

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 19 JULY 2012** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting commenced at 8.00 p.m.

**Present:** Mr. S. Henton  
Mr. M. Allen  
Mr. M. Amor  
Mr. W. Blunden  
Mr. A. Gomme  
Mr. R. Pickett  
Mrs. V. Upton

**Also present:** 1 member of the public

**In attendance:** Mrs. C. Irwin

The Chairman welcomed all those present.

### **138. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

138.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Plass and the reasons were accepted.

### **139. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

139.1 None declared.

### **140. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

140.1 Mr. N. Kerslake commented on the budget – to analyse, prior to considering next year's budget, the budget expenditure against actual expenditure over a ten year period and how the reserves had moved over the same period. He also made comments about Parish Office accommodation. The Chairman stated that the comments about the budget were noted and that he would make a statement about accommodation before the confidential session.

### **141. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 17 MAY 2012.**

141.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 17 May 2012. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

### **142. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

142.1 The Chairman made no announcements.

### **143. ACTION LIST**

143.1 The Action List was **NOTED:**

- As reported at Full Council, the grant request for night vision binoculars had been withdrawn by the Police Community Support Officer
- Arrangements would be made to add Cllr. Plass to the Bank Mandate in due course.

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### 144. GRANTS AND DONATIONS.

- 144.1 Grant application from the Queen Alexandra Hospital Home. This organisation provided care and rehabilitation facilities for physically disabled ex-servicemen and women. On the recommendation of the Grants Panel (Councillors Allen, Gomme and Amor) it was **AGREED** that this application should not be supported as the Home was outside the area and there was no knowledge of Lindfield residents having benefited from this provision.
- 144.2 Open Spaces Society – “Octavia Legacy Appeal”. The Open Spaces Society had written to draw attention to the threat to open spaces and paths under the new National Planning Policy Framework and had requested a donation to the appeal. On the recommendation of the Grants Panel, it was **AGREED** that this request should not be supported as the Council already supported this Society by an annual membership subscription.
- 144.3 Lifecentre. This organisation supported survivors of sexual abuse and rape. Councillors Allen, Amor and Gomme reported that Lifecentre appeared not to have been active in Lindfield. It was therefore **AGREED** that this request should not be supported.
- 144.4 Letters of thanks received. Letters of thanks had been received from the Lindfield Arts Festival and the West Sussex Mediation Service for donations of £500 and £100 respectively.

### 145. BUDGET 2012/13.

- 145.1 The budget reports up to the end of June had been circulated.
- 145.2 Finance and General Purposes Committee - to review payments made to 30.06.12. **NOTED** that the F&GP Committee's budget progress to 30 June 2012 showed that from a total budget of £93,925.00, the sum of £23,382.47 had been spent.
- 145.3 Analysis of Administration budget to 30.06.12. **NOTED** that the Administration budget breakdown to 30 June 2012 showed that from a total of £78,925.00 the sum of £21,099.66 had been spent. **NOTED** that the invoice from WSCC for the April salaries was received in May and the May and June invoices arrived at the beginning and end of June.
- 145.4 Overall Council budget 2012 – 13: to review expenditure to 30.06.12 **NOTED:**
- the E&A Committee had spent £7,825.19 from its budget of £66,050.00 which included the payment for the lights on the Pond and the painting of the allotment sheds.
  - overall the Council had spent £31,207.56 from the in-year budget of £170,175.00 and a further £4,593.50 from outstanding projects and designated reserves.

### 146. AUDIT

- 146.1 External Audit. **NOTED** that, after approval by Full Council on 21 June, the Annual Return had been signed and sent to the External Auditor by the due date.
- 146.2 Internal Auditor's Report. A short summary of the items for consideration from the Internal Auditor's Report, circulated by the RFO was **NOTED:**
- **Insurance – Buildings.** Recommendation that a review should be made to ascertain whether the insurance cover would be sufficient to meet any reinstatement costs.
  - **Asset Register.** Advice that recent changes in the guidelines mean that the assets register should be presented in a different format. Details should include:
    - Original acquisition costs, if not, otherwise use 2011 Notional Values
    - Location of assets

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- No allowances for depreciation
- Date of acquisition, if known.

