



# PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

*Working together for a better future*

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & POLICY  
COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 25<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2015  
AT THE SPORTS PAVILION**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Clarke (Chairman), Kipp, Qusted, Tilbrook, Wallace & Wilson.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Sarah Norman (Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer).

*The meeting opened at 7.35pm*

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Reddin.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Qusted declared a personal but non pecuniary interest in agenda item 11 (Community Engagement & Publications) as a family member is the publisher for the Parish Bulletin.

Cllr Clarke declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 12 as he is an allotment tenant.

**3. MINUTES**

The Committee **RESOLVED** to agree and approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2015 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and the Chairman of the meeting signed them.

**CLERKS REPORT**

There was nothing to report.

**4. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING**

There were no members of the public that had given notice of wishing to speak.

**5. PARISH COUNCIL FINANCES**

Members received Bank Reconciliations for cashbooks 1 as at 30<sup>th</sup> April and 31<sup>st</sup> May 2015. Members confirmed their agreement to the Bank Statements and instructed the Chairman to sign the bank statements accordingly.

Finally, Members noted the following invoices which were more than 30 days overdue

- i) Snooker Club (£200) balance owed for 2014/15 rent

**6. INTERNAL AUDIT**

Members received and noted the contents of the final audit for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 as prepared by Auditing Solutions Ltd and noted that there were no areas of concern raised.

**7. POWERS AND DUTIES**

Members noted the existing Powers & Duties of the Finance Committee (attached as Appendix 1) and after discussion AGREED that they should be approved without amendment.

**8. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION PUBLICATION SCHEME**

Members received and reviewed the existing publication scheme and after discussion AGREED that the Scheme should be approved with no amendment.

**9. PARISH COUNCIL POLICIES**

Members received and noted the Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Staff Recruitment and Disciplinary & Grievance Policies and approved with the following changes :-

Staff Recruitment Policy – include that the confirmation of eligibility to work will be obtained to ensure that the Council does not employ illegal workers.

**RESOLVED: the policies, subject to the agreed amendment, be recommend to Full Council for ratification**

**10. INSURANCE**

Members noted the revised split of the insurance premium and that the effect was a decrease of £ 510.93 per annum or 35% in the amount payable by the S&SC. Members noted that this large reduction was as a result of the rebroke of the Policy through Came & Co.

**11. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & PUBLICATIONS**

Whilst Cllr Quedsted had not declared a pecuniary interest in this item, for the avoidance of doubt Cllr Quedsted withdrew from the meeting.

Members noted that the avenues for community engagement used by the Parish Council are :-

- \* Articles in the quarterly Parish Bulletin published by Eyelevel Publishing Ltd
- \* Articles in the monthly Parish News published by St Mary's Church
- \* Articles in the monthly Sussex Local
- \* Parish Website
- \* Twitter
- \* Facebook

Members discussed at length the various methods and agreed that the electronic avenues especially Facebook and Twitter were extremely important, especially in trying to reach the younger section of the community. Cllr Tilbrook proposed, with all in favour, that in future all committees should agree under "Items for Inclusion on the Next Agenda" any topics that they wish to have pushed out through Twitter/Facebook.

With regard to the written publications it was noted that man hours in the Parish Office are limited and Members noted that this has resulted in the Parish Council often being later for copy for Sussex Local and on several occasions needing to be

chased by the Editor of Sussex Local. Members also felt that it was challenging to come up with interesting and engaging topics on a monthly basis and this was one of the reasons that the Parish Council had been unable to submit articles to the St Mary's Church bulletin on a regular basis for the last year.

Members noted that Eyelevel Publishing had confirmed their intention to continue with their quarterly publication and invited the Parish Council to submit articles as required, for the publication. Members AGREED that this should continue to primarily be the Chairman's Update together with any articles drafted in the previous quarter. Members noted that the parish community groups will continue to be asked to contribute articles.

