 | | |
| 13 Tree Pollarding | 2,500.00 | - | 2,500.00 | - | 2,500.00 | | |
| 14 Removal of epicormic growth | 600.00 | 280.00 | 280.00 | 320.00 | 600.00 | | |
| 15 Grass cutting (High Street) | 1,700.00 | - | 1,700.00 | - | 2,000.00 | | |
| 16 Emergency Equipment | 1,500.00 | 335.77 | 1,500.00 | - | 1,500.00 | | |
| 17 HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations | 1,500.00 | 1,407.15 | 1,407.15 | 92.85 | - | | |
| 18 Bus Stop Poles refurbishment | 2,500.00 | - | 2,500.00 | - | - | | |
| 19 Pond Aerator | 3,000.00 | 1,741.00 | 3,000.00 | - | - | | |
| Sub total | 66,050.00 | 24,189.87 | 64,987.15 | 1,062.85 | | | |
| NEW FOR 2013 -2014 | | | | | | | |
| 20 Joint Project with MSDC: Posts around MSDC open spaces | - | - | - | - | 5,000.00 | | |
| 21 Joint project with WSCC: Dropped kerbs | - | - | - | - | 2,500.00 | | |
| 22 Joint Project with MSDC: Replacement of floating islands on the Pond | - | - | - | - | 1,000.00 | | |
| Sub total: | | | | | 64,150.00 | | |
| Planning and Traffic Committee (Sheet 5) | | | | | | | |
| (i) Miscellaneous | 200.00 | 194.00 | 194.00 | 6.00 | 200.00 | | |
| (ii) Professional Fees | 10,000.00 | 1,248.31 | 10,000.00 | - | 20,000.00 | | |
| Sub total | 10,200.00 | 1,442.31 | 10,194.00 | 6.00 | 20,200.00 | | |
| BUDGET TOTAL | 170,175.00 | 75,580.18 | 167,606.15 | 2,568.85 | 242,025.00 | 15,398.00 | |
| Outstanding Projects | | | | | | | |
| Street map of Lindfield | 2,922.52 | - | - | 2,922.52 | - | | |
| Christmas Lights | 3,500.00 | 3,500.00 | 3,500.00 | - | - | | |
| HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations | 650.00 | 650.00 | 650.00 | - | - | | |
| Sub total | 7,072.52 | 4,150.00 | 4,150.00 | 2,922.52 | - | | |
| Reserves | | | | | | | |
| General Reserve | 50,000.00 | - | - | 50,000.00 | 50,000.00 | | |
| Unallocated funds - estimate only | | | | | 6,955.08 | | |
| | 50,000.00 | - | - | 50,000.00 | 56,955.08 | | |
| Sinking Fund - Denmans Lane | 3,600.00 | - | - | 3,600.00 | 3,600.00 | | |
| New Premises | 20,000.00 | 14,234.50 | 20,000.00 | - | - | | |
| Election | 3,121.00 | - | - | 3,121.00 | 3,121.00 | | |
| Street Lighting | 8,605.68 | 1,200.80 | 1,200.80 | 7,404.88 | 7,404.88 | | |
| Allotments | 500.00 | - | - | 500.00 | 500.00 | | |
| Denmans Lane toilets – maintenance sinking fund | 5,000.00 | - | - | 5,000.00 | 5,000.00 | | |
| Capital Project: Toilets on Common | 30,000.00 | - | - | - | 30,000.00 | | |
| Public Toilets on Common – sinking fund | 20,000.00 | - | - | 20,000.00 | 20,000.00 | | |
| Repair/maintenance of community assets – sinking fund | 3,000.00 | - | - | 3,000.00 | 3,000.00 | | |
| Maintenance of King Edward Hall clock | 900.00 | - | - | 900.00 | 900.00 | | |
| Christmas Lights | 2,100.00 | - | 2,100.00 | - | - | | |
| Replacement of litter bins | 5,727.00 | 2,896.00 | 2,896.00 | 2,831.00 | 2,831.00 | | |
| Professional fees | 10,000.00 | - | - | 10,000.00 | 20,000.00 | | |
| Sub total: | 112,553.68 | 18,331.30 | 26,196.80 | 46,356.88 | 96,356.88 | | |
| Capital Project - Clock Tower House | 299,895.00 | 285,025.00 | 299,895.00 | - | - | | |
| Total: Outstanding Projects and Designated Reserves | 462,448.68 | 325,837.60 | 30,346.80 | 49,279.40 | 153,311.96 | | |
| Allocated Funds as at 30.11.12. | 147,135.90 | | | | | | |
| Public Works Loan Board | 14,765.00 | | | | | | |
| Unallocated Funds as at 30.11.12. | 92,187.04 | | | | | | |
| | 254,087.94 | | | | | | |