

MEETING OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

HELD ON 9th July 2024 AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllrs Sharp (Chairman), Ballance, I Alexander, Norcross, M Alexander, Foxwell, Johnson and S Alexander.

Clerk: John Fullbrook

Members of the Public in attendance: 2

Meeting commenced: 7:30 pm

MINUTES

ACTIONS

F&GP/24/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

01.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Trundle.

F&GP/24/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

02.1 Cllr I Alexander declared an interest in agenda item 7.3, as he is a member of the Steyping & District Partnership, so will take part but will not vote on the outcome.

F&GP/23/03 QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR {in summary}

03.1 None

F&GP/23/04 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

04.1 Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that the draft minutes of the meeting held on the 14th May 2024 be agreed as a true and fair record. **Agreed 7 For, 1 Abstained**

The Chair brought forward agenda item 7.3 as a resident interested in the matter was present

F&GP/24/05 FINANCIAL MATTERS

05.1 **Request for a grant for the Steyping and District Partnership Food & Drink festival 2024.**

Members were impressed with the content and ambitious nature of this grant request.

Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Norcross that SPC approve the grant application for £550 from the Steyping & District Partnership. **Agreed 6 For, 2 Abstained**

F&GP/24/06 MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS – *These items taken as read*

06.1 Clerk to bring back project list for agreement – **See item 07.5**

06.2 Clerk to amend SPC Earmarked Reserve list – **Actioned**

06.3 Clerk to check and relay to members details of miss-postings – **Ongoing**

06.4 Clerk to bring back Christmas light display to F&GP for final decision – **Actioned**

06.5 Clerk to bring back ongoing projects for integration into new year Action Plan – **Actioned/See item 07.5**

06.6 Clerk to respond to request for comments concerning HDC Draft Green Space Strategy – **Actioned**

06.7 Clerk and Cllr S Alexander delegated to complete details for & submit text to 'Your Steyping' – **Actioned**

06.8 To complete full staff selection update concerning SPC staff selection at next Full Council – **Actioned**

06.9 CCTV working party to reconvene when first quotes received by the Clerk – **See item 08.2**

CLERK

F&GP/24/07 FINANCIAL MATTERS.

07.1 To approve the list of SPC payments for April & May 2024.

Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that SPC accept the April and May 2024 SPC Payment lists. **Agreed**

07.2 Income and expenditure reports for F&GP, covering April and May 2024.

The Clerk informed members regarding end of year figures and accruals and how this affected the figures within these reports. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ballance that SPC accepts the F&GP income and expenditure reports for April and May 2024. **Agreed**

07.3 To consider progress on the 2023/24 SPC Action Plan and agree any subsequent actions.

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The Clerk summarised the document details, and updated on the projects that either couldn't be completed, or were yet to be finalised. Those projects that could be completed were to be added to next year's Action Plan (24/25).

07.4 Clerk to update on the 23/24 End of Year, and internal audit process. The Clerk produced the Year End balance sheet, and discussed the internal audit process, then members discussed the letter received back from the internal auditor following the End of Year accounting and auditory procedures. Members noted that there were no recommendations from the Auditor requiring actions and that this was a very good outcome. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Norcross that SPC accepts the internal end of year audit report. **Agreed.** {Clerk to write to auditors noting acceptance, and to place report on website}

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07.5 To discuss and agree SPC projects for 2024/25. The Chair suggested that the discussion was more or less closed on project aims for 24/25. He had also sent out an email requesting project ideas from members in advance of this meeting which could be discussed in preparation for the budgetary discourse due to commence in October '24, and these being agreed would then lead to the expenditure requirements for the following years projects {25/26}.

CLERK

07.5.2 Members came up with the following ideas:

- Seek improvements to Highways infrastructure about signage, and to widen pathways, and their lighting
- Electronic newsletter idea, and other social media platforms to be agreed
- SPC website to be a tool to be used by the wider community groups
- Enhanced leisure and recreation, inc. play areas and possibly pétanque pitch
- Visitors to use club facilities like tennis courts
- Disabled access to bus shelter
- Inhibit electric scooters usage
- Local policeman (?)
- Reducing carbon footprint as a main aim
- Cycle path leading to a rebuilt White Bridge
- Prioritise SPC App
- MPF entrances improvements cont.
- Home for youth services and scouts, cubs and girl guides
- Organise the next Steyning 'Showcase' event
- NT Live, including projector installation
- More dog bins and/or standard bins
- Improve public toilets (?)
- More history/visitor boards installed around the town

Members felt that this was a good start but there really needed to be a larger discussion to be had at an all member working party, and that this needed to be organised for the autumn.

