

Steyning Parish Council



The Steyning Centre, Fletcher's Croft, Steyning,
West Sussex, BN44 3XZ

Telephone: 01903 812042

www.steyningpc.gov.uk

www.thesteyningcentre.co.uk

MEETING OF FULL PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 15th JULY 2019 AT 7.30PM

IN THE STEYNING CENTRE

Present: Cllrs Goldsmith (Chairman), Bissett-Powell, Campbell, Cree, Hanson, Lloyd, Rudkin, Saunders, S Sullivan, G. Sullivan, Trundle and Young.

Clerk: John Fullbrook

Members of the Public: 17

Meeting commenced 7.30 pm

MINUTES

FULL/19/48 APOLOGIES

ACTIONS

48.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Taylor, Ray and Northam.

FULL/19/49 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

49.1 There were declarations of interest from Cllrs S. Sullivan as lives adjacent the MPF and serve on the Steyning Community Orchard.

FULL/19/50 QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

50.1.1 **Q** – Jane Oxley – Any update on the Oak fence renewal on the corner of High street and Church street?

50.1.2 **A** – *The Clerk answered - quotes have been sought from two companies by the Clerk and he hopes to speak with them on site to agree details. These quotes are to be supplied to WSCC Highways department and Cllr Barling, who are both already aware of the situation, for then Cllr Barling to pursue.*

50.2.1 **Q** – Richard Bell - *I'm concerned about the speed of the decision-making process. NP steering committee has four members of the council on its committee and I wonder if that helps speed up the processes involved in making decisions. I'm keen to see that all decisions at our steering committee are not going to have to be ratified at Full Council, before progress is made.*

50.2.2 **A** - *The Chair responded - We are having meetings now and things will start moving forward*

50.3.1 **Q** - *At this council's first meeting in May you promised to operate in an open & transparent way. Indeed, in April 2016, Mr Campbell (now Cllr Campbell) emailed the previous council expressing his concern that 2 or 3 councillors were meeting at a Breakfast club in Steyning and that important council business may be discussed there, and important decisions may be pre-determined. Would the chairman confirm my understanding that the Steyning First councillors are holding "secret meetings" to discuss council business*



Parish Clerk: John Fullbrook
Deputy Clerk: Hazel Roxby

Email: clerk@steyningpc.gov.uk
Email: hazel.roxby@steyningpc.gov.uk

ahead of SPC's official public meetings (which are of course themselves recorded & minuted). The most recent "secret meeting" was I believe held last week in the Jungle Tearooms in Wiston. Would the chairman also confirm my understanding that Steyning First councillors are exchanging emails about SPC business from their private email addresses; presumably to avoid any possibility of them being revealed to any Freedom of Information request from a resident or another organisation. How are such behaviours by SF councillors consistent with your promise for openness & transparency?

- 50.3.2** **A – The Chairman responded- I think it's okay for friends to meet up and have breakfast, and I'm not answering the rest because I think you are just stirring up trouble.**
- 50.4.1** **Q – Russell Barnes – I understand there is a written response to our Article 4 communication, and I wonder if it is going to become public knowledge or if there was to be an update on that?**
- 50.4.2** **A- The Chairman responded, - We had it just at the end of the last Council, and it will be an Agenda item very soon at Full Council**
- 50.5.1** **Q- I'd like to ask the Council if they are happy with the efforts put in so far by the NP steering committee Because on behalf of the community, we think they have done a sterling job, and will their information be used moving forward?**
- 50.5.2** **A – The Chairman replied,-The Neighbourhood planning team have done a very good job over the last nearly two years, obviously there will always be hiccups, but we are moving forward and will be a council decision as to how quick it goes through, and everyone is appreciative as to their efforts. If it's appropriate it will be used. We have the meeting with HDC this evening and it will be dealt with there.**
- 50.6.1** **Q – The contract you are referring to in the reasoning for the confidential session this evening – what is the subject of the contract under discussion.**
- 50.6.2** **A – The Chairman replied we are not discussing a contract and the Clerk added that this line was on the Agenda in error (His) as actually as the Agenda goes on to state – the reasoning was due to the Horsham Planning officer who had been invited to be meet Council asking for it to be held in confidential session.**
- 50.7.1** **Q – For Full Council, confidential sessions can only be held for financial, legal or contractual reasons.**
- 50.7.2** **A – The Chairman said - We need to move the process forward and the representatives from Horsham have stressed that they want it to be held within confidential session and if they don't have any objection then I would say please stay. Chairman then asked the Horsham rep. for his views. Norman Kwan stated that he needed a frank conversation with the Councillors, and he felt a confidential session was appropriate. Cllr Campbell suggested the Council end the meeting before it gets to confidential session and then Council could have a private meeting.**

CLERK

FULL/19/51 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

51.1 None

FULL/19/52 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

52.1 Cllr Goldsmith **Proposed**, Cllr Bissett-Powell **seconded** the minutes of the meeting held on the 17th June 2019 be agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings. **Agreed 11 For, 1 Against**

