



The minutes of the **FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held on **Monday 3rd February 2020**
At Willingdon Community School, Broad Road, Willingdon

Present: Cllrs Andy Watkins (AW) (Chairman) Ben Clennell (BC), Martin Cooper (MC), H Coote (HC), Jim Gleeson (JG), Christina Lynn (CL), Douglas Murray (DM), Ian Nisbet (IN), Fran Pritchett (FP), John Pritchett (JP), Stephen Shing (SS).

In Attendance: Stephen Keogh – Parish Clerk (SK)

<u>Item</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Action By</u>
FGP20/53	<u>Apologies, Councillors not present and notification of substitutes</u> There were no apologies received. Cllr John Martin did not attend. Cllr Ben Clennell was in attendance and agreed to substitute (without voting rights) for Cllr Martin. Cllr Murray arrived at 7.37 pm during discussion of Minute FGP20/57.	
FGP20/54	<u>To accept the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd December 2019</u> <u>RESOLVED:</u> The minutes of 2nd December 2019 had already been accepted as an accurate and true record by full Council on 16 th December 2019 and were signed by the Chairman.	
FGP20/55	<u>Declarations of interest</u> All members declared an interest as Trustees of Huggetts Lane Trust. The Chairman declared on the advice of the Clerk that he had a personal interest in FGP20/67 (vii). There were non pecuniary declarations of interest from Cllr Howard Coote as he is a resident of Foulride Green.	
FGP20/56	<u>Public Question Time</u> – to deal with any questions received from members of the public relating to items on this agenda. There were no members of the public present.	
FGP20/57	<u>Parish Clerk's Report</u> <u>Outstanding items not on Agenda</u> i. <u>Awards to Councillors</u> It was NOTED that two former Members had not yet had their awards presented. It was AGREED that Cllr Pritchett would make the presentation to Bonnie Beck and Cllr Clennell to Jo Carr and that photographs of the presentations be taken and passed to the Parish Clerk for the Council's website.	<u>JP</u> <u>BC</u> <u>SK</u>
FGP20/58	<u>Administrative Matters</u> i. <u>Property Matters</u> The Clerk's report concerning Jevington Tearooms, Huggetts Lane Recreation Ground and Foulride Green was NOTED . The Clerk confirmed that he had examined the two title deeds for Foulride Green between No 125 Eastbourne Road and Broad Road and that they were now correct.	

	Members asked if a definitive map would be better than the title deeds and the Clerk explained that the title deeds were the legal documents. ii. <u>Review of the Asset Register</u> The Asset Register was noted and would be put before Council at the Annual Meeting. It was AGREED that before Council is asked to approve the Register the Clerk examine the title deeds for all land said to be owned by the Council to ensure that the land is correctly registered and there had been no encroachment by neighbours. Also, that the Clerk be in a position to enable Members to access copies of the deeds at the Parish Council office should they wish to do so. iii. <u>Website</u> The Clerk's report that the transparency code had been updated as required by the Auditor and that the website was up to date was NOTED. iv. <u>Newsletter and Publicity</u> The Clerk's reported that the new style A3 newsletter is due in the spring and subjects to be included in it together with sponsorship through advertisements were discussed and AGREED. The Clerk agreed that police contact details would be included as a link on the website. v. <u>Councillors Acceptance of e-mail summons.</u> The Clerk reported that most Members had signed their forms to give the Clerk flexibility when meeting the legal requirements in sending summonses to meetings by electronic means even if some Members required paper copies for the meetings. It was suggested that the Clerk might look at sending summonses a day earlier than at present as that would, also, create flexibility. vii. <u>Progress Made on Providing a Loop or Other Hearing system for Meetings</u> The Clerk's report that Willingdon Community School did not intend to provide a hearing system in the community suite meeting room was NOTED. Also that the community suite might be moved within the school during the autumn term. It was NOTED that hearing systems should be provided to enable Members to take full part in meetings and to enable the public to fully hear the discussions. It was AGREED that the Clerk investigate options for the Council to provide a satisfactory hearing system and alternative venues ie village and church halls and the library for meetings and report progress at the next full Council meeting.	<u>SK</u> <u>SK</u> <u>SK</u> <u>SK</u> <u>SK</u>
FGP20/59	<u>Policing Matters</u> i. <u>Liaison with Police</u> The Clerk reported that the next Parish Council surgery held by Inspector John Gross would be held on 3rd March. Members should pass their concerns to the Clerk for discussion. Members were still keen to have the PCSO details available and some Members thought it very strange that although names of three PCSO's were given on the Sussex Police website Members were not allowed to see their photographs and this should be discussed at the next meeting.. ii. <u>Latest Crime Figures</u> It was NOTED that 24 crimes had been committed in the Parish during December 2019. iii. <u>Willingdon Neighbourhood Watch/Speed watch</u> The Clerk's report that there had been no reports from Neighbourhood Watch was NOTED. Cllr Clennell was advised to contact Neighbourhood Watch about having a speed watch camera in Jevington.	<u>SK</u>
FGP20/60	<u>Strengthening Local Relations Sub Committee -</u> i. <u>Minutes of the SLR meeting held on Thursday 12th December 2019.</u> The minutes of the last Sub Committee meeting were NOTED. The apologies section needed correction. ii. <u>To Consider Report on outstanding or unresolved matters from previous meetings</u> The Clerk's report on signage on the A2270; cyclical maintenance; drain and hedging issues was NOTED. Concern was expressed about the trip hazard in Tott Yew Road which Highways did not feel	

