

Clerk to the Council
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**Minutes of the Meeting of Southbourne Parish Council's Finance and Policy
Committee held 7th September 2022**

Present: Cllrs: P. Thorne (Chairman), L. Hicks , A. Tait and R. Taylor (until Agenda Item 13)

In Attendance: S. Hodgson - Clerk and RFO

The meeting opened at 6.35pm

17. CHAIRMANS INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

18. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. James and Redman due to personal reasons

**19. MINUTES. TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THE 6th JULY 2022**

The Clerk drew Member's attention to an amendment relating to a typo in the previously circulated Minutes:

Min 9.1 - the Allotment Balance £1,650 should have read £1,610 which the Clerk had duly amended.

Members Noted the amendment and **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the Finance & Policy Meeting held on the 6th July 2022 and they were duly signed by the Chairman.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no Declaration of Interests

21. ADJOURNMENT FOR OPEN FORUM

There were no members of the public present

22. CLERK'S UPDATE

22.1 Hall Hire

Village Hall Room Hire Charges: Members are asked to Note that from January 2023. The main hall charges will be £12.00 per hour, whilst the Sutcliffe room will be £8.00 per hour.

22.2 SSE Charges Pavilion Supply

Cllr James has spoken with SSE regarding the high charges incurred on the Invoice for the period 17th September to 9th December.

Members are asked to Note that since 2016 all invoices were based on estimates. The last invoice was adjusted according to the latest meter reading supplied. However, OFGEM only allow 12 months catch up which means an amount will be credited. SPC will also be amended to a Micro business customer.

Members wished to thank Cllr. James for addressing this issue.

22.3 Barclays Bank

Changes to Active Saver Account - Members are asked to **NOTE** from November Barclays Bank are making some changes to their business accounts. Therefore, the Parish Council's Active Saver Account will be changed to a Business Premium account. The Business Premium account remains a flexible instant-access savings account with no withdrawal restrictions. However, the interest rates are more favourable:

Current Active Saver Rate £1+ 0.01%
Business Premium Rate £1+ 0.15%

Members are further asked to **NOTE** that Barclays have now supplied a paying in card which will enable the Clerk to deposit the funds generated from the Queens Jubilee Big Lunch.

22.4 ACCLC – Paul Burdick

As there was a decision required for this item it will be discussed under Agenda Item 13.

Members **NOTED** the Clerks Report

23. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE, THE REPORTS FOR THE MONTHS OF JULY AND AUGUST 2022 AS FOLLOWS:

- TO NOTE VERIFICATION OF BANK RECONCILIATIONS FOR THE COUNCILS CURRENT ACCOUNT AND ACTIVE SAVER ACCOUNT FOR THE MONTHS OF JULY AND AUGUST IN LINE WITH THE COUNCILS' FINANCIAL REGULATIONS
- TO NOTE THE INCOME, EXPENDITURE AND RESERVES FOR THE PERIOD COVERING 1st APRIL 2022 – 31st AUGUST 2022
- TO NOTE THE BALANCE SHEETS, RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS REPORTS AND EMR REPORTS

The reports were **NOTED** and the Chairman signed the Balance sheets for July and August as reported.

Members queried EMR Code 325, £71,891.00, re Operation Watershed, Lumley Road. This amount has been held in reserves for some years and is believed to be initiated by a previous administration.

Members **AGREED** for the Clerk to make some enquires with the West Sussex County Council's Operation Watershed Officer to investigate the current position relating to any ongoing or potential projects.

Members further queried EMR Code 390, £5457.79, re Cemetery Development. Members asked the Clerk to establish if these funds were part of the JBC accounts or if the funding had been set aside specifically by SPC as a contingency for possible future costs.

This is also believed to have been established by a previous administration. The Clerk will investigate and report back.

24.TO AGREE ANY PENDING PAYMENTS AND TO RATIFY PAYMENTS AS PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED.

Members **AGREED** to **RATIFY** the payments as previously circulated

Members further **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the pending payments for September as listed.

25.TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM AFC SOUTHBOURNE FOR AN EXTENSION IN REGARD TO PAYMENT DUE FOR LICENCE FEES FOR THE 2022/23 SEASON.

A request had been received from AFC Southbourne for an extension in relation to the payment due for the 2022/23 Licence Fee. The payment was due on the 1st September for an amount of £1405.00. A representative from AFC Southbourne had been invited to attend this meeting and the Clerk had also requested for some financial information be supplied.

The Clerk reported that the Coach for AFC Southbourne had provided a financial sheet, circulated to Members, which she had discussed with him prior to the meeting. She was able to clarify some of the expenditure under the “outgoings”.

Members were advised that AFC Southbourne transferred an amount of £405.00 that evening and advised the remaining £1,000 would be forthcoming within 2 - 4 weeks. However, Members had concerns given the payment history of previous years:

2020/21 - All fees written off

2021/22 - Minimal payments received – remainder written off as invoices not paid

Members also Noted that the Payment Terms for the 2022/23 season had been adjusted at the request of AFC Southbourne. It had been agreed by both parties and arrangements put in place for a one off upfront payment to be made at the beginning of the season. AFC Southbourne said this would enable them to manage their budget and ensure payment. Members further Noted that the AFC Southbourne opening balance on the financial information provided had at the beginning of the year held sufficient funds to cover the agreed terms.

Whilst sympathetic and supportive of the club it was acknowledged that the Pavilion needs to be able to generate income to assist with the ongoing upkeep of the building, and maintenance of the football pitch.

