

Steyning Parish Council



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MEETING OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 10th DECEMBER 2019 AT 7.30PM IN THE STEYNING CENTRE

Present: Cllrs Goldsmith, Campbell, G Sullivan, Cree, Hanson, Saunders, Lloyd and S. Sullivan.

Clerk: John Fullbrook

Members of the Public in attendance: 3 (including Cllr Northam)

Meeting commenced: 7:30pm

MINUTES

ACTIONS

F&GP/19/81 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies received from Cllr Taylor.

F&GP/19/82 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

Cllr Cree declared a personal, prejudicial and pecuniary interest in Agenda item 14.

F&GP/19/83 QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

83.1.1

Q – *In relation to Agenda items 6.3, and 6.4, previous Councils have taken considerable care in preparing their budgets and planned expenditure for the coming year to ensure that residents are not burdened with sudden increases in the parish precept. I recall that some years ago, the council decided to add two important new services to their planned budget, locally funded youth services (following WSCC abandonment of all their youth services) and local neighbourhood wardens. In view of the level of new expense I believe the council called a town vote, which confirmed that the majority of Steyning residents agreed with their proposals and the associated additional costs. According to the draft budget proposals being considered tonight, there are again very significant planned increases in the 2020/21 budget; currently showing a staggering 42,8% overall increase. This includes major items of new expenditure, which some residents may doubt is for the benefit of the community, e.g. £11k Legal costs for alleged defamation of a councillor on social media by a local resident; £10k Human resource consultancy fees for staff matters (never need before); £6k for an SPC Newsletter; £54k on projects. My question to this committee is: - Will you be seeking residents' views and concurrence about these planned new expenses to be included in their 2020/21 precept? Or will Steyning First's priorities just be imposed on the community?*

83.1.2

A – *Chairman - Thank you. Cllr Saunders – Are we going to answer the question? Chairman – No, there was a sarcastic comment at the end. Cllr Cree, - it's just the start of the Budget process. Chairman - , Yes, and that's why we will discuss it.*

F&GP/19/84 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

84.1

Cllr Goldsmith **proposed**, and Cllr Lloyd **seconded** that the version 2 non – confidential minutes for the meeting held on 12th November 2019 be approved as a true record of the proceedings. **Agreed**

CLERK

Chairman moved straight to item 6, saying he would return to Agenda item 5.

F&GP/19/85 FINANCE MATTERS

- 85.1.1** Cllr Goldsmith **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S. Sullivan to approve list of payments for November 2019. **Agreed** **CLERK**
- 85.1.2** Bongo Bus income - £700 and for this amount to be Ring-fenced to go to Full Council **CLERK**
- 85.2** Cllr Goldsmith **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Lloyd to agree Income & Expenditure report for September 2019 is an accurate statement. **Agreed**
- 85.2.1** Line headed 'Donation' – Clerk to send email to Councillors with breakdown of what has been received. **CLERK**
- 85.3** Committee agreed to move forward to Agenda item 6.8 - Bowls Club Matters. Clerk updated on the Ownership of the Bowls Club House Building, which had delayed progress in completing the Lease agreement. Cllr Campbell **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Lloyd that the Clerk is directed forthwith to obtain legal advice concerning the ownership of the Bowls Club house with particular reference to whether it is a fixture and has or will become SPC's property on expiry of the previous or present lease. **Agreed** **CLERK**
- 85.4.1** F&GP Project priorities and Draft Budget paper were discussed with supporting papers having previously been compiled and distributed by the Clerk. Committee went through line by line the F&GP Budgets and agreed amounts at this stage with some lines remaining to be further discussed. Clerk to update the draft budget and send out to Councillors **CLERK**
- 85.4.2** Clerk to contact Chamber of trade to discuss an upgrade on future investment on Christmas decorations. **CLERK**
- 85.5** Clerk asked again for agreement for Audit actions and to agree 'Notice of Public Rights' and Section 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance statements for 2018/19. The item was deferred.
- 85.6** Clerk updated he had received confirmation council could not use Cil revenue on the Welcome sign project expenditure as it was not covered by the criteria.
- 85.7** State of Neighbourhood Plan Financial Account – Current budget figure total is at £23,036. Cllr Goldsmith **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Lloyd that committee agrees payment of the invoice 065 - £2,587.55 to Squires. Clerk to ask for itemised bills from Squires and to distribute to councillors. **CLERK**

F&GP/19/86 DATE OF NEXT MEETING 14th JANUARY 2020

The Chairman closed the meeting at 10.01pm

Signed Date 14th January 2020

Chairman of F&GP Committee

Audio recording of this meeting available on :

<https://archive.org/details/20191210steyningparishcouncilfinanceandgeneralpurposesmeeting>