

MEETING OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

HELD ON 9th JANUARY 2024 AT 7.30PM

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

Clerk: John Fullbrook

Members of the Public in attendance: 3

Meeting commenced: 7:30 pm

MINUTES

ACTIONS

F&GP/23/62 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

62.1 Apologies were received from Cllrs Trundle, Campbell, and I Alexander.

F&GP/23/63 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

63.1 None

F&GP/23/64 QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR {in summary}

64.1 None

F&GP/23/65 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

65.1 Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Norcross that the draft minutes of the meeting held on the 12th December 2023 be agreed as a true and fair record. **Agreed**

F&GP/23/66 MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS – These items taken as read

66.1 Bring back projects for 24/25 for further discussion – **Actioned / See item 67.1**

66.2 Operational survey (Heating Plant controls) to be arranged for the Steyning Centre – **Actioned**

66.3 Clerk to bring back full consolidated draft SPC budget for next meeting – **Actioned/ See item 67.2**

66.4 One agreed invoice payment plus one Town clock service arrangement – **Actioned**

66.5 Storyboard /Tourist Signs for Steyning to be brought back to F&GP – **Actioned / See Item 68.3**

66.6 To look at Christmas decoration options for next year / three years from same provider – **See item 68.1**

66.7 Clerk's office waiting for Land registry searches to be completed to enable further updating of the SPC Land and Asset register, item to come back to F&GP in six months – **Diarised**

66.8 For next Action Plan update exclude 'Mitigation to risks if item completed – **Actioned /See item 68.2**

66.9 Community Engagement Sub Committee terms to be discussed by Working Practices – **Actioned**

66.10 Clerk's office to enquire about Youth Service contract payment reimbursements, now with JPYC – **Actioned**

66.11 Grass contractors to be contacted to convey the decisions from F&GP – **Actioned**

F&GP/23/67 FINANCIAL MATTERS.

- 67.1** **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 were no decisions on projects made at this meeting, with the item to be further discussed at the March F&GP. The only item currently considered for earmarking in March '24 was the 'Youth Service' unspent funds. It was however stated that all the 'proposed' and 'partly agreed' projects could be completed using existing funds available, with the exception of the MPF play area renewal, which was heavily dependent on successful third-party funding application/s. The Clerk will prepare a draft action plan for the 24/25 year, for next F&GP, to include likely projects. **CLERK**
- 67.2** **To consider the SPC consolidated budget for 2024/25.** Members considered the budget papers presented, and concluded discussions on any final queries. Then moved on to discuss the headline Precept figure of £404,325.00; the consequent percentage rise in comparison to last year's SPC Precept request {19.27%}; and the associated annual Band D Tax figure {£157.42} – This being the Parish Council element alone, not the full amount. Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Sharp that F&GP recommends to SPC Full Council the consolidated budget for approval {as per presented in Supporting papers} for later this month {January 15th}. **Agreed** **CLERK**
- 67.3** **To consider a new phone system for the Steyning Centre.** The existing phone system and supplier had reached the end of the three-year contract. The Clerks office had secured significant savings from another supplier for a fixed term of 7 years. Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Foxwell that SPC agrees to the new phone supplier for the Steyning Centre, being 'CRE', and at the rates as shown within the briefing paper. **Agreed** **CLERK**
- 67.4** **To consider a grant funding request from the 'Hope' charity.** The request was to support one - to- one session provision based at the Steyning Grammer School, for those youths aged between 12 and 18 with mental health issues. Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Foxwell that SPC accepts the grant application to the value of £600, which would cover a 'Full' {12 session} service for one person. **Agreed** **CLERK**
- 67.5** **To agree the need for an out of hours security call out service for the Steyning Centre.** Currently staff are asked to attend alarm call outs at any hour, and this was thought by the Personnel Committee to be a safety issue which warranted further consideration. The Clerks office had therefore found a number of quotes from local security companies which could supply this service. Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Norcross that SPC agrees that there is a need for an out of hours security call out service at the Steyning Centre, and that quotes should be sought and brought back to a future meeting. **Agreed** **CLERK**
- 67.6** **To discuss future project aspirations for the F&GP Committee.** No new projects were discussed

F&GP/23/68 GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY MATTERS

- 68.1** **To consider next year's Christmas light display on the Steyning High Street.** Members further discussed the displays but councillors had not brought forward any new ideas for the Clerks office to investigate, so the existing supplier will be asked to provide options which are to be discussed at a future meeting. **CLERK**
- 68.2** **SPC Action Plan update.** Cllrs considered the various projects that have been prioritised for action for this first year of the current council's term. The Youth service provision project was discussed in greater detail with recommendations from the JPYC to be agreed or otherwise at the next Full Council Meeting. **CLERK**
- 68.3** **Storyboard/ Tourist Signs to be considered as a project for 24/25.** Last meeting this idea was tabled for further consideration. It was recognised that other local groups, notably the Steyning and District Partnership, had done a great deal of good work already on this topic

68.4 Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Sharp that SPC agree to set up a working party to involve any SPC member plus any other local groups or individuals {notably the Steyning and District Partnership visitor and tourism representatives}. **Agreed** **CLERK**

68.5 **Discuss and agree the first message for the likely, and soon to be set up, SPC Community Engagement Group, to be working on.** Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Norcross that the first item the Community Engagement group should consider organising, is the councillor representation and displays associated with the Steyning Farmers Market, then the answering of the responses associated with the 'Call for Projects' promotion / suggestion box and then a promotional document consisting of this Q and A plus a list signposting the services associated with and responsibilities of each of the tiers of Local Government {County, District and Parish}. **Agreed** **CLERK**

F&GP/23/69 PROGRESS REPORT

69.1 *F&GP/22/55.3 Earmarking of reserves to be discussed at March '24 meeting - Ongoing.* **CLERK**

69.2 *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 Alexander

F&GP/23/70 INFORMATION/CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS

70.1 The Clerk reported on two reasons for recent administrative cheer, that being the securing of reduced charges for both the annual grass cutting service invoice {reduction of £1500} and a reduced alarm call out charge saving £300. Thanks go in particular to the Deputy Clerk for her determination to prevail.

F&GP/23/71 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 12th March 2024 @7.30pm.

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.32pm

Signed Date 12th March 2024
Chair

A video recording of this meeting can be found using this link ;
<https://youtu.be/1nsYFsyXgV8>