

## LANCING PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 29 January 2020 at 7:00pm in the Parish Hall

**Councillors Present:** Lydia Pope (Chair); Douglas Bradley, Ann Bridges, James Butcher, Clive Burghard, Mick Clark, Lee Cowen (from Minute 73), Liz Haywood, Danny Jackson, Lionel Parsons, Geoff Patmore and Emma Purnell (from Minute 66 to 73.5).

**Officers:** Helen Plant, Clerk and Vally Fish, Assistant Clerk.

**Public:** 3

Prior to the start of the meeting, ex-Councillor Jean Turner was presented with gifts to commemorate her 25 years of service as a parish councillor following her resignation in November 2019.

**66. Apologies**

Apologies had been received, and with the reasons outlined, were accepted from Cllr Robin Monk.

**67. Declarations of Interest**

None.

**68. Public Forum & Questions**

None.

**69. To approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 27 November 2019**

**Resolved** – That the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 27 November 2019 be agreed as a true and accurate record.

**70. Grouped Items**

**Resolved** – That the following draft Committee Minutes and Working Group Notes be received:-

- (1) Planning Committee Meeting – 4 December 2019
- (2) Planning Committee Meeting – 18 December 2019
- (3) Amenities & Environment Committee Meeting – 8 January 2020
- (4) Planning Committee Meeting – 15 January 2020
- (5) Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting – 15 January 2020

**71. Recommendations from Committees & Associated Matters**

**1. Amenities & Environment Committee - Motion received to reverse a resolution**

At the recent Committee meeting, the employment of the Groundwork South Project Manager was put into question as the work of the PM was already behind schedule, and the fact that the Council was imminently due to employ its own Project Officer. It was therefore suggested to end with Groundwork's services, and thereby retain close to £10,000 in the Monks Rec Improvement Project fund.

The Committee consequently agreed to discontinue with the services of the Groundwork Project Manager (Committee Minute 26.1i/Jan/2020 refers).

However, in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders, a motion had been submitted by Cllrs Pope and Cowen for that decision to be reconsidered, with a view to it being reversed.

Cllr Pope explained that organisations such as Groundwork (or any consultant) would give professional advice to the Council's Project Officer, who would in turn manage the delivery of the project and of the contract with Groundwork. The Clerk also admitted that after the recent experiences of the Project Officer interviews and learning more about the complexities of project management, in hindsight the recommendation put to the Committee would not have been made.

After hearing the justifications for the decision to be reversed, Members agreed to the motion.

**Resolved** – That the decision taken at Minute 26.1i/Jan/2020 of the Amenities and Environment Committee be reversed and the services of Groundwork South be continued.

**2. Finance and General Purposes Committee - Budget 2020/21 and setting the precept, including the future of the Compass Bus Service 16**

Pursuant to Council Minute 43.2ii/Sep/19 and Committee Minutes 26.6/Sep/19 and 37.3/Nov/19, the Committee meeting on 15 January 2020 (Minute 47.3/Jan/2020 refers) considered a report outlining the draft budget 2020/21, for onward recommendation to this Council meeting. The precept request must be made to Adur District Council by 31 January 2020. However, prior to the start of the discussion, the future of the Compass Bus Service 16 was brought up as this was the only item that hadn't been taken into account within the draft budget.

It was noted that between 1 December 2019 and 17 January 2020, the service remained well used, but 92% of those passengers continued to be concessionary fares.

Compass's Managing Director had offered this Council a revised rate at marginal cost of £14,000 to keep the service running for one more year when it was then anticipated the Section 106 agreement in respect of the proposed development in Sompting would be finalised, as this would then fund the service. Funding options to continue the service for one more year were put forward.

Discussion ensued. Cllr Bridges recounted extracts from some of the numerous letters received from local residents appealing for the service to be saved. The service was a lifeline to those residents and prevented potential incidents of social isolation.

A member of the public present at the meeting, also spoke on how important the service was to the many residents of Willowbrook Park.

