



PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE OF
LENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON THE 16TH SEPTEMBER 2020 IN THE OSBORNE ROOM AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE AT 7.30pm

PRESENT Cllr. J Britt, Chairman presiding.

Cllrs. M Ballard, M Cockett, N Osborne, A Ratcliffe, K Hammond, & A Walmsley.

J Bate RFO in attendance

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED

The Council accepted apologies for absence from Cllr Garland and M McFarlane Parish Clerk.

2. CONFIRMATION OF CHAIRMAN

The meeting confirmed Cllr Britt as Chairman of the F&GP

3. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS

Declarations of Interest on Agenda items. No declarations received.

4. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE F & GP MEETING

Cllr. Ballard proposed, Cllr. Osborne seconded, and it was RESOLVED that minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 18th March are a true record and were approved, adopted and signed by the Chairman.

5. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STATUS UPDATE

A) Update from the SPI meeting. It was noted that the Neighbourhood Plan had been accepted to proceed to referendum. It was considered as being of significant weight and to be taken into account by Maidstone Planners.

Cllr Britt reported that the list of accepted sites for the Lenham and Harrietsham Parishes had now been published and he would circulate it to the whole Council. he noted that some new sites had now been added (the sloping ground below Old school Close) but it was agreed in principle that LPC comments on the entire list should mirror the comments previously made on the initial call for sites. (JB Action)

B) Cllr Osborne reported the correspondence between the new developer and the Meadows trust in respect of discharge to the stream from the Duck pond. It was agreed that the Planning Committee and Cllr Osborne should meet with the developer to discuss issues and that this should take place prior to the new planning application intended by the developer. (AW /NO action)

C) Cllr Britt will have a further telephone conversation with PHP regarding the expansion of the Surgery premises. It was agreed that a meeting should be held to include both planning and Cllr Osborne. (JB Action)

D) Cllr Cockett reported no further progress in respect of the sale of the WPF strip.

6. 1A HIGH STREET LENHAM – DISCUSSION REGARDING POTENTIAL ACQUISITION

Cllr Osborne explained the details of the property recommending that F&GP should approve its purchase for eventual use as a Parish Office and for transfer of stored records. he stated that in the short term it could also be rented out as a business. The basic asking price was £225K though it was noted that it was in need of extensive maintenance. Cllr. Cockett suggested that a budget of approx. £300K in total would be needed. It was agreed that details of how the monies could be raised would



be obtained prior to the next full Council meeting and subject to a satisfactory arrangement F&GP would propose acceptance to the full Council.

Cllr Osborne was asked to enquire if an offer in the region of £200K would be likely to be accepted.

JB (RFO) was asked to generate the funding options.

7. **BANKING**

JB (RFO) had previously mentioned that he would prefer to operate an electronic banking system and proposed that we change banks to do this. This was agreed in principle subject to the two signatures still being required when writing cheques. he would detail the Business account charges for approval at the Council meeting.

8. **MAINTENANCE OF NEW GREEN SPACE – AGREEMENT ON A WAY FORWARD**

It was reported that the NP implementation Group was contacting contractors and companies who already carry out land and general ground maintenance with a view to understanding costs and possibly appointing a company to do this on behalf of the Parish

9. **PROJECTS UPDATE**

A) Toilets – Cllr Osborne reported that the new bins would not pass through the gate at the toilet block and the contractor had no way of disposing of the rubbish. Cllr Osborne to consider options.

B) Maidstone Road car Park – it was reported that Cllr Scrivens had informed the Dog & Bear about the closing of access on Monday 21st. He would also leaflet cars on the Sunday and put out a sign asking that there be no parking from Midnight Sunday. The foliage had been cut back and all foliage on the relevant central islands was scheduled for removal on Thursday 17th

C) Nursery – a cheque was raised to allow Cllr Ratcliffe to proceed to submit the planning application for the Nursery as agreed at the last Council meeting.

D) Football Club – Cllr Walmsley reported that the implementation Group had set up a meeting with the Football Club in order to try to reach an accommodation between the two sets of teams regarding the new Football field. He stated that he was unhappy that agreements made between the Parish Football liaison Committee and the football club were to be revisited. It was agreed that Cllrs Osborne and Ratcliffe should attend the meeting on behalf of the LPC. Cllr Walmsley requested clarification on which Group would liaise in future as we could well fall between stools. He agreed to circulate relevant liaison minutes and documentation.

10. **LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE** (current issues)

Cllr Ballard reported that he was about to take possession of some 400 saplings but with little idea at present where they should be planted. He noted that it was anyway too dry to plant them at this time. He stated that he had permission from John Arthur to store them in one of his barns.

11. **UPDATE ON S106 / CIL**

Nothing reported at this time – Cllr Garland had sent apologies.

12. **DISCUSSION ABOUT CO-OPTION OF A REPLACEMENT COUNCILLOR**

Cllr Britt noted that membership of the F&GP was low and that there was danger of not achieving a quorum. After some consideration it was agreed that Cllr Ratcliffe would be co-opted. he noted that



he usually attended the Planning Committee which was held in conjunction so it would not take up much more meeting time.

13 **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED (NOT DEALT WITH ELSEWHERE)**

None received

14 **AOB**

Cllr Britt asked that in principle if meeting could be held either fully or partially via the Internet either using Zoom or some other similar platform. He noted that if the Covid restrictions were re-applied (as was possible) that we had nothing in hand to do this. Cllr Osborne also noted that there was a room restriction in terms of numbers and that the Osborne could not accommodate a full Council plus members of the Public. It was agreed to recommend this in principle to the full Council and ask the Parish Clerk to circulate an email asking members to respond to a small questionnaire asking:

- 1) Did they have the equipment that could run one of these platforms
- 2) Was their Broadband connection good enough to run one of these platforms.

It was also noted that there would be the option of uploading the entire proceeding to u-tube.

ACTION: Cllr J Britt to produce a report for next council with a proposed motion for authorisation to change the council's operating procedures to adopt electronic meetings.

Minutes produced by Cllr. A Walmsley.