



BRAMSHOTT & LIPHOOK PARISH COUNCIL

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FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE

**THESE ARE DRAFT MINUTES AND ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL
AT THE NEXT MEETING ON 16th MARCH 2016**

**AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF BRAMSHOTT & LIPHOOK
PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE TOOK
PLACE AT 7.30 PM IN THE HASKELL CENTRE, MIDHURST ROAD,
LIPHOOK ON WEDNESDAY 17th FEBRUARY 2016.**

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Cllr Maroney – Chairman
Cllr Croucher
Cllr Easton
Cllr Kirby

Also in attendance: Cllr. J Poole (Secretary) and three members of the public

12/16 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr. Maroney welcomed those present to the meeting, explained where the fire exits were and asked that mobiles be switched to silent.

13/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr. J Ives

14/16 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

No interests were declared.

15/16 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Minutes of the meeting held on 13th January 2016 were unanimously approved.

16/16 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising

17/16 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Meeting adjourned

Public Questions not on the Agenda

None

Questions relating to business on the Agenda

Robin Young asked why the Parish Plan was not being considered by the other sub committees. Cllr. Maroney explained that all councillors had received copies of the Plan at the beginning of the month and that since there were financial and policy implications it had been brought in front of F&P for consideration prior to being put in front of full council for adoption at the end of the month.

Meeting Reconvened

18/16 INTERIM AUDIT REPORT

The internal auditor's report, which endorsed DCK Beaver's recommendations on registering for VAT and 'opting to tax', was discussed in depth as were the other two recommendations on staffing levels and the best practice of treating subcommittee minutes as standalone documents when recording them in the full council minutes.

Cllr. Easton queried whether VAT was recoverable on repairs. She thought it only applied to new buildings. It was explained that DCK Beaver were made well aware of the amount of work required on the Millennium Centre before recommending that 'opt to tax' would be beneficial.

It was agreed that the interim audit report be recommended to council.

19/16 VAT

The decision to 'opt to tax' on 1st April 2016 was made by Finance & Policy Committee in Minute 66/15 last September. This meeting was convened to see how it should be implemented.

Cllr. Maroney had received a written response to the agenda from Cllr Ives, chair of LMC committee in which she suggests postponing VAT implementation until 1st July to allow them to review hire charges for all users. Cllr Croucher stated that it would not be appropriate to start VAT changes some months into the financial year. Having spoken to HMRC and DCK Beavers, made extensive on-line enquiries and looked through the Sales Ledger with the LMC manager Cllr. Maroney was satisfied that almost all hirers would have to pay VAT. The only ones zero rated would be McMillian, Dreams, TLC etc. but only when they were conducting their charitable activities and not administration. Similarly where the council let rooms 'free' to the Youth Club VAT would not be applicable.

Cllr. Maroney explained that after opting to tax there was a 6 month cooling off period during which the council could change its mind and withdraw from the scheme. Cllr Easton favoured deferring the decision; Cllr. Kirby understood Cllr. Ives wishes but felt that professional advice should be followed.

Proposed recommendation: Council should 'opt to tax' from 1st April 2016.

Proposed by Cllr. Maroney; Seconded by Cllr. Croucher (Vote: 3 for and one abstention.)

20/16 CAPITAL WORKS AT THE MILLENNIUM CENTRE

It was acknowledged that over £123,000 needed spending on improvements and repairs to the LMC. By opting to tax there would be a 20% saving on the cost of this work. It could therefore be tackled as a large project thereby achieving economies of scale. What, how and when this work would be undertaken would rest solely with the LMC committee.

It was proposed we recommend to Council that the LMC committee puts together a costed project for the complete refurbishment of the Millennium Centre within 3 months with a plan for completing the work within two years and present this to F&P for approval.

Proposed Cllr. Maroney; Seconded Cllr. Kirby, unanimously approved.

S106 Funding. Following this decision Cllr. Maroney circulated a list of S106 funds held by EHDC on behalf of the Parish Council and another list of preferred projects that previous councils would like to see carried out. These lists were produced in 2014, but he was endeavouring to obtain updated versions that could be considered at the next meeting. He added that some of the proposed projects required justification, which he was looking into.

21/16 RELOCATION OF THE HASKELL CENTRE

Cllr. Maroney explained that the working party looking into this feasibility study had been set up by Council in Minute 84/15 in June 2015 without any terms of reference or professional support. He had therefore put forward a draft terms of reference which he circulated at the meeting. He had also been in discussions with the Chief Executive Officer at EHDC about buying in officer time on a professional basis and had been given Steve Pearce's name.

Cllr. Easton felt that these terms were above and beyond what was originally voted on. Cllr. Croucher felt that they offered a good basis for future planning. Cllr. Maroney acknowledged that the working party and Steve Pearce should be consulted and may wish to amend these terms.

Proposal: We agree these terms of reference and timescale and recommend them to Council.

Proposed: Cllr. Maroney, Seconded: Cllr. Croucher, unanimously approved.

22/16 PARISH PLAN

Cllr. Maroney explained that he accepted the Executive Officer's advice not to put this item to a vote as both Cllr. Kirby and he had been involved in drawing up the Plan. He asked Cllr. Croucher to chair this item so that he could present the Plan and answer questions. The aim being to identify those actions which F&P members felt had financial or policy implications.

He then led the committee through each action point in turn and answered questions. Cllr. Easton was concerned that some of the actions required from the Parish Council would incur costs which hadn't been budgeted for in the next financial year. It was explained that the Council would have to identify these costs as and when it decided to deliver the community's wishes.

Cllr. Easton expressed concern over the proposal to re-establish the Highways, Byways and Transport committee to protect the countryside saying that it had, in the

past, been unable to persuade HCC to take any action. It was pointed out that this proposal came from walkers, cyclists and commoners. The steering group felt that such a committee involving representatives from outside groups would be an effective way for the council to monitor footpaths and bridleways etc.

To justify the need for a Liphook Development Trust (LDT) Cllr. Maroney circulated the list of comments received from EHDC. These made clear that there would be insufficient developers' contributions to fund the facilities requested. Therefore the need to raise funds through an approved tax efficient body such as a trust fund made sense.

He has found similar trust funds on the Charity Commission's website with almost identical aims and objectives. These had been set up as independent bodies by their local councils with county and town councillors sitting on the boards alongside other professionals. He had spoken to one trust with an annual turnover of £184,000 and assets of £1.8 million, which had been serving its community for over 20 years. They were now focused on job creation.

LDT's first task would be to raise funds to conduct studies into the need for essential community facilities, especially for the elderly and disabled. Cllr. Croucher suggested that some statistical data could be obtained from CAB's research.

Cllr. Maroney then resumed the chair and concluded by saying that he would put the Parish Plan forward for adoption at the next full council meeting on 29th February.

23/16 EXCLUSION OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Motion: "In accordance with the provisions of section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the press and public be excluded from the meeting by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

Proposed Cllr Maroney, Seconded Cllr Croucher, unanimously approved.