While some Members were not keen to maintain a service that should be funded by West Sussex County Council, but knowing that Council's current and various troubles, and recognising the significance of the service, Members agreed for £14,000 to be used from General Reserves towards the costs of keeping the service going for one more year. Notwithstanding, as issues of performance were known of, this funding was subject to the sight of key performance indicators on reliability.

The matter of the budget 2020/21 then proceeded to be considered.

It was noted that other than those increases detailed in the various reports, most were due to general inflation and that projects relating to existing budgetary headings, as identified by the Amenities and Environment, Finance and General Purposes Committees and the Clerk, had been included in the proposed budget.

The Council's agreed level of reserves was set at £60k (Council Minute 80.2(b)/Jan/19 refers), but following the half-yearly audit review, the Internal Auditor had stated this level should increase, which the Clerk concurred. The Committee heeded this advice, albeit reluctantly, and an associated recommendation was submitted.

The Council's current financial situation was detailed in the attached draft budget, listing income and expenditure by budgetary headings showing 2018/19 actual figures against budget, 2019/20 budgets and estimated end of year figures and the 2020/21 proposed budget, highlighting specific variations, with the precept remaining at the same level as it was last year, and summarised as follows:-

Detail	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Estimates	2020/21 Proposed
Balances brought forward	£224,073	£358,780	£273,052
All income including precept (£322,200)	£586,131	£566,029	£555,435
All expenditure including agreed projects	£451,424	£651,757	£550,765
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>£358,780</b>	<b>£273,052</b>	<b>£277,722</b>
Less Earmarked Reserves & Minimum General Reserves (£90k)	£155,375	£184,701	£248,701
General Reserves balance	£203,405	£ 88,351	£ 29,021

As the proposed budget did not necessitate an increase in the precept and continued to allow for £40,000 to be put towards the Monks Rec Improvement Project, there was no effect on the Band D property figure, which should remain at £52 per annum.

**Resolved** - (a) That the 2020/21 budget, as outlined above and in the attached Appendix, with the level of precept remaining at £322,200, be approved.

(c) That the minimum level of General Reserves be increased to £90,000, with the aspiration to increase it to at least 50% of the precept in accordance with the Internal Auditors recommendation.

(c) That the annual sum transferred to earmarked reserves to account for ordinary Elections be increased from £4,000 to £6,000.

(d) That, in respect of the Compass Bus Service 16, £14,000 be used from General Reserves to fund the service for one more year, and subject to the sight of key performance indicators on reliability.

## 72. Chairman's Report

Cllr Pope provided details of the Christmas events attended as Chairman of the Council and looked ahead with some of the planned projects in 2020.

Volunteers were sought for the next Parish Surgery to be held as part of the Easter themed Village Market on Good Friday, 10 April 2020.

**Resolved** – Cllrs Bridges, Burghard, Patmore and Pope volunteered to attend the Village Market on 10 April 2020.

### **73. Clerk's Report**

#### **73.1 Parish Council Newsletter**

It was confirmed that the Spring 2020 edition of the Parish Council's Newsletter was in the process of being printed and would be delivered early February.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

#### **73.2 AVA and Lancing & Sompting Foodbank Information**

**AVA** - The latest figures for November and December 2019 were provided; 1 volunteer enquiry, 5 food bank donations, 37 food bank collections and 6 general enquiries.

**LSFB** - The combined figures for November and December showed each location gave out 38 food bags with only two new visitors at each end and foodbank initiatives over the Christmas period were outlined.

From 3 January, LSFB reverted to normal activity but as it had been so generously supported, there was no room for additional food in their stores meaning LSFB should be able to provide for people for at least a couple of months at current rates of use.

**Resolved** – That the thanks of the Parish Council be extended to all those volunteers and businesses who supported the Lancing and Sompting Food Bank over the Christmas period.

#### **73.3 West Sussex County Council's Forward Plan**

It was reported that a matter identified within the Forward Plan affecting Lancing in isolation was in respect of the change to the current gypsy and traveller site at Withy Patch for the provision of a new gypsy and traveller site within the New Monks Farm development.

