

MEETING OF FULL PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 20th SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 7.30PM

Councillors Present : Cllrs Norcross (Chairman), Northam, Hanson, Trundle, Rudkin, Lloyd, S. Sullivan, G. Sullivan, I. Alexander, Goldsmith, Bell, Young, Campbell and S. Alexander.

Clerks in attendance : John Fullbrook and Hazel Roxby

Members of the Public : 15 {including WSCC Cllr Linehan and District Cllr Bob Platt}

Meeting commenced 7.30 pm

MINUTES

ACTION

FULL/21/45 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 45.1** No Apologies received from Cllrs.
The Clerk reported the two Wardens had sent apologies

FULL/21/46 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 46.1** None received

FULL/21/47 STATEMENTS FROM CLERK AND CHAIRMAN

- 47.1** The Clerk conveyed words of thanks for the support, understanding and kind condolences he had received from councillors, residents and staff in relation to two months of tragic family related issues he had personally been facing.
- 47.2** The Chair read out a statement {appended to these minutes} reminding councillors of the protocols she wanted observed at meetings following the poor behaviour displayed at the last SPC Communities Committee. The main points being that whatever our individual differences, we treat each other, the staff and the residents, with dignity and respect.

FULL/21/48 CO-OPTION OF A PARISH COUNCILLOR

- 48.1** There had been an SPC Councillor vacancy for some time. An expression of interest in fulfilling the role had been received from a Steyping resident and this had been sent as a supporting paper to councillors so that questions could be raised to the prospective councillor at this point in the meeting – the resident being present and able to answer questions from the public gallery. After presenting her case, Council voted.
- Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** Cllr S. Alexander that Rona Parsons be co-opted onto Steyping Parish Council. **Agreed.** Rona did not sign her acceptance papers at this point and so was to join the Council officially for the next meeting.

CLERK

FULL/21/49 QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR (in Summary)

- 49.1.1** **Q.** – Trevor Cree asked three questions
1. – Under agenda item 8.1, the Council had sought legal advice- How much was it costing & from whom?
 2. – Item 11.1 – No responsible council would sign a confidentiality agreement – please explain why SPC would?

3. – There are no meetings due in October for Community, F&GP nor Full Council and therefore no official decisions can be made- when will SPC reinstate all the council and committee meetings?

- 49.1.2** **A.** – 1. - *The SPC solicitors, Wellers Headley, were consulted for this advice and there is no specific cost known at this stage.*
2. – *The possible signing of a confidentiality agreement will be discussed later in this meeting.*
3. – *The SPC meeting schedule has been agreed and will not be changed. However, there will be a rearranged F&GP Meeting on the 12th of October '21.*

- 49.2.1** **Q.** – *Robert Mattinson made a statement saying – He soon hopes to hear a response to the Neighbourhood plan public consultation as it been two years since the process began and his land was being proposed LGS against his wishes. He suspects one of the responses which might be prompting a possible confidentiality agreement might be concerning his land, and he wanted to say if anyone said anything of a damaging nature concerning his conduct or his intentions, he was more than happy that any comments should be published, because he has nothing to hide.*

- 49.2.2** **A.** – *The Chair wanted to make it absolutely clear that any proposed confidentiality agreement issue sits with Horsham district council, and that SPC did not propose it nor wants it and instead would prefer transparency.*

FULL/21/50 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- 50.1** Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S. Alexander that subject to the 'explanation' text noted within item 42.1 being appended to the 19th July 2021 minutes, that these minutes be accepted as a true and fair record. **Agreed**

CLERK

FULL/21/51 MATTERS ARISING

These were taken as read as per agenda (Except item 51.3, as the clerk pointed out the wardens were not now in attendance and so therefore could not verbally report on antisocial behaviour at this time).

- 51.1** Cllr Linehan to pursue WSCC Highways to see if deregistered disabled parking bay lines can be removed – **Update at 53.1 from Cllr Linehan**

- 51.2** Clerk and Mr Barnard to submit Highways Scheme Application online including amendments to WSCC - **Actioned**

- 51.3** Wardens to report on antisocial behaviour issues and what is being done to avoid further issues – **Ongoing**

CLERK

- 51.4** Clerk to obtain further information relating to proposed confidentiality agreement with HDC – **See item 55.1**

- 51.5** Clerk to inform residents who are to be members of the NP Steering Committee – **Actioned**

- 51.6** Clerk to update NP Steering Committee Terms of Reference and distribute – **Actioned**

- 51.7** Payment of Grant to Vintage Years - **Actioned**

FULL/21/52 TO RECEIVE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SPC PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

- 52.1** Cllr Campbell stated he thought neither item discussed at this committee meeting – dated 14th September - was within the terms of reference of that committee and that it was wrong that he had been criticised in this way and that he had sent a very long rebuttal to all councillors and invited the Chair to consider that this rebuttal be posted on the web site, as he had concerns about what had been said, and that the statement put on the web site by the Chair was false. The Chair utterly refuted that her statement was false. In terms of placing Cllr Campbells views (rebuttal) on the web site, the Chair stated that provided that with those views, was the counter argument to those views, which would be presented by the serving members of the personnel committee, then this would offer the public the fairest overview.