It was subsequently proposed, with all in favour :-

**RESOLVED : to continue to contribute to the quarterly Parish Bulletin, cease editorial for both monthly publications by St Mary's Church and Sussex Local and increase output through Twitter and Facebook.**

Cllr Quedstedt rejoined the meeting

## 12. **SPORTS CLUBS/ALLOTMENT RENTS AND LEASES**

The Clerk reported that whilst it had been agreed previously to increase the sports clubs rents by 0.9% (minute no 92 F&P Committee 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2015) the situation with the Snooker Club was slightly different as the Committee had agreed to reduce the rent from £1120 to £800 in 2014 and that this reduction would be reviewed after 1 year. The Clerk therefore requested confirmation as to whether the 0.9% should be applied to the £800 (resulting in 2015 rent of £807.20) or to the previous level of £1120 (resulting in 2015 rent of £1130.08).

Members AGREED that the intention was to return the Snooker Club to its previous level of rent in due course but were mindful that the club is still facing challenging times financially. It was noted that an increase of 0.9% or £7.20 would make no impact on this aim. The Clerk also highlighted that the Snooker Club rent was historically relatively high compared to the other clubs partly due to the amount of electricity used for the lighting but the situation was now different because the light meters had been installed and paid for directly by the players. It was also noted that the level of rent will be part of the Lease renewal which is due April 2016.

After discussion, it was AGREED, with all in favour, that the Snooker Club's rent should be increased to £850 in 2015.

**RESOLVED: To increase the Snooker Club rent to £850 in 2015**

Cllr Clarke withdrew from the debate regarding allotment rents.

The Clerk advised that the 0.9% if applied to the allotment rents would result in increases ranging from 16 pence per annum from a small plot to 61 pence per annum for an extra, extra large plot.

After discussion it was AGREED with all in favour to not increase the rents in October 2015 but that the compound increase should be accounted for when assessing the level of rent for October 2016.

**RESOLVED: No increases in allotment rents for 2015/16**

Cllr Clarke rejoined the meeting.

Further to the discussion at the 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2015 meeting (minute no 93), the Clerk advised that Ian Davison had been contacted and advised that the costs for the preparation of all the Leases should be £5000 plus VAT and disbursements. The high costs were noted but Members agreed that it was worthwhile expenditure to ensure that the leases/licenses were correct and that it was hoped that future renewals would therefore be easier and more cost effective. The possibility of extending the terms of the Licences/Leases was also discussed, to spread the cost over a longer time, and it was AGREED that this could be explored in discussion with Ian Davison but consideration needs to be given to the Cricket Club's existing 10 year licence.

**RESOLVED: A budget of £5000 plus disbursements for the lease/licence preparation and the Clerk instructed to sign the Terms of Business from Wellers Hedleys solicitors.**

**13. PARISH COUNCIL EMAIL ADDRESSES**

Cllr Qusted had requested that this issue be discussed.

The issue of disclosure of emails under the FOI from private email addresses used by Councillors was discussed. This was felt to be a grey area and that the Council should make arrangements for Councillors to ensure there was no doubt.

The Clerk was therefore instructed to make enquiries with EastWeb Media the Parish Council's web hosting provider, about arrangement of [councillorname@pulboroughparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:councillorname@pulboroughparishcouncil.gov.uk) email address and report back to the Committee with full details including costs.

**14. CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence.

**15. MATTERS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS FOR INCLUSION ON NEXT AGENDA**

Electronic Agendas (Cllr Qusted)  
Neighbourhood Plan Budget (Cllr Tilbrook)

**16. PAYMENTS**

Members received, considered and approved with all in favour payments to be made.

**RESOLVED:** that the payment of the following Direct Debits and Cheques be approved and signed:

	£
The Sign Shop Horsham Ltd	30.00
Action in rural Sussex	13808.88
West Sussex County Council	5944.34
rCOH Ltd	600.00

***The meeting closed at 8.37pm***

.....Chairman

.....Date