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Southbourne Parish Council

The Village Hall

First Avenue, Southbourne

PO10 8HN

Telephone (01243) 373667

Sheila Hodgson

[clerk@southbourne-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@southbourne-pc.gov.uk) [www.southbourne-pc.gov.uk](http://www.southbourne-pc.gov.uk)

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**MINUTES of the Annual Electors Meeting**

**for the Parish of Southbourne**

**on 19th May 2023**

**Bourne Community College @ 7.00pm**

Southbourne Parish Councillors: Amanda Tait (Chair) Neil Redman (Vice-Chair) Phillipa Thorne and Robert Taylor

Chichester District Councillor: Cllr. Oona Hickson

PCSO Kowalski

In attendance: Sheila Hodgson – Parish Clerk, Maria Carvajal-Neal – Deputy Clerk

***The meeting opened at meeting 7.05pm***

**1. Chairmans welcome and introductions of Cllrs present.**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced her fellow Councillors.

Since issuing the agenda, PCSO Kowalski had confirmed his attendance and offered to give a presentation on Scam Prevention. To allow PCSO Kowalski to return to his duties as soon the Chair asked those present if they would agree to change the order of business and give his presentation immediately after agenda item 2. This was unanimously **AGREED**.

**2. To approve the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 23rd May 2022**

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 23rd May 2022 were **APPROVED** and duly signed by the Chairman.

**3. PCSO Kowalski – Scam Prevention**

A brief overview of PCSO Kowalski’s presentation is detailed below.

*Scams come in all forms from, Email, texts, letter and phone. They can affect anyone not just the elderly or the naïve as often perceived. The CEO of Barclays Bank fell victim to scamming which shows the level of sophistication associated with modern day scamming. We are all vulnerable and must take steps to protect ourselves.*

*Facebook is a favourite source for scammers to gather information to make their calls plausible. Please take time to check your security access settings and be careful what information you share. Scammers use family information and send text messages pretending to be family members to obtain money.*

*Romance scamming is aimed at lonely people looking for company. Sadly, many of the victims know they are being scammed but are grateful to have someone to talk to. The scammer may be the only person they get to talk to all day.*

*Targeting underage children is also increasing by blackmailing them with the threat of posting fake pictures of them causing them to be too scared to say anything. Never be afraid to report a scam. There are trained officers who know how to deal with these situations.*

*Scams are getting more sophisticated so the Police need to know what new techniques are being used to warn others.*

Following a brief question and answer session PCSO Kowalski left the meeting. The Chair thanked PCSO Kowalski for his valuable and interesting presentation and for taking the time to attend.

If anyone would like copies of the literature provided for the meeting, they are available via the Parish office.

**4. Report from the Chairman of Southbourne Parish Council**

The Chair read out the following statement:

**Financial**

The last financial year has been challenging for all and indications are that this trend is likely to continue for some time yet.

When SPC set their budget for the 2022/23 financial year no one could have predicted how significantly costs would rise. Cllrs and staff strived to keep costs down as much as possible and at the end of March the accounts returned an overspend of £15k. However, 12k, not unexpectedly, can be attributed to supply costs. In 2021/22 supply costs totalled £10,933 in 2022/23 the total expenditure was £22,970.

The problem facing SPC when setting the budget for this financial year was how to combat increased costs but keep the precept as low as possible, given the economic climate. Thanks to careful budgeting over previous years SPC was able to contribute £50k therefore generating a much lower precept than previous years of 5.5% (equivalent to £0.09 per week).

The SPC internal audit for 2022/23 has now been completed and the relevant paperwork will now be prepared for the external audit. All the information relating to this will be posted on the website as per the regulations.

**Councillors**

The number of nominees opting to stand for the May elections was very disappointing and as such did not trigger an election for Southbourne. The Returning Officer declared the parish as uncontested and those who stood for election duly appointed. Southbourne Parish Council has a total of 13 seats but currently only 8 of those are filled. Whilst the Council is quorate and able to undertake the business of the parish there is a shortfall of 5 leaving the Council and its Members stretched.

Therefore, I urge anyone who is able to give up a few hours a month to consider joining SPC as a co-opted Member. We need people from all backgrounds and experiences who reflect our community to join the team. Please do give it some thought and if you are interested speak to either the Clerk or any Councillor who will be pleased to give you more information.

**Fete and other things**

I will shortly be turning to the next agenda item which is the Business Plan for SPC which outlines the vision for this administration. But before we move on can I just mention a couple of items.

The Sussex Day Fete is taking place on Saturday 17th June. There are lots if exciting events planned for the day so, please come along with a picnic and enjoy the day with us. We will also be presenting the SPC Community Award and Chairmans Award winners their certificates during the day.

SPC are eligible for some Section 106 funding relating to sports and recreation which will enable some enhancements to the recreation ground facilities. A simple questionnaire has been generated and I would ask you to take time to complete this to give the Council some ideas on how you think the recreation ground can be improved. For example, one suggestion is to install another football or training pitch, another to have a multi-use track for running, cycling and walking. Please let us have you thoughts. The info is on the parish council website and Facebook sites as well as QR codes displayed on noticeboards throughout the parish.

Finally, SPC really do want to hear from residents, community organisations and local businesses. The parish is rapidly expanding bringing new families to the area and we all need to work together for the benefit of Southbourne to ensure ever increasing changes are right for the village.

Please do engage with us, let us know your thoughts and views, help us lobby higher powers to do the right things for our community and please urge others to do the same.

**5. To receive the Southbourne Parish Council Business Plan up to 2025**

Cllr. Thorne gave a detailed overview of the Southbourne Parish Council Business Plan.

The Plan has been produced by Councillors to outline the plans and ambitions for SPC and to help steer and drive the Council to deliver the intended outcomes.

A copy of the business plan is available on the SPC website and a hard copy can be obtained from the Parish Officer.

**5. Open Forum with questions to Councillors and Attendees**

Some of the questions were as follows:

* Regreening Cooks Lane – could CIL or Section 106 money be used to continue with this
* Can there please be more Cut Engine/Pollution signs at the crossing
* Signage needs attention – mostly obscured by overgrown vegetation

Cllr. Hickson confirmed that signage was primarily the remit of West Sussex County Council but she would raise the issues with the WSCC Cllr. Andrew Kerry-Bedell.

Cllr. Thorne also mentioned that this was being looked at by SPC Councillors via the Stein Road Forum who are working with WSCC on a number of speed and traffic related issues.

***The Chair thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting and 8.00pm***