Following discussion, Members **AGREED** that AFC Southbourne be issued with a reminder for outstanding and overdue fees to be paid in full within 14 days. Failure by the club to settle the account would contravene the signed licence and the agreement would be terminated. Going forward any use of the facilities would be on a first come first served basis with payment in full up front.

26.TO NOTE THE AUDITORS INTERIM REPORT ON THE AUDIT HELD 25th AUGUST 2022 INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF ANY RECOMMENDATIONS AND BREAKDOWN OF AUDIT COST (F&P 6th JULY 2022 - MIN. 9.4 REFERS)

Members Noted the Report.

The Clerk drew Members attention to a couple of comments:

26.1 Historic VAT return. A review of the nominal code on the accounting system highlighted a difference of circa £11,000. The Clerk had been able to trace a historic VAT return relating to a corresponding amount that had been completed and signed by a previous Clerk. However, the variation would indicate that the form had not been submitted. This will be actioned.

26.2 General Reserves. The auditor recommended that the general reserves be kept under review.

26.3 Asset Register. Whilst adequate the auditor recommended that the asset register could benefit from more detail. The Clerk and Deputy Clerk are already looking at an upgraded version.

26.4 Bank and Cash. Recommendation was made for SPC to adopt an Investment Policy. The Clerk has drafted a policy that will be considered under Agenda Item 14.

27. CONSIDERATION OF ANY BUDGETARY REQUEST OR RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES INCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE GREENSPACE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE (26TH JULY 2022 – MIN. 32 REFERS) FOR MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR TO BUS SHELTERS

Members considered a recommendation from the Greenspace and Community Services Committee for a budget to be agreed for maintenance and repair to the bus shelters.

Members **AGREED** to meet the cost of £340.00 from General Reserves to clean the bus shelters.

Members were further asked to consider a budget to enable some repairs to be undertaken to damaged or broken bus shelters and **AGREED** that provision for bus shelters would need to be included within the next years budget.

During discussion it was suggested that the cost of the repairs may be able to be met from the insurance. Members **AGREED** that a review of the shelters be undertaken to ascertain the level of repair and for Officers to progress an insurance claim.

28. BUDGETS – INCLUDING REVIEW OF STAFFING BUDGET FOR 2022/23 (F&P 6th JULY 2022 MIN. 13.1 REFERS) AND PREPARATION AND AGREED PROCESS FOR THE 2023/24 BUDGET FOR SPC

The Clerk's Report was **NOTED** as follows.

28.1 The cost to SPC to 31st August 2022 for Salaries, Pension Contributions and PAYE combined totals = £31,155.32. This amount includes back payments to previous staff following the incremental back dated pay award and back payments for Pension contributions.

The budget for this financial year was set at £68,650.00 which would indicate that the expenditure so far is on target. Some savings have been made following the resignation of the Caretaker. However, should a position for a new caretaker be agreed the current budget would be insufficient.

28.2 Members were asked to agree a process for the 2023/24 SPC. The Chairman asked the Clerk to circulate a copy of the Annual Report by Budget to all Committee Members so they can begin to consider requirements.

Proposed timetable for 2023/24 budget:

F&P November Meeting – production of draft budget for recommendation to SPC November meeting

F&P January Meeting – review of any proposed amendments changes by SPC and possible re-draft for further recommendation to SPC January meeting

SPC January Meeting – Full council review and approval of proposed budget for 203/34

Members **AGREED** the proposed timetable.

Cllr Taylor left the meeting at this point.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 20.04 for a short break

The Chairman reconvened the meeting at 20.10

29. CONSIDERATION OF A PROPOPOSAL FROM ACCLC TO PROVIDE AN ADDITIONAL RIALTAS SUPPORT PACKAGE

The Clerk's Report was **NOTED**

Members were asked to consider purchasing a support package at a cost of £100 to be funded from the Account Support Budget. This will allow provide unlimited contact (reasonable) support to minor queries or questions.

Member **AGREED** to **APPROVE** to purchase the support package to be funded from the Account Support budget at a cost of £100.

Members further asked the Clerk for a breakdown of the Rialtas agreement.

30. Due to the time, Members **RESOLVED** to change the order of business and **AGREED** to defer Agenda Items 14 (to Review and approve draft policies) and 16 (update on business plan) to a future meeting.

31. FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSAL TO REBRAND SOUTHBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF QUOTES AND PRESENTATIONS FROM DESIGNERS.

The Clerk's report was **NOTED**.

Three designers had been approached and invited to tender for the contract to assist SPC with rebranding. Only two replied and expressed interest.

Designer 1

Our costs for redesigning your logo would be £175 plus VAT. For this, we would take a brief from you to find out a bit more information about your vision/colour preferences. We would supply 6 -8 ideas and work with your feedback until we reached a final version. Upon receipt of full payment, we will supply your logo to you in various formats to use as you need.

Designer 2

I usually pull together a design brief of 'must haves' and ideas/inspiration for a design with a client, as a good solid start point. This is often done in tandem with the person (or people) who will be making the final decision and approval. Who would this be and can we set up a quick meeting with them to work this part out? Then I will be able to provide a quote and get started, if you decide you want me to get going?

Members felt that the first stage of the rebranding exercise should be to commission a suitable logo. Therefore, they **AGREED** that they would submit their ideas/vision to the two designers to enable them to prepare some draft examples. The decision on which designer to appoint would be based on those examples. Members further **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the cost of £175.00+Vat required by designer one to be funded from the Corporate Image Budget.

32. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next scheduled meeting is Wednesday 2nd November 2022 @ 6.30pm

The Chairman thanked everyone and closed the meeting at 8.30pm