



SPEEN PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL PRE MEETING DISCUSSIONS
HELD ONLINE ON MONDAY 17TH JANUARY 2022 AT 7PM

Present	Parish Councillors	Cllr Dudman (Chair), Cllr Amirtharaj (Vice Chair), Cllr Butter, Cllr Booth, Cllr Newell-Hart, Cllr Phillips
	In Attendance	Cllr Doherty
	Members of the Public	None Present
	Clerk & RFO	Jean Lindsell

Resolution	Item	Action
	<p>1. Chair Opening Remarks</p> <p>Cllr Dudman thanked all Councillors for their flexibility and acknowledged as there were some Councillors who did not feel comfortable meeting indoors and in order to continue to conduct business this meeting was to allow all Agenda items to be discussed in full prior to a Full Council meeting being held outside as required by legislation to formally vote on proposals.</p> <p>2. Minutes – to approve the draft minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 08-11-21 (to be ratified at the next formal Full Council meeting)</p> <p>Cllr Doherty requested as her attendance at SPC meetings was every other month could her attendance be minuted as not expected for the intervening months rather than it appearing that she had neither sent apologies nor attended.</p> <p>The Minutes were approved subject to amendment as above.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Booth Abstention: 1 In Favour: 5</p> <p>Cllr Phillips advised there had been no further progress regarding The Rising Sun since the meeting scheduled for 21st December had been postponed due to COVID-19 and they were waiting to see attendance levels for The Sutton Estates presentation at Sutton Hall on 20th January as most people had been shy of meeting in large gatherings to date. Following that the Committee would decide the way forward regarding arranging another community consultation meeting recognising COVID limitations.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman advised The Sutton Estates presentation was a pre planning consultation over a plot of land in Stockcross they were looking to develop.</p> <p>Cllr Phillips suggested Cllr Doherty contact The Sutton Estates to reserve a seat should she wish to attend as numbers were limited and advised both he and Cllr Booth would be attending.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman to forward The Sutton Estates contact details to Cllr Doherty.</p> <p>3. Scheme of Delegation</p> <p>Proposal: To approve the revised Scheme of Delegation (to be ratified at the next</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Cllr Dudman</p>



	<p>formal Full Council meeting)</p> <p>Cllr Dudman advised the current Scheme of Delegation that had been in place since March 2020 had been updated to bring it into line with the latest guidance from BALC/HALC together with a review of what other Parish Councils had in place.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman queried whether a review date or time scale should be included.</p> <p>The Clerk suggested a review date be set for the Annual Council meeting in May at which time Council would decide to either set the next review date or rescind the Scheme of Delegation.</p> <p>All Councillors agreed subject to this addition.</p> <p>Clerk to amend document.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Phillips All in Favour</p> <p>4. Financial Report Clerk as RFO</p> <p>4.1 Balance in bank as at 31-12-21 reported as £71,627.33</p> <p>4.2 To retrospectively note payments for November and December 2021</p> <p>Cllr Butter asked if payments to Brabazons Garden Maintenance were an annual cost equally divided over 12 months.</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed this.</p> <p>Cllr Newell-Hart queried why SPC was paying the same amount each month when the work carried out was less in the winter months.</p> <p>The Clerk advised these contracts had been agreed on this basis for many years and to request variable invoices based on the level of work carried out each month could be problematic as this was a standard method of working. The Clerk further advised the Grass and Hedge Cutting contract was due for renewal on 1st April 2022.</p> <p>Cllr Booth asked who Enerveo Ltd was as this company had not appeared on the payments list previously.</p> <p>The Clerk advised Enerveo was formally SSE Contracting.</p> <p>All Councillors noted payments made</p> <p>4.3 Proposal: To accept Finance Reports to 31-12-21 (to be ratified at the next formal Full Council meeting)</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Amirtharaj All in Favour</p> <p>4.4 Proposal: To accept Quarterly Budget v Actual Report Q3 (to be ratified at the next formal Full Council meeting)</p> <p>The Clerk advised a Budget Forecast to year end had been included in the papers for information purposes only.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman acknowledged there appeared to be underspend across all categories for 2021/22.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Amirtharaj All in Favour</p> <p>5. Finance Committee</p> <p>5.1 2022/2023 Budget</p> <p>Proposal: To approve 2022/2023 Budget as recommended by the Finance</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
--	---	--------------