Cllr Patmore understood that the arrangements were not yet conclusive.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

#### **73.4 Social Prescribing/Going Local update**

An update report from Adur & Worthing Council's Wellbeing Team had been circulated prior to the meeting and Jo Clarke and Holly Sugden from the team were in attendance to provide further information and answered Members questions.

As the project had been a recognised success, it had been allocated full funding from the newly set up Primary Care Network for the project to become an established service. As such, the Wellbeing team had submitted a request for the funding previously granted by Lancing and Sompting Parish Councils, Sompting Big Local and GP Practices, to be redirected from its initial purpose to support a volunteering programme to bolster the overall service.

Jo and Holly were thanked for their attendance.

**Resolved** – That approval be given to the Parish Councils grant funding being redirected for other use within the overall Social Prescribing/Going Local service.

#### **73.5 Project Officer Role update**

It was confirmed that the interviews for the above role took place on 22 January 2020. The Panel concluded that Sarah Parker was the most appropriate candidate and Ms Parker was very happy to accept the position.

The Panel had suggested that the proposed start date be brought forward from 1 March to a mutually convenient date in February, to provide Ms Parker additional time to read through the associated Monks Rec Improvement Project documents with a view to positive actions being started in March.

**Resolved** – (a) That the Council endorses the decision of the Interview Panel and Ms Sarah Parker be accordingly appointed as this Council’s Project Officer.  
(b) That the proposed start date be brought forward.

### **73.6 Change to Lancing’s Library service**

It was reported that the Mobile Library vehicle that served Lancing had been deemed no longer road worthy and as part of West Sussex County Council’s financial pressures, the service had subsequently been ceased. Alternative services were outlined.

**Resolved** – That the information be regrettably noted.

### **73.7 Recycling in Lancing public spaces - what are Adur & Worthing Councils doing about it?**

Following the above point being raised at the Autumn Residents Meeting and by Parish Councillors, AWC was posed the question and had answered as follows:-

*“AWC are currently pulling together the 2020/21 business plan and it is anticipated that public recycling will be part of that plan within the overall waste sector with an options list due to be drawn up.”*

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

### **73.8 Consultation: Strengthening police powers to tackle unauthorised encampments**

The Home Office had issued a new consultation on strengthening police powers to tackle unauthorised encampments and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) was encouraging town and parish councils to respond.

The consultation covered criminalising the act of trespassing, broadening the existing categories of criminal trespass and broadening police powers to deal with trespassers and further details were provided.

In order for a consultation response to be made, Members were asked whether they agreed with specific statements which were by a majority vote.

**Resolved** – In respect of the Home Office consultation strengthening police powers to tackle unauthorised encampments, the Council agrees with the following

- All cases of unauthorised encampments should be criminalised on account of trespassing.
- The police should have the power to direct trespassers to leave land as soon as it has been determined that they are there illegally.
- The police should be able to take action regardless of the number of vehicles in the unauthorised encampment.
- Principal authorities should have the power to demand the police attend as soon as an unauthorised encampment appears and to claim back costs incurred repairing damage caused by clearing up after unauthorised encampments.

### **73.9 New Puffin Crossing on Brighton Road - request to enter into an agreement with West Sussex County Council**

It was reported that, following the request by this Council, WSCC had agreed to upgrade the existing island crossing on Brighton Road between Beachville Court and Marlin Court to a puffin crossing, and the scheme had now reached the design stage.

However, as the southern highway footpath boundary at that point was very narrow, WSCC had requested permission for the footpath to step over onto Parish Council land so the necessary posts etc., could be installed to maintain a sufficient footpath width.

Members were agreeable to the request but asked that WSCC be mindful of the issues that occur at the crossing south of Western Road and for these to be avoided at this location.

**Resolved** – That permission be granted to West Sussex County Council to use a portion of this Council's land as part of the Brighton Road puffin crossing scheme to allow an ample width footpath at that point, with an associated agreement being drawn up.

