

Request

A total of £20,546.32 of the Steyning Area Youth Service Charity (SAYS) reserves is derived from two grants; one from HDC and one from WSCC. ... Once funds are in the SAYS accounts they are liable to irrecoverable VAT as SAYS pays for goods and services. The same goods and services if paid for by SPC are in effect 20% cheaper because SPC can recover the VAT, I understand.

Accordingly, it seems it would have been better if these grant payments had come to the parish councils rather than to SAYS and had then been used directly to purchase goods and services for the provision of the area youth service. There would have been a saving to the local tax-payer of around £4,000. But maybe it is not too late.

I understand that at least one of these payments did actually come in to SPC before being paid out. It seems to me that it would be useful if it could be established that one or both of these payments were made to SAYS in error. There would be a saving of this £4,000 or so to the local tax-payer if the money could now be recovered from SAYS by the parish councils and then used to pay HM.

In the circumstances I would be grateful if under the FoI Act you could let me have copies of all correspondence exchanged and file notes of telephone calls with WSCC and with HDC regarding the circumstances in which the two grants were made by those bodies. Also any documentation relating to the transfer of ownership of the van. If it is correct that at least one of these payments came through SPC's books please could you identify for me the meeting at which the payment out to SAYS was authorised as I have not been able to find it?

Response 21 January 2016

The WSCC grant funding was transferred directly from WSCC to SAYS and did not pass through the SPC accounts.

In order for SAYS to receive grant funding from HDC, the Parish Councils were required to invoice HDC for the funds on behalf of SAYS – please see invoice attached.

The transfer of funds, from HDC to SAYS, was made via the SPC account. The funds were never the property of SPC, therefore no authorisation was deemed necessary, although the March I&E Report agreed by F&C on 05.03.2013 included reference to the transfer.

The Bongo van and documents were transferred directly from WSCC to SAYS, therefore SPC hold no documentation on this matter.