	<p>Committee (to be ratified at the next formal Full Council meeting)</p> <p>Cllr Dudman advised that the Finance Committee had looked at where SPC was likely to be financially at the end of 2021/2022 and had taken some realism measures regarding budget categories particularly where monies available had either not been spent or had a forecasted underspend together with the level of SPC's projected unallocated reserves at year end and despite the need to significantly increase the budget regarding utility bills due to the current huge increases the overall result was a decrease in the budget for 2022/2023.</p> <p>The Clerk drew Councillors attention to the proposed budget figure of £100 for internal audit and advised that to date when looking for a new auditor costs ranged from £250 up to £600 and asked if Council wished to revise this budget amount or use General Reserves if necessary.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman advised he was not keen to amend the proposed budget figure as the final costs were currently unknown and along with General Reserves SPC had a very healthy level of unallocated reserves.</p> <p>Cllr Amirtharaj asked for clarification that revisions to the budget as agreed at the Finance Committee meeting held on 8th December had been made.</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed the budget had been amended and the amendments were detailed on the Notes sheet.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Newell-Hart All in Favour</p> <p>The 2022/2023 budget of £60,139 was unanimously approved.</p> <p>Cllr Phillips to send contact details for Sutton Hall auditor to the Clerk.</p> <p>5.2 2022/2023 Precept</p> <p>Proposal: To approve 2022/2023 Precept for submission to WBC as recommended by the Finance Committee (to be ratified at the next formal Full Council meeting)</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Newell-Hart All in Favour</p> <p>The 2022/2023 Precept of £60,139 was unanimously approved for submission to WBC.</p> <p>5.3 2022/2023 General Reserves</p> <p>Proposal: To approve 2022/2023 General Reserves as recommended by the Finance Committee (to be ratified at the next formal Full Council meeting)</p> <p>The Clerk advised General Reserves for 2021/2022 had been set at £15,401 being 25% of the operational budget and applying the same minimum recommended % the figure for 2022/2023 would be £15,035 (25% of £60,139). The Finance Committee had agreed and recommended General Reserves for 2022/2023 remain at £15,401.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Booth All in Favour</p> <p>The 2022/2023 General Reserves of £15,401 were unanimously approved.</p> <p>6. Planning & Highways</p> <p>6.1 To agree to reinvigorate the deployment of SID led by Cllr Booth with Councillors offering suggested deployment locations (to be resolved at the next formal Full Council meeting)</p> <p>The Clerk advised it was a requirement to join the SID portal and complete the SID</p>	<p>Cllr Phillips</p> <p>Clerk</p>
--	--	-----------------------------------



7. SPC Assets and Play Equipment Replacement and Repairs

7.1 Proposal: To review quotations received and approve appointment of contractor (to be ratified at the next formal Full Council meeting)

Cllr Amirtharaj queried why this item was not PART II and why no contractor names were shown on the papers and added he was not comfortable reviewing this item without information as to who the contractors were...

Cllr Newell-Hart suggested the quotes could be reviewed without knowing who the contractors were but when a preferred quote was selected then details of the contractor should be available and discussed prior to making any final decision.

The Clerk advised as the meeting was not a formal meeting and therefore no members of the public present PART II was not required and had adopted a different approach to allow for impartiality but acknowledged this approach was an error by not including specific details about the contractors.

The Clerk gave a brief overview of the contractors.

Cllr Dudman advised that now knowing one of the contractors was well known to SPC, based locally and the quality of work delivered to SPC in the past this should be recognised. Cllr Dudman acknowledged there was a risk of being seen to be regularly selecting the same contractor but asked if this was really an issue.

Cllr Phillips advised his view was quotes should reviewed on cost alone initially then review who the contractors were.

Cllr Newell-Hart queried how 3 of the quotes were of similar cost but the fourth was considerably less which should be investigated to ascertain why.

Cllr Butter advised that overheads would be a contributing factor that should be taken into account particularly as 3 contractors were not local and it was unknown where their staff were based whereas the fourth contractor was local.

Cllr Doherty advised WBC went out to tender for many different projects and they had a Procurement Framework and one of the policies just taken through related to the social value element of a Procurement Framework to recognise the social benefits of having local businesses, environmentally friendly, green footprint etc., giving weighting to the social value and from what Councillors were saying relating to contractor D that would actually weigh up better and if SPC had a Procurement Framework in place it would add to their points on that system. Cllr Doherty added she felt it good to give business locally and reduce the carbon footprint of those having to travel to do the work.

