

Request

Against all the above background here is an FoI Request and a written question for the full council, please. It is appreciated that it would be a significant burden to provide the answers at the next meeting, so please could the answers be given at the November meeting?:-

FoI Act Request

Please could you either upload or let me have a copy of:-

- 1 The service contract between the councils and Horsham Matters
- 2 The contract (if any) between the councils and SAYS
- 3 The terms of reference of the SAYS management committee.
- 4 The document about SAYS referred to by Cllr Bowell as the "Narrative I put out.....I spent a lot of time on that" which was apparently distributed to the Clerk and fellow councillors at about the beginning of April 2015. This is referred to in the recording of the 7 April 2015 F and C Committee at 47 minutes in.
- 5 The updated SAYS governance document referred to in the Upper Beeding Minutes of 19 May 2015

Questions for Full Council Meeting

Question A

In December 2012 the people of Steyning were asked by means of a survey whether they, along with the residents of Upper Beeding, Bramber and Ashurst, would be willing to fund the employment of an area youth worker. The total cost, including the use of premises, was put at a MAXIMUM of 20p per week per household (£10.40 per annum).

- 1 By reference to the sums SPC has paid or remains liable to pay (the fourth payment for 2014/15 seems to have been withheld beyond the SAYS year-end) to both Horsham Matters and to the Steyning Area Youth Service please could the Council state:-

How much the youth service (the total of SAYS and HM payments) has cost each Steyning household per week (averaged out over the relevant period and ignoring any rebate)

- a) for the period from commencement of the service to 31 March 2014; and
- b) for the period from 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015

(Please also show the calculation of the weekly figure by reference to the number of households)

- 2 If there is any significant difference between the consultation figure of £0.20pw and the actual weekly figure please give the percentage difference and the reason(s).

3 Please explain how the payments came to be made without the F and Committee being aware of the two payment streams or of the accumulating reserve. Who authorised the payments and how was this done with no motion at any public meeting of SPC?

Question B

The recently uploaded minutes of SAYS reveal that Cllr Howell as trustee knew in April 2014 that SAYS had accumulated significant reserves of at least £30,000 with a further £12,000 or more likely to come from WSCC and that he knew by 3 December 2014 that the SAYS reserves at 31 March 2014 had actually stood at £42,025. They also reveal that regular financial reports were made to trustees throughout the SAYS financial year ending 31 March 2015 and so Cllr Howell had a clear picture that the SAYS reserves were approaching £48,000 as the 2015 financial year neared its close.

1 By particular reference to SPC's Code of Conduct and its Duty of Openness

a) please would Cllr Howell now answer the question put to the F and C Committee by a member of the public on 5 May 2015 which can be heard at

<https://archive.org/details/20150505SteyningParishCouncilFinanceAndCommunityMeetingSC>

the gist of which was:-

Why was the F and C Committee and the full Parish Council apparently still in the dark about the existence and extent of the SAYS reserves in February 2015? This was long after Cllr Howell was aware of both and yet not even an approximate figure was given publicly until June 2015.

b) please would Cllr Howell explain why Steyning has not been informed of the changes in the constitution of SAYS either as to the new number of trustees or as to public participation in the management committee while Upper Beeding has actively recruited a new trustee and has had this information on its website for nearly five months (since 19 May).

2 By reference to the SPC Code of Conduct and in particular Part 2 (Personal and Prejudicial Interests) please would Cllr Howell

a) explain why he and Cllr Muggridge have advocated on behalf of SAYS at meetings of SPC without disclosing their personal and prejudicial interests and without leaving the room after speaking; and

b) please could he give details of any and all meetings, informal or formal involving himself or Cllr Muggridge with the Clerk or with any other member at which SAYS has been discussed and at which the public has not been present.

3 By reference to the Charity Commission Guidance on conflicts of interest please could Cllr Howell explain how he has resolved his apparent conflict of interest when voting at SAYS on matters involving its reserves fund.

Question C.

Having in mind in particular the Charity Commission Guidance, the bureaucracy engendered, the lack of accountability of trustees to SPC, the 20% VAT liability, the small rump of administrative duties now left with SAYS, and the accounting implications generally is the Council satisfied that a separate charity rather than a committee of the councils is the best mechanism for the future?

Question D

In the first operating period, according to SPC's published consolidated budget, Steyning contributed £33,760 against a budgeted £26,342 even though, as we have been told repeatedly by Cllr Howell, this was not a full year of operation. Please explain the inconsistency and explain how and by whom the payments were authorised by SPC given that the F and C Committee seems not to have been aware of what payments were being made or for what purpose.

Response 2 November 2015

Following your recent request for information under the Freedom of Information Act, please find attached:

- A copy of the Service Contract between Horsham Matters and Steyning Parish Council
- A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding between Steyning, Ashurst, Bramber and Upper Beeding Parish Councils
- Terms of Reference for the SAYS Management Committee – to be drafted and agreed by the Management Committee, no document currently available.
- Document referred to by Cllr Howell at F&C 07.04.15 – Cllr Howell believes this to be the document that is being referred to at the meeting.
- An updated SAYS Constitution is not yet available, however, the increase from 4 to 7 Trustees was recorded in the Trustees minutes of 16.02.15 and noted by the Charity Commission on 18.05.15 – original Constitution attached.