**Personnel
Committee
members**

Cllr Campbell accepted this suggestion, on the basis of Cllr Lloyd's assurance that it would be dealt with speedily. Cllr S. Alexander further pointed out that in so far as the items discussed were concerning criticism of the staff then it was entirely appropriate that the matter was being dealt with by the Personnel Committee.

FULL/21/53 REPORT FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

53.1 Cllr Linehan (WSCC) – He confirmed that he would not necessarily be reporting at every Full Council meeting as he believed his work dealing with resident's issues would not necessarily need to be reported to SPC. He will set up and promote surgeries for residents to attend in the near future.

Relating to disabled bays – unless they are supported by appropriate notices then they are not enforceable. Deregistered bays are not painted over or removed generally, rather their paint is allowed to wear away.

53.2 Cllr Bob Platt (HDC) – The Horsham District Plan is still being discussed, with a briefing due on the 24th of October as to proposed changes following movement on the government guidelines. At the last Council meeting, there was a motion passed to actively help any refugees that might seek to settle from Afghanistan. Horsham District Council and the Sussex Wildlife Trust have now come up with a joint plan which covers green space initiatives in the district, and this is available on the HDC website. Lastly, a food waste collection service will be trialed in the district shortly.

53.3 Cllr Tim Lloyd (HDC) – Re-iterated the importance that the Local plan is agreed very soon

FULL/21/54 NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS' REPORT

54.1 Council received the Neighbourhood Wardens report for July and August 2021. There was continued concern raised with regards to antisocial behaviour and especially within play areas – it was noted that the wardens and PCSO's had raised their profile and attendance in these areas in the last month. Cllr Northam raised the issue once again of data evaluation – there is a need to analyse the data within these reports and provide evidence of a change in the service provided based upon changes in trends in antisocial behaviour for example.

FULL/21/55 SPC NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

55.1.1 The Clerk had been tasked with finding out further details as to why there was a proposed confidentiality agreement and sent an email soon after the last Full Council meeting to the monitoring officer in which he asked for answers to the following -

1. *What happens if SPC refuses to sign this confidentiality agreement?*
2. *Is the reason HDC are pushing for this to be signed, that it believes there may be instances where litigation might be possible, due to potentially defamatory content of some of the representations. And If this is not the case please can we be provided with the reason as to why?*

There had been further approaches to HDC via email, phone and virtual meeting and it had been stated that there would be further clarification for this meeting.

55.1.2 On Friday 17th September the following email was received from Norman Kwan, Senior Neighbourhood Planning Officer - *'We have just received legal opinion today from our colleagues regarding proceeding with the confidentiality agreement and are considering its contents with my senior managers. I envisage to resolve the issue of release of representations to the {SPC} steering group early next {this} week and will look to inform the parish {SPC} before the end of next {this} week on how you should proceed with the examination.'*

55.1.3 The Clerk was asked to circulate any new information, representations, guidance or any amended proposed agreements as they arrive.

CLERK

FULL/21/56 GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE MATTERS

- 56.1** To discuss the appointment of the internal auditor. The Clerk spoke in support of the current provider. Cllr Norcross **proposed a motion** (Noted below). Cllr Campbell **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Goldsmith **an amended motion** that we {SPC} agree to appoint Mulberry and Co as Internal Auditor (for the next current financial year 2021/22) after first seeking quotes for an alternative accountant. **Not Agreed 6 For {SSu, GS, TR, RG, PC, RB} 6 Against {JN, TL, SN, LT, IA, SA}, 2 Abstained {CY, DH} - not agreed on the Chairs casting vote.** Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** Cllr Northam that we {SPC} agree to appoint Mulberry and Co as Internal Auditor (for the current financial year 2021/22). **Agreed - 9 For {SA, IA, TL, CY, JN, RB, SN, DH, LT}, 5 Against {PC, RG, SSu, GSu, TR}**

CLERK**FULL/21/57 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES / DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