	was bad enough to repair. Members were pleased to note that the developers of Brodricklands Farm had taken very firm action against their subcontractors who were improperly using Seven Sisters Road. Members asked and the Clerk AGREED to produce a list of issues reported and progress being made to resolve them to be made available on the Council website for the information of residents, so residents knew what issues have been reported and the progress being made. It was NOTED that residents could report issues via the County Council website.	<u>SK</u>
FGP20/61	<u>Meeting and Location Dates for 2020-2021</u> The Clerk's report was NOTED. It was AGREED to recommend to Full Council that Council's Committees and Full Council meetings should continue to be held on Mondays unless Bank Holidays or emergencies dictated otherwise and that where possible dates of Polegate Town Council meetings should be avoided. It was AGREED, also, that before putting a recommendation to Council to agree particular dates the Clerk investigates alternative venues for meetings, ie church and village halls and the library being mindful that the rooms needed to provide professional surroundings including facilities for disabled people and big enough for the public to attend.	<u>SK</u> <u>SK</u>
FGP20/62	<u>Climate Emergency/Environment Policy</u> i. <u>To consider the report from the Clerk on referral from District Council Climate Emergency.</u> The Clerk's report was NOTED. Members were concerned that the use of certain fertilizers and chemicals for cleaning etc. may need to be included in the discussion and that all options to reduce the impact of the Council activities on the environment needed to be considered. Members requested the Clerk to ask all contractors to provide details of their environmental credentials and policies. ii. <u>To Consider a Draft Environmental Policy</u> Following discussion it was AGREED to recommend to the Full Council that the Policy be adopted.	<u>SK</u> <u>SK</u>
FGP20/63	<u>To Consider Arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting.</u> It was AGREED to recommend to Council that the format of the Parish Meeting should remain the same as in recent years. It was AGREED that the guest speakers to be invited could include: the new PCSO's; Inspector Gross; Derrick Coffey to speak about roads and transport; a District Planning officer; Parish Representative on SDNPA; Community School Head Teacher.	<u>SK</u>
FGP20/64	<u>Parish Governance Sub Committee</u> The Chairman's report setting out the areas for the sub-committee to examine was AGREED. The Clerk to obtain the information detailed in the report and when collated the first meeting to be arranged	<u>SK</u>
FGP20/65	<u>Liaison With Schools</u> i. <u>Liaison with Primary School – Cllr Lynn</u> Despite an approach from Cllr Lynn the School had not made contact with her. ii. <u>Liaison with the Community School – Cllrs J and F Pritchett</u> It was NOTED that the school had been in contact last autumn asking for Members to assist with mock interviews and that a number of community organisations were using the new sports hall. It was NOTED also that despite the additional parking on site parking was still very bad in the vicinity of the junction at Broad Road/Farmlands Avenue/Coppice Avenue. A new School Travel Plan had been promised at the time the school had been given planning approval and that would be produced in	<u>SK</u>