CLERK

07.5.2 Members returned to confirming and prioritising the 24/25 project list. And this was based upon a draft listing outlined within supporting papers. It was an extensive list and the Clerk advised against increasing the number of projects based upon the SMART principles of project

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management, therefore trying to ensure the council could achieve reasonable targets. There was agreement that to complete the list stated would be a great achievement, however to include two additions, these being a projector installation at the Steyning Centre and to initiate an SPC App. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Norcross that SPC agree to the project list as stated within the supporting papers but to include the two additions that members collectively suggested. **Agreed**

F&GP/24/08 GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY MATTERS

- 08.1** **To consider the work undertaken, following the recent meeting of the Community Engagement Group, and to agree the next message/s for the group to be working on.** The group convened on July the 5th and agreed representation arrangements for the July farmers market ‘surgery’, with Cllrs Sharp and Linfield kindly agreeing to provide the cover on this occasion. The long term planning of a roster to cover these events was to be taken to next week’s Full Council {15th July} for final agreement. Cllrs S Alexander and Linfield also considered, and mapped out, an extensive programme of social media postings and an outline schedule, plus a list of templates. Members then discussed what method of social media platforms should be used. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** Cllr Norcross that the Community Engagement Group continue to work on this idea and bring it back to the September F&GP Committee for approval. **Agreed** **CLERK**
- 08.2** **To receive an update concerning the SPC CCTV installation project.** Members had received details of the current CCTV companies scope of works and price. Cllr S Alexander elaborated on the details within the quote, and also informed members on further meetings which are taking place with another company, in order to try and receive a comparable quote. Members discussed concerns about the scope of the remit, and reinforced a need to ensure that leading up to a public consultation, the reasoning behind the project was well evidenced. **CLERK & CCTV W. Party**
- 08.3** **To agree the proposed contract details concerning installation of the SPC notice board at the High Street Car Park wall – property of adjacent retail space owner.** The Clerk, through discussion with the freeholders, had established a draft list of terms which SPC needed to agree, or to amend. One amendment was suggested which specified a three-month timeframe for any possible need for removal of the notice board at a later date. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Norcross that the Clerk be delegated responsibility to compile an agreement {memorandum of understanding} and take it back to the wall owners, but with the proviso of the inclusion of the ‘three-month’ clause. **Agreed** **CLERK**
- 08.4** **To consider and agree an ILCA training course entry for the new Deputy Clerk.** The Clerk had supplied a supporting paper detailing the ILCA course content, the duration {likely between two months and one year maximum}, and costed at £120(ex VAT) as Leanne was now a member of SLCC. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that SPC accepts this course expense. **Agreed.** **CLERK**

F&GP/24/09 DATA PROTECTION AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

- 09.1** **Update on SPC Data protection and Freedom of information requests** **CLERK**
On the 10th and 11th June Cllr Campbell put in two Freedom of Information requests, one concerning the High Street toilets and one covering play equipment issues on the MPF. These have as yet not been substantively responded to, but will be within the next five working days. On the 27th of June a resident also put in a Freedom of Information request. He had been made aware that Cllr Campbell had sent in a crib sheet {statement} detailing his issues concerning the Chandlers Way play area installation. He therefore asked SPC to supply said document to him, which has been done.
- On the 22nd May the Clerks office received from the ICO a decision notice concerning one of Cllr Campbell’s previous Freedom of Information requests. It concluded SPC should review its most recent response to Cllr Campbell’s request as they did not believe the SPC stance was sufficiently robust to deny the information requested. The Clerk called the ICO Case Officer to ask for an explanation, and it transpired that their office no longer held the 2018 response letter, which had been referenced within the SPC response, and which had proffered advice on **CLERK**

dealing with certain vexatious individuals. In the absence of their own advice, the Clerk understood that there needed therefore to be an amended response to this FOI request, and this also needed to be completed within the next 5 working days following this meeting.

F&GP/24/10 PROGRESS REPORT

10.1 *F&GP/22/67.5 The need for an out of hours security call out service for the Steyning Centre to be discussed – Ongoing – details to be discussed with new deputy clerk when in post.* **D. CLERK**

10.2 *F&GP/22/68.3 Set up Working Party to discuss Storyboard/Tourist Signs involving District Partnership – Ongoing – to be arranged when Partnership members more available.* **CLERK & Chairman**

F&GP/24/11 INFORMATION/CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS

11.1 None

F&GP/24/12 CONFIDENTIAL SESSION

12.1 Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander 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 13 may involve disclosure of personal or privileged information which would be inappropriate to put in the public domain. **Agreed**

F&GP/24/13 COMMUNITY MATTERS

13.1 **To agree actions concerning the Clock Tower, as per raised within the Chairs supporting paper** Working Party
Members discussed the contents of the Chairs briefing notes and in particular the five recommended actions as proposed, relating to ascertaining specific documentation in order to clarify the situation. Once collected then to bring back to F&GP for further discussion. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Norcross that SPC follow the recommended actions {as per the Briefing paper} and that SPC use all efforts to locate, source and then discuss documents, and that this responsibility is delegated to Cllrs Sharp, Norcross and the SPC Clerk. **Agreed**

F&GP/24/14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 10th September 2024 @7.30pm.

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.52pm

Signed Date 10th September 2024
Chair

A video recording of this meeting can be found using this link:

<https://youtu.be/SPCLbTPCwsk>