

MEETING OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

HELD ON 12th DECEMBER 2023 AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllrs S Alexander (Chairman), Sharp, Ballance, I Alexander, Norcross and Bell.

Clerk: John Fullbrook

Members of the Public in attendance: 1

Meeting commenced: 7:30 pm

NON-CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

ACTIONS

- F&GP/23/50 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
50.1 Apologies were received from Cllrs Trundle, Campbell and Foxwell.
- F&GP/23/51 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**
51.1 None
- F&GP/23/52 QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR {in summary}**
52.1 None
- F&GP/23/53 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**
53.1 Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Norcross that the non-confidential and confidential minutes of the meeting held on the 14th November 2023 be agreed as a true and fair record.
Agreed
- F&GP/23/54 MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS – These items taken as read**
54.1 Cllrs to research Christmas light display options for next 3 years & bring to next meeting – **Actioned**
54.2 Staff pay award resultant admin completed – **Actioned**
54.3 Internal audit report approved, and recommendations being actively followed – **Actioned**
54.4 Agreed SPC Asset register with one amendment published on Web Site – **Actioned**
54.5 SPC Action plan progressed and brought back to next meeting – **Actioned / See 56.2**
54.6 Recent FOI requests and responses uploaded onto SPC Web Site – **Actioned**
54.7 Clerk's office seeks quote from grass cutting company to cover tender – **Actioned / See 60.1**
54.8 SPC Community Awards certificates completed and awarded at Chairmans Function – **Actioned**
- F&GP/23/55 FINANCIAL MATTERS.**
55.1 **To approve the list of SPC payments for November 2023.**
Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded** by Cllr I Alexander that the list of payments for November 2023 be approved as a correct record. **Agreed**
55.2 **To agree F&GP Income & Expenditure reports for November 2023.**
Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ballance to agree the F&GP Income and Expenditure reports for November 2023 as a correct record. **Agreed**

55.3	To consider SPC projects for 2024/25, and earmarking reserves for 2023 'year-end'. Members discussed at length the proposed projects for 2024/25 as per supporting papers and attempted to prioritise them in consideration of the proposed budget funding for the next fiscal year. There was a suggestion that, if possible, play areas ought to be serviced via an annual sinking fund so that there was an ongoing process in place to renew them over time. It was also thought however that this should happen only after the current round of renewals which it was suggested are outweighing all other project priorities. There were no decisions on projects made at this meeting, with the item to be further discussed at the January F&GP. The only item currently considered for earmarking in March '24 were the 'Youth Service' unspent funds. In consideration of the planning and premises committee's proposed projects the following motion was put forward. Cllr Norcross proposed, seconded by Cllr S Alexander that SPC agree that an operational survey is carried out to check existing Steyning Centre plant controls to see if efficiency could be improved, and savings made, at the quoted cost of £325. Agreed	CLERK D CLERK
55.4	To consider the F&GP committee budget and SPC consolidated budget for 2023/24. The Chair explained that this was the committee's first consideration of the full consolidated annual SPC budget. First the committee checked the other committees budget recommendations and there was only one point noted for possible amendment, that being the fact that the grass cutting contract amount was liable for change, but this was dependent upon the decision being made in this meeting's confidential session. Members discussed several other budget items, but could find no easy way of reducing further the expenditure budgets noted as per supporting papers. This matter to be brought back to the next meeting for a final recommendation.	CLERK
55.5.1	To consider two invoices which due to their amounts, need agreement from F&GP Committee Cllr S Alexander proposed, seconded by Cllr Bell that SPC accept to pay the invoice as per quoted for £4,570 plus VAT for the audio improvements at the Steyning Centre. Agreed	CLERK
55.5.2	Cllr S Alexander proposed, seconded by Cllr Norcross that SPC accept to pay the invoice as per quoted for £1,840 plus VAT for the pendulum mechanism installation at the Clock Tower, and that the monies be taken out of the Town Improvement budget line. Agreed	
55.6	To discuss future project aspirations for the F&GP Committee. Members considered that upgrading tourist story-board signs around the town be brought back to this committee for future discussion and that other key-stakeholders such as the Steyning Society and Community Partnership be contacted and the project be facilitated by SPC.	CLERK
F&GP/23/56 GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY MATTERS		
56.1	To consider next year's Christmas light display on the Steyning High Street. Members had considered the matter and the current display was considered reasonably good by consensus. It was also fed back to committee that the Business Chamber were 'happy' with the current display provided by SPC with the idea that there be a return to displays which straddled the high street being rejected. The SPC current display, but to include an 'icicle feature', as per seen elsewhere was put forward as a possible enhancement. Cllr S Alexander proposed, seconded by Cllr Ballance that the Clerk reach out to the existing contractor for all options for 2024 up to a value of £6,200. Agreed	CLERK
56.2	SPC Action Plan update. Cllrs discussed the various projects that have been prioritised for action for this first year of the current council's term. Three projects had been completed. Other project completion was more or less on schedule. It was suggested that the narrative be removed from the 'Mitigation to risks' section when projects are completed.	CLERK
F&GP/23/57 PROGRESS REPORT		
57.1	<i>F&GP/22/15.10 Clerks office produce an interim Land and Asset register whilst waiting for Registry search to be completed via the SPC solicitors. – Members considered that because SPC is in the hands of the Land registry office on this matter, and that an Asset register had recently been agreed, that the item be brought back at a later date rather than continually being discussed for no reason.</i>	

Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded by** Cllr Norcross that SPC drop the Land Registry search item for the next six months and then report back at that time any amendments from the Land Registry Office. **Agreed**

CLERK

57.2 F&GP/23/8.2 Community Engagement Sub Committee terms to be discussed by Working Practices Group – **Ongoing – members agreed that the Working practices would convene on the 19th December at 11am to consider this matter**

Working Par

57.3 F&GP/22/18.1 Clerks office to enquire about Youth Service contract payment reimbursements **The Clerk had completed a 'proof of debt' form and sent it to liquidators and was awaiting a response. This now with the JPYC.**

57.4 F&GP/23/42.3 CCTV working party to reconvene when first quotes received – **Cllr S Alexander reported that he was continuing to chase the long-awaited quote.**

Cllr S Alexand

F&GP/23/58 INFORMATION/CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS

58.1 None

F&GP/23/59 **CONFIDENTIAL SESSION** – Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded by** Cllr Norcross to resolve, under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, in accordance with Standing orders 3d to exclude the press and public on the grounds that the confidential matters to be discussed under agenda item 11 (below) may involve disclosure of personal or privileged information which would be inappropriate to put in the public domain. **Agreed**

F&GP/23/60 SPC GRASS CUTTING CONTRACT

60.1 **To consider the situation concerning the current grass contract and agree any subsequent actions.** It had been agreed that the current grass cutting service provision was below standard and not in keeping with the terms of the three-year contract. At the previous F&GP meeting it was agreed that the Clerk's office would seek an updated quote from the company considered the 2nd best option during the tendering process which had been completed in February 2023, and that the matter be brought back to F&GP for a determination to be made.
Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded by** Cllr I Alexander that SPC agree to the new company completing the remainder of the three-year grass cutting contract for the {price set out within confidential supporting papers}* . **Agreed**

CLERK

F&GP/23/61 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 9th January 2024 @7.30pm.**

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.15pm

Signed Date 9th January 2024
Chair

A video recording of this meeting can be found using this link ; -
<https://youtu.be/UdLEMBvXOno>

*** This motion redacted as these are the non-confidential minutes**