	liaison with Council but that had not happened. It AGREED that the Clerk should clarify the situation with the School.	
FGP20/66	<u>Review of Council Policies.</u> i. Lone Working Policy It was AGREED to recommend to the Full Council that that the Policy should be accepted. ii. Code of Conduct It was AGREED to recommend to the Full Council that the Policy should be accepted as amended by Wealden. iii. Emergency Plan – Update The Clerk’s report was NOTED. Cllr Gleeson expressed concern about the delay in finishing the Plan particularly in view of the unexpected emergencies elsewhere. It was AGREED The Clerk would complete the proforma Plan obtained from the County Council and bring it back to the next meeting for approval.	<u>SK</u> <u>SK</u> <u>SK</u>
FGP20/67	<u>Financial Matters</u> i. To consider a report from the Responsible Finance Officer Members NOTED the report of the RFO about expenditure and VAT. Discussion took place about the possibility of the Planning and Licensing Committee deciding on producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan and it was AGREED that if they did so the cost could be met from Reserves. ii. Update on the Precept 2020-2021 RESOLVED: Members NOTED the RFO's report that the Precept would be the Band D equivalent figure of £60.95 an increase of 4% (£2.34) over the previous year. A total amount of £184,292. iii. Update on meeting recommendations from Internal Audit Report Members NOTED the report of the RFO that all recommendations from the Auditor had been completed. iv. Payments List for agreement RESOLVED: To APPROVE the list of payments totalling £72,378.68 v. Budgetary Controls – income and expenditure report RESOLVED: Members NOTED the report of the RFO. vi. Reconciliation Third Quarter Members NOTED that the reconciliation had not been completed before the meeting. It was AGREED that the reconciliation would be completed before the next full Council meeting and the RFO would report to Council the outcome. vii. Consideration of proposed Councillors Remuneration and Allowances Scheme Members NOTED the report of the RFO and the report of the Wealden Parish Remuneration Panel on Town and Parish Council allowances for 2020/21. In particular they NOTED the recommendation by the Panel at 2(f) of their report that they wish all Councils to consider adopting a basic allowance to enable Parish Councillors to use this to cover care costs where need be to attend meetings. It was NOTED that even if a scheme was adopted Members did not have to take any payment.	<u>SK</u> <u>SK</u> <u>SK</u>

	Concern was expressed that the Council had not been made aware of the Panel's considerations; had not been asked for views; the report had not been received direct and had been acquired from the Uckfield Town Council website and it was AGREED to ask the Clerk to find out how this occurred. It was AGREED to refer the Panel's proposal to Full Council for consideration and that the Clerk be asked to produce a draft scheme for consideration at that meeting. viii. Consideration of CIL monies already received and expected during next financial year It was AGREED that all spending Committees meet to consider and agree their proposals for the CIL Monies already received and expected and that the RFO report the outcome to the next F&GP Meeting. The RFO was asked to produce clear instructions on what CIL money could be spent on. ix. Internet Banking Update The cheque signatories were asked to visit the office to register for internet banking.	<u>SK</u> <u>SK</u> <u>SK</u> <u>JP/AW/JG</u>
FGP20/68	<u>Personnel Matters</u> i. Update on Personnel Issues. It was NOTED that the Sub Committee had not met for some time and the Chairman reminded Members that it had been agreed that the Sub Committee would meet between each F&GP meeting. ii. Workstation Assessments It was reported by the Clerk that Cllr Gleeson's wife had carried out a workstation assessment and the equipment required had been ordered at a cost of £142. iii. Councillor and Staff Training Members asked that a list of training received and proposed for staff and councillors be brought to the next Personnel Sub Committee meeting. Both members of staff had booked for the First Aid at Work Course arranged by Wealden in October 2019 but the course had been oversubscribed. It was AGREED there was value in attending such a course and the Clerk was asked to arrange in the near future for a suitable course if necessary using another provider.	<u>SK</u> <u>SK</u> <u>SK</u> <u>SK</u>
FGP20/69	<u>Risk Management – to consider the effects (if any) arising from items on the agenda</u> None	
FGP20/70	<u>Urgent Matters – for noting or referral to the next agenda for Full Council or appropriate committee/sub-committee.</u> Cllr Gleeson commented that there was a planning application approved for 22 Wannock Lane and in the grounds of this property was the last remaining outbuilding from the old Air Station. Planning Committee to note.	
FGP20/71	<u>Date of next meeting</u> Tuesday 14th April 2020	

Meeting closed at 9.20pm

Signed Committee Chair.....

Date.....