### **73.10 2020/21 Calendar of Meetings**

**Resolved** – That the submitted 2020/21 Calendar of Council and Committee meetings be approved.

### **74. Other Matters:-**

#### **74.1 Lancing Parish Youth Council**

The Minutes of the meetings held on 11 December and 22 January had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllrs Jackson and Patmore provided further details regarding ongoing projects.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

#### **74.2 Lancing Vision Group**

Pursuant to Council Minute 61.2/Nov/19, it was confirmed that the Lancing images had not yet been taken due to the Christmas lighting being in place, but it was anticipated that they would be imminently now the motifs had been removed. The relevant column tests were also in hand so that permission for the banner fixings could be obtained.

A meeting of the Lancing Vision Group was due to take place on 11 February to review the associated Vision documents to establish where attention should next be focused.

At the recent Adur West Capital Projects Group, it was confirmed that the Queensway resurfacing road works were imminently due and following a Lancing 'walk-about', works carried out included street weeding, bollards straightened/replaced, and bike stands replaced or repainted. Additional tree planting was also discussed (see Minute 74.3ii below).

Cllr Patmore added that a brief discussion in respect of the Widewater footbridge had also taken place which had cast doubt again on the Section 106 contribution towards the project. Clarification was being sought.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

### **74.3 Climate Emergency**

- i. Updates were provided in respect of Climate Emergency actions, including staff training on Climate Emergency Action Planning, details of the Worthing & Adur Climate Conference - Zero 2030, Grant funding was being sought from the Community Rail Fund towards the set up costs of a Donkey Bike scheme at Lancing railway station, as a way to encourage sustainable transport and that the Adur & Worthing Eco Homes Trail in April included an Electric Vehicle Display on Beach Green (Amenities & Environment Committee Minute 26.2ix/Jan/2020 refers).

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

- ii. **Tree Planting by Adur & Worthing Councils**

As AWC had declared a Climate Emergency, which aimed to see the authorities become carbon neutral by 2030, it was reported that the Adur West Capital Project Group was looking for suitable areas in Lancing where new trees could be planted, but it was noted the associated budget was limited.

Members were asked to make location suggestions and views were requested as to whether this Council should make a contribution to the scheme so more trees could be planted. Whilst the scheme was supported by Members, it was felt that no funding should be made at this time.

**Recommendation** – (a) That suggestions for tree planting locations be submitted to the Clerk. (b) That no contribution of funding from this Council towards Adur & Worthing Council's tree planting scheme be made at this time.

### **75. Report(s) of Representatives on Outside Bodies**

#### **75.1i. Community-led Housing**

It was confirmed that the group's funding application to establish an 'official' community land trust had been successful. Once the group became a legal body, to be known as 'Adur Collective CLT', it would then be a separate entity to the Parish Council. However, it was hoped the CLT would invite Lancing Parish Council to be a member and that the Board set-up would allow for a Parish Councillor representative.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

- ii. **Lancing Football Club**

Cllr Patmore reported that the goal mouths at the Monks Rec football pitch had been repaired by the Club but were now in need of repair again.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

- iii. **Adur & Worthing Councils Joint Governance Committee**

Cllr Bridges advised that AWC were reviewing their Members Code of Conduct in case this Council wished to do the same.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

#### **75.2 Joint Action Group**

It was reported that small amounts of antisocial behaviour and drug activity continued to be experienced around the village which the relevant organisations were arranging to tackle.

Members were reminded to advise the Clerk of any incidents posted on social media so they could be properly reported.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

**76. Future Agenda Items**

None.

**77. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

**78. Future Management Arrangements for Beach Green & Widewater Car Parks**

Submitted – Pursuant to Council Minute 65/Nov/19, a report providing an update in respect of the preferred operating model. The start of the process had been followed, but the response received was perplexing as it was contrary to other information received from another department from the same organisation. Clarification was therefore being sought.

It was also reported that the current contractor was happy to extend the existing contract date to enable the process of the preferred operating model to be completed.

**Resolved** – (a) That the current License agreement between this Council and District Enforcement Ltd be rolled over on an annual basis until the process of the preferred operating model is complete.

(b) That a review of the current agreement's financial terms and any other related changes or considerations be made prior to the tender process being published in anticipation of the completion of the preferred operating model.

**The meeting closed at 8.49pm.**