FULL/19/53 FINANCE MATTERS

53.1 To approve the recommendation from F&GP committee to agree Insurance cover with Inspire via AXA for Steyning Parish Council for the next three-year period from 1st September 2019. Cllr Cree **proposed**, **seconded** by Cllr Bissett-Powell that Full Council approve F&GP committee's recommendation to choose to set up a three year long term agreement (LTA) with **Inspire via AXA**, the annual premium being £5,046.85 with a £75 administrative fee to the Brokers giving a total premium of £5,121.85. **Agreed**

CLERK



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53.2	To approve the recommendation from F&GP Committee that SPC's clerk is authorised to sign and release the two agreements (Wardens Service contract with HDC and MOU with Upper Beeding and Bramber Parish Councils) in accordance with the latest draft versions as per supporting papers - provided that if any party declines to accept them as drafted then further negotiations will be required. Meanwhile, the Clerk to give assurance to the wardens that we have been using our best endeavours to bring matters to completion and that our aim continues to be to conclude the agreements as soon as possible and that they will be backdated to 1 April. Cllr Campbell proposed, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith to approve the F&GP committee's recommendation regarding the Wardens Contract and Memorandum of Understanding documents being signed and released by the Clerk as noted above. Agreed, 10 For 2 Abstained	CLERK
FULL/19/54	AUDIT ITEM	
54.1	The Clerk advised Councillors that the review from the external auditor was for the year 2017/18 and that the four agenda item documents to be approved for signature by the Chairman were for 2018/19. Cllr Campbell stated that he did not think it was possible to sign off on the Annual Governance Statement for 2018/19 without knowing the results of the External Auditors' review for 2017/18 as the problems, including those concerning contract control and decision-making being looked into by the Auditors, spanned both financial years. The Clerk confirmed he had not had the External Auditors' report and was so was not certain what they might be happy or unhappy with. He did not know precisely what questions had been raised and by whom. The Clerk re-emphasised that the Auditors were looking at 2017/18 whereas tonight's documents related to 2018/19. There was discussion suggesting the governance statement be deferred and that the other items could be agreed separately. The Clerk confirmed he had been in regular contact with the Auditors trying to chase them up. He also explained that the process had taken so long because questions had first been raised last July/August 2018 and many questions had been raised since that point - though he was not aware of what they all were. Delays were also caused by a change of personnel at the Auditors. There had been five final questions raised by the Auditors which had been answered a good month ago and so the conclusions from the Auditors were now expected. The Clerk speculated that the final delay could be that the external auditors were waiting to see if Council raises any questions in relation to their signing off on these 2018/19 items. Cllr Goldsmith proposed, seconded by Cllr S. Sullivan that because it was quite complicated that this item be deferred in its entirety until next F&GP committee when it could all be looked at in more detail. Agreed 7 For {PC, TC, S. Sull, RG, GS, CY, TR}, 5 Against {TL, DH, LT, GS, MBP}. Cllr Lloyd wanted to qualify his vote by stating that he didn't agree that all of the 4 items ought to be deferred as it should only be the Annual Governance statement.	CLERK
FULL/19/55	MEDIA	
55.1	To Discuss and agree the appointment of Cllr Kerry Taylor as a media liaison councillor with the terms of refence as previously set out in briefing paper and with specific authority to upload the NP recruitment advert plus any agendas or minutes of the council or its committees or any other document at the request of the Clerk. Cllr Campbell proposed, seconded by Cllr Bissett Powell that this item is deferred by to the next Full Council meeting on the 24th July. Agreed 9 For, 3 Against	CLERK

FULL/19/40 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE

40.1 Report from the Neighbourhood plan steering committee representative – Richard Bell, who stated that the committee are slowly getting back to business, but that it was probably best to wait until after the Q & A session, planned for later in the evening, to have happened before a more relevant report on progress could be given. He said there is some very good work currently being undertaken with regards to Green spaces and the environment, but there is some more organizational work needing to be undertaken.

40.2.1 To discuss and agree appointment of Neighbourhood plan steering committee Chairman and Vice Chairman. Cllr Campbell **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Cree that Richard Bell be elected as Neighbourhood plan steering committee Chairman. **Agreed**

40.2.2 Cllr Campbell **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Young that Murray Van de Poll be elected as Neighbourhood plan steering committee Vice - Chairman. **Agreed**

40.3 To discuss and agree publication of NP Steering committee vacancy Advert. Cllr Goldsmith **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Lloyd that Council agrees the content and publication of the poster advertising a vacancy within the Neighbourhood plan steering committee and that Clerk and Cllr Trundle action its promotion. **Agreed**

**CLERK / Cllr
Trundle**

40.4 To discuss and agree new Terms of reference for NP steering committee. Cllr Campbell **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Cree that Council considers this item again on the 24th July and that the Steering committee provides written comments on the item to Council before the end of this week. **Agreed**

CLERK

FULL/19/41 CORRESPONDANCE AND INFORMATION ITEMS

41.1 None

FULL/19/42 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 24th July 2019 at 7.30pm

Meeting closed at 8:10 pm

Signed Date 24th July 2019

Chairman