Values under the first bullet point should subsequently be maintained, and not changed for future Annual Returns, but adjustments made for disposals and new purchases. The ongoing insurance cover might also be included in the Register, as well as the location of Deeds. The RFO would work on this over the next few weeks.

- **Financial Regulations and Standing Orders.** Advice that further guidance may be received regarding any possible changes to be introduced as a result of the Localism Act.
- **Declarations of Councillors' Interest.** Suggestion that Councillors should read each other's' Register of Interests Forms.
- **Risk Assessment.** Comments in the report.
- **Accounting System.** Suggestion that the year end accounting regime should be changed to Receipts and Payments, rather than converting to Income and Expenditure. The RFO had written to Mazars for confirmation that this could be done.
- **Petty Cash Accounting.** Recommendation that cheques **drawn** for petty cash should not be included in the cash book. Only the amounts actually **spent and paid for** by petty cash were to be shown. The reason for this was that an amount drawn from the bank for petty cash had not actually been spent, simply moved to another place.
- **Insurance.** Advice that Zurich offered reduced cover for any Councillors who reach 75 years of age. The Clerk was to follow this up with Zurich.

146.3 To confirm the appointment of the Internal Auditor for 2012/13. **AGREED** to confirm the appointment of Peter Frost as the Parish Council's Internal Auditor for 2012 /13. **NOTED** that Mr. Frost would not be increasing his fee.

### 147. TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE AT TRAINING AND CONFERENCE EVENTS.

#### 147.1 NOTED:

- the RFO and Deputy Clerk were to attend the SALC Legal and Finance Day in September.
- Councillor Plass had recently attended a useful seminar, by the Zurich Local Council Advisory Service, on Insurance and Risk Assessment.
- Councillor Allen had attended a training course for newly appointed Tree Wardens which had been useful.

147.2 It was suggested that it would be useful to receive feedback on courses attended.

### 148. RISK MANAGEMENT.

148.1 Nothing reported.

### 149. PUBLIC TOILETS ON THE COMMON.

149.1 **NOTED:** arrangements were being made for a meeting with Steve Smith of the Trevor Patrick Partnership.

### 150. 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.

151.1 None reported.

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### 152. PARISH OFFICE ACCOMMODATION.

- 152.1 Before moving the resolution to exclude the public, the Chairman stated that the Council's interest in purchasing the Clock Tower House in the Lindfield Enterprise Park for use as a Parish Office should be acknowledged in public. This matter was to be discussed further at item 17 in confidential session because of commercial sensitivity. The Chairman confirmed that the Parish Council had made an offer for the property subject to contract etc; a planning application for change of use of the ground floor from D1 to B1 had been submitted to MSDC and had been validated for publication; Hedleys Solicitors had been engaged; a professional survey had been carried out and the Clerk was liaising with SALC regarding borrowing approval. The Committee was to discuss the survey report during item 17.

The confidential session began at 8.35 p.m.

### 153. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS: TO CONSIDER WHETHER A RESOLUTION SHOULD BE MOVED UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. 1(C) 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.

- 153.1 The following two items concerned staffing and commercially sensitive matters. It was therefore **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **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.

### 154. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 17 MAY 2012.

- 154.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Confidential Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 17 May 2012. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

### 155. DEPUTY PARISH CLERK.

- 155.1 Contract of Employment. **APPROVED**: the full terms and conditions of employment for the newly appointed Deputy Parish Clerk, as set out in the draft Contract.
- 155.2 Pension. **AGREED**: a recommendation to Council regarding admission of the Deputy Clerk to the Local Government Pension Scheme
- 155.3 Exit interview with the former Deputy Parish Clerk. The Chairman gave an oral report on his exit interview with the former Deputy Parish Clerk.

### 156. PARISH OFFICE ACCOMMODATION.

- 156.1 An update on progress with the purchase of Clock Tower House was received and noted. Action on the recommendations in the survey report was **AGREED**.

The meeting concluded at 8.45 p.m.