Cllr Amirtharaj asked what guarantees were given regarding the items of work.

The Clerk advised there would be a guarantee for the new swing pod however regarding timber replacement works did not know if any guarantees would be available. The Clerk further advised she would have to check with whichever contractor was appointed as to what guarantees there were regarding bearings.

Cllr Amirtharaj queried what measures were in place to monitor lifespan of works carried out.

Cllr Butter advised all works had to comply with the regulations and standards in place and whilst these were not guarantees all works had to meet these regulations and be carried out to a certain standard.

The Clerk confirmed that only contractors who were qualified and experienced with the regulations should be appointed to carry out these works and advised that quarterly RoSPA Inspections were carried out. The Clerk further advised that she reviewed all inspection reports and if any item of work recently carried out was raised in a report this would be addressed with the contractor who carried out that work.

Cllr Newell-Hart felt that SPC should put a Procurement Framework in place and



	<p>award points as the basis outlined by Cllr Doherty.</p> <p>Cllr Amirtharaj as Chair of the Committee to develop a draft Procurement Framework to be considered by the Finance Committee.</p> <p>Cllr Butter queried the replacement of post and rail fencing at Marsh Benham as she felt there was only a smaller section that required replacement.</p> <p>The Clerk advised these works had been raised in the RoSPA Inspection report as a significant amount of the timber was severely decayed.</p> <p>Cllr Butter to inspect fencing and report back at the next formal Full Council meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman proposed contractor D be appointed and the scope of the fencing works be confirmed based on Cllr Butter's feedback at the next formal Full Council meeting.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Newell-Hart All in Favour</p> <p>7.2 Proposal: To approve the transfer of funds from unallocated reserves to earmarked reserves to cover the costs of appointed contractor</p> <p>The Clerk advised providing invoices for the work were received prior to the end of March there were funds totalling £3,413 allocated to this type of work underspent in the 2021/2022 budget and therefore it was the remaining balance of £5,219 to be transferred from unallocated reserves to earmarked reserves.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman suggested in light of the possible reduction in fencing costs and the available budget the proposal be to transfer a maximum of £5,219 from unallocated reserves to earmarked reserves to cover the costs of the appointed contractor pending confirmation of the fencing requirements.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Phillips All in Favour</p> <p>Cllr Dudman invited Cllr Doherty to give Council any WBC updates.</p> <p>Cllr Doherty gave an update on the following:</p> <p>Omicron had been the focus for the majority of December as cases had increased but there had now been a reduction but added a note of caution due to the changes in the testing regime however reports from the hospitals were they remained able to cope and were not seeing the numbers of people with COVID translated into ICU beds and commended the work of the CCGs in West Berkshire with their work regarding the vaccination booster programme.</p> <p>The Health and Wellbeing Annual Board Conference focussing on the next 10 years of health and wellbeing in West Berkshire was being held on 21st January and anyone could sign up to be part of that.</p> <p>The temporary suspension of garden waste service which had been done to enable removal of excess Christmas waste and potential staff shortages was back up and running. Changes to waste removal days were currently being revised to maximise travel runs.</p> <p>There had been a second planning application regarding The Pilgrims Rest Guest House and although the HMO application was still live this second application was for a care home.</p> <p>The Clerk advised she had just been made aware of the application from a parishioner and asked for confirmation of the consultation expiry date as the portal stated it was 26th January.</p> <p>Cllr Doherty advised the site notice was published on 11th January and therefore the consultation period expired 21 days from that date being 1st February.</p>	<p>Cllr Amirtharaj</p> <p>Cllr Butter</p>
--	--	---



	<p>Cllr Doherty confirmed the HMO application would go to the Committee for consideration due to the level of objection.</p> <p>Clerk to send links to the planning portal to the Planning & Highways Committee on 18th January.</p> <p>Cllr Phillips asked for an update on the B4000 footpath project.</p> <p>Cllr Doherty advised there was no further news at the present time but it was unknown what might happen over the next few months of the financial year.</p> <p>8. Date of Next Meeting – 22nd January 2022</p> <p>Cllr Dudman confirmed the next focussed discussion group was scheduled for 21st February.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 9.05pm</p>	Clerk
--	--	-------

Signed:	Name (print): Position:	Date: 22/01/22
----------------	--	---------------------------------

Abbreviations Used:

SPC = Speen Parish Council
WBC = West Berkshire Council
CSW = Community Speed Watch