- 57.1** Cllr Lloyd and Trundle – (HALC/ WSALC/NALC) No update as no meeting
- 57.2** Cllrs Chris Young and Bell – Isolation and loneliness / PPG update – Cllr Young updated that the Flu vaccinations are well under way at the surgery. That there are two new salaried GP's at the surgery and that Vintage Years group have made a welcome return – with two meetings having taken place at the Steyning Centre recently.
- 57.3** Cllrs S. Alexander and Lloyd – Update on Wardens Steering Group – no meetings, nothing to report.
- 57.4** Cllr Northam and Norcross – Joint Parishes Cemetery Committee – next meeting in October but no agenda as yet and nothing else to report.
- 57.5** Cllrs S. Alexander, Trundle, Bell and Hanson – Climate Change Emergency working party – nothing to report
- 57.6** Cllrs S. Alexander and I. Alexander – South Downs National Park – no meeting and nothing to report

Note *Cllr Rudkin left the meeting at this point without explanation – 8.55pm*

- 57.7** Cllr Norcross and S. Alexander – Update on Joint Parishes Youth Committee – There is a meeting with the school in the next few days to discuss future use of the Cuthman centre. And there is then planned a meeting of the Youth Committee for the following week. The last Committee minutes {26th May} are to be placed on the web site. Cllr Linehan offered to attend the meeting with the school.

D. CLERK**FULL/21/58 PROGRESS REPORT**

- To receive the following ongoing items and to discuss and agree any necessary actions to be taken -
- 58.1** Cllr Norcross to present Millennium Award to the Upper Beeding Hub in person when able - **Ongoing**
- 58.2** Internal Auditor appointment details to be brought back to Full Council - **Actioned**
- 58.3** Take HDC approved Code of Conduct to a Working Practices Group then back to Full Council - **Ongoing**
- 58.4** SPC Land Register to be brought back to Full Council, subject to ongoing processing of non-registered land by solicitors – **Ongoing – with the SPC Solicitors**

**Cllr
Norcross****CLERK****CLERK /
Wellers
Headley**

- 58.5 Personnel Committee to seek legal advice as to how the council can protect its staff as per decision at Full Council – **Actioned**
- 58.6 Soft Sands Working party members to liaise with residents/groups to offer support - **Ongoing** **CLERK**
- 58.7 Clerk to inform NP Steering committee members that they have agreement to proceed once SPC receive final clarification note – **Ongoing – based upon the need for further information from HDC** **CLERK**
- 58.8 Christmas lights, alternative quotes to be obtained – **Ongoing – to be dealt with as a priority** **CLERK**
- FULL/21/59 CORRESPONDENCE AND INFORMATION ITEMS**
- 59.1 Cllr Goldsmith raised two points – he wanted to know more about the planning EOM decisions concerning the Washington Land fill site – the minutes will be uploaded to the SPC web site. **D. CLERK**
Also, he pointed out that a traffic order associated with Shooting fields wasn't given out in a timely fashion
- 59.2 Cllr I. Alexander reported on his representative role with the Steyning Society - He informed that the Steyning Society is undertaking the compilation of a local heritage list, consisting of buildings of historic local context. SPC were requested to assist with the process and as part of this there is to be a walkaround with the HDC conservation team later this month. Once the List is completed there will be a public consultation with SPC asked to assist with promotion and to give comments.

FULL/21/60 DATE OF NEXT FULL COUNCIL MEETING: 15th November 2021 at 7.30pm

Meeting closed at 9.10 pm

Signed Date 15th November 2021
Chairman

A Video recording of this meeting is available on the SPC Website or via this link below
<https://youtu.be/zYwxXED37UQ>

APPENDIX

Statement from the Chair – Item 47.2

Following the last Communities committee meeting and some of the behaviour on display at that meeting I would just like to remind all present of the protocols under which meetings are held and the standard of behaviour expected at these meetings.

Our Standing Orders make it quite clear that each Councillor is permitted up to two minutes to speak on any agenda item, and that they have a right of reply should it so arise. So as a reminder to all present this is, as per usual, the system under which this meeting will be conducted.

As Councillors we are here to represent the residents of Steyning and as such we need to be able to all work together. We do not have to like each other, nor to always agree with each other. In fact, disagreement and debate is an expected part of the role. It is however imperative that, whatever our individual differences, we treat each other, the staff and the residents, with dignity and respect. Consequently, shouting, constantly interrupting and/or insulting each other or the staff will not be tolerated. The same applies to members of the public. Council meetings are, in the main, held in public and there is always an opportunity for questions and or statements at the beginning of the meetings. However once that part of the meeting is concluded the expectation is that the public will remain silent, unless expressly asked to contribute. Heckling, shouting and any form of abuse, to both Councillors and other members of the public will not be tolerated and anybody engaging in this behaviour will be asked to leave the meeting.