

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 12 JANUARY 2017** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting began at 8.00 p.m.

Present: Mr. S. Henton (Chairman)
Mr. M. Allen
Mr. W. Blunden
Mr. R. Plass (Vice Chairman)
Mrs. V. Upton

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

Absent: Parish Councillors Mr. R. Pickett and Mr. S. Shortland.

174. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.

174.1 Apologies were received from Councillors Mr. R. Pickett and Mr. S. Shortland and the reasons were accepted.

175. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

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

176. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

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

177. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 DECEMBER 2016.

177.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Thursday 8 December 2016. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

178. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

178.1 The Chairman wished all those present a happy New Year.

179. ACTION LIST.

179.1 Public toilets on the Common (Minute 153.1). It was **NOTED** that the meeting with planning officers was outstanding.

179.2 Risk Management (Minute 21.1). It was **NOTED** that the meeting of the Insurance and Risk Management Working Group was still to be arranged.

179.3 Review of Financial Procedures. It was **NOTED** that the review was still to be carried out.

180. GRANTS AND DONATIONS.

180.1 Grants budget. It was **NOTED** that £975 remained in the budget of £2,000.

180.2 Grant request from CPRE Sussex (the Campaign to Protect Rural England, Sussex Countryside Trust). Councillor Allen reported on behalf of the Grants Panel and recommended £50. This request was a separate matter from the annual subscription: CPRE were seeking more funds to provide training and support for volunteers and also fees for technical advice, communications and other overheads to enable the organisation to challenge unwanted development

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in Sussex. Councillor Blunden proposed £100 stating that CPRE Sussex had made strong representations against the development in Gravelye Lane and were constantly campaigning to protect rural sites.

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 the CPRE Sussex.

180.3 Letters of thanks received. **NOTED:** that letters of thanks had been received from 4Sight and Victim Support for grants of £150 and £100 respectively.

181. BUDGET 2016/17.

181.1 The budget progress reports to 30.11.16 were **NOTED:**

- Finance and General Purposes Committee: - £76,331 had been spent from the budget of £131,780 of which £72,420 had been spent from the Administration budget of £115,780.
- Environment and Amenities Committee: - £25,185 had been spent from the budget of £51,600
- Planning and Traffic Committee: - £50 had been spent from the budget of £200 for Miscellaneous items
- Overall Council Budget 2016 / 17: - The total spent from the in-year budget total of £183,580 was £101,567.
- Reserves: - £4,125 had been spent on the Traffic Study from the designated reserves total of £163,413 and £1,567 had been spent from the General Reserve of £53,452.

182. BUDGET 2017/18.

182.1 Proposed Budget 2017/18. The Chairman reported that copies of the full set of spreadsheets setting out the budget proposals and funding calculations and the policy paper giving an explanation for the separate items of expenditure, had been circulated with the Agenda.

The three Committees had all considered their respective budgets in detail at recent meetings. However the recommendations of the Planning and Traffic Committee would have added £40,000 to the budget total so an amended proposal of £10,000 had been used for the calculations, following consultation with the Chairman of the P&T Committee, the Chairman of Council and the Chairman of the F&GP Committee. Councillor Blunden stated that the E&A Committee's main budget was realistic and the proposed new items had subsequently been amended to help reduce the overall budget total (the pond island had been taken out as it was not high priority; the figure for fees etc in respect of the Wilderness Field had been reduced to £1,000 and the amount for a reprint of the Lindfield leaflet had been reduced to £500 as a smaller quantity could be ordered. The Chairman took Members through each of the numbered spreadsheets and the recommendations were noted.

	2016/17	2017/18
SHEETS 1 - 5		
	£	£
Administration budget	115,780	123,130
Finance and General Purposes Committee (including Administration budget figures)	131,780	139,130
Environment and Amenities Committee (including new items £2,500)	51,600	47,750
Planning and Traffic Committee	200	10,200
	<u>183,580</u>	<u>197,080</u>
SHEET 6 -		
estimated receipts and income excluding precept	26,595	26,590

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	2016/17	2017/18
SHEET 7	£	£
Anticipated funds as at 31.03.17		220,880.95
Estimated reserves:		197,163.79
Estimated unallocated funds in hand		23,717.16
SHEET 8		
Calculation of funding required		
Proposed budget plus reserves		417,960.95
Anticipated income plus funds in hand	-	247,470.95
		<u>170,490.00</u>

The Chairman stated that to cover the budget a precept of £170,490 would be required, which he considered was not acceptable. It was therefore recommended to set the precept at £162,000 (an increase of 3.185%), recognising that not everything in the budget would come to fruition during the 2017/18 financial year and the £8,490 not covered by the precept could be met from the General Reserve.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Blunden, **SECONDED** by Councillor Plass and unanimously **AGREED** that a budget of £197,080 as recommended, and a precept of £162,000 should be recommended to Full Council.

183. INVESTMENT OF FUNDS.

183.1 Further to the Council's decision to place its funds with more than one entity so that most of the funds would be protected under the Government's Financial Services Compensation Scheme, Councillor Henton had submitted a report dated 19 December 2016, setting out a list of recommendations for the Committee to discuss for onward recommendation to Full Council. It was **NOTED** that with smaller balances in several accounts, the cash flow would need closer monitoring. To facilitate this, Councillor Henton had recommended that a "view only" banking system should be set up which the RFO would be authorised to access. It was also recommended that the RFO be given the authority to discuss the Council's accounts with Barclays Bank; at present this was limited to the Councillor signatories and the Clerk. The Clerk suggested that the RFO also to be given the authority to cash petty cash cheques pre-signed by Councillor signatories.

It was **AGREED** to make the following recommendations to Full Council:

1. Invest £85,000 with Nationwide in the 6 month Saver Account [0.70% gross p.a. AER (fixed)]
2. Invest £85,000 with Santander in their Treasurer's Savings Account, which gave instant access ([0.25% AER Gross (variable)].
3. Leave the balance with Barclays current and savings accounts as at some stage the latter should start paying interest.
4. Subject to suitable controls, set up a "view only" online banking system with Barclays. Additionally, authorise the RFO to be able to speak to Barclays and cash pre-signed petty cash cheques
5. Once the new accounts were operating, take steps towards moving to full online banking.

184. INSURANCE.

184.1 Review of the insurance provision. It was **NOTED** that the current long term agreement with Zurich Municipal was due to expire on 27 May 2017. It was considered prudent to review insurance provision periodically and it was therefore **AGREED** that two other providers of insurance for Parish Councils should be invited to quote.

185. PARISH OFFICE.

185.1 Office cleaning. It was **NOTED** that the office cleaner had given a month's notice that from the end of January she would be unable to continue cleaning the Parish Office. It was **AGREED** that a replacement should be sought and therefore quotations should be invited from other service providers.

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186. ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING AND CONFERENCE EVENTS.

- 186.1 It was **NOTED** that a booking had been made for Councillors Blunden and Plass to attend the Zurich Local Council Advisory Service Seminar as agreed at the previous meeting.

187. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

- 187.1 No other items of business were raised.

The public part of the meeting ended at 8.28 p.m.

188. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [AND PRESS].

- 188.1 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.

189. MATTER RELATING TO THE CLOCK TOWER HOUSE TENANCY.

- 189.1 A report from the Clerk was considered and a decision was made.

The meeting concluded at 8.32 p.m.