

MEETING OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

HELD ON 14th May 2024 AT 7.30PM

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

Clerk: John Fullbrook

Members of the Public in attendance: 2

Meeting commenced: 7:30 pm

MINUTES

ACTIONS

F&GP/23/84 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

84.1 Apologies were received from Cllrs Trundle, Sharp, Bell and Foxwell.

F&GP/23/85 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

85.1 None.

F&GP/23/86 STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIR

86.1 As this marked the last meeting of the municipal year, the Chair took the opportunity to thank his fellow committee members for their unwavering support and noted significant progress achieved during the year. Whilst tackling external budgetary challenges, due to high energy costs, the cost-of-living crisis, and high inflation levels, yet establishing stronger relationships within the community and ensuring significant SPC project completion and staff appointments.

F&GP/23/87 QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR {in summary}

87.1.1 *Q - Trevor Cree made a statement concerning agenda item 7.2 with reference to what he believed to be overspent SPC budget lines. He also asked questions relating to the MPF play area project, whether grant funding had been obtained to assist with this project, progress on the Chandlers way pocket park installation, general SPC project implementation, and stated that in his opinion the viewpoints of five SPC councillors was not enough to respond formally to HDC regarding the greenspace strategy, and why wasn't this document circulated to all SPC Councillors prior to the meeting.*

87.1.2 *A – The Clerk replied with the reasons why the salary budget line was overspent {noted and discussed in the last F&GP meeting}, and pointed out why the other budget line expenditures were not in fact over-spends. He stated that grants had not yet been obtained for the MPF play area installation, this being why it had not yet happened; and pointed out that there had in fact been a great deal of time and effort going into the community engagement process concerning the Chandlers way pocket park installation, and in reference to the Greenspace strategy document – this had been distributed to councillors some three weeks before this meeting.*

F&GP/23/88 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

88.1 Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded** by Cllr I Alexander that the draft minutes of the meeting held on the 12th March 2024 be agreed as a true and fair record. **Agreed 4 For, 1 Against**

F&GP/23/89 MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS – *These items taken as read*

89.1 Clerk to bring back for further discussion the possible earmarking of SPC Reserves – **Item 90.1**

88.2 Youth Service unspent funds placed under 'Earmarked Reserves' and into new Bank Account - **Actioned**

88.3 Clerk's office to process four final year grant payments to local groups and clubs – **Actioned**

88.4 Clerk to bring back Christmas light display options for discussion – **See item 91.1**

- 88.5 'Risks to timescale' column to be added to 'Project Action List' – **Actioned/ see item 91.2**
- 88.6 Portrait of the King to be requested and when delivered hung prominently in Steyning Centre - **Actioned**
- 88.7 Cllr S Alexander & Clerk to amend promotional 'Whose responsibility is it?' leaflet & distribute- **Actioned**
- 88.8 Clerk to complete Resident responses/ feedback emails – **Actioned**
- 88.9 Clerk to compile promo boards, leaflets, clip board and book table for next Farmers Market – **Actioned**
- 88.10 Messages to be discussed for next Community Engagement meeting, then recommendations brought back to this committee – **See item 91.4**
- 88.11 Information concerning Steyning Library temporary Closure to be publicised – **Actioned**
- 88.12 Technicians to be summoned back to resolve High Street Clock mechanism issues - **Actioned**
- 88.13 New staff contract with amendments to be taken to Full Council for discussion/approval – **Actioned**
- 88.14 Staff Selection Process – Clerk to return with update for this committee – **See Item 91.5**

F&GP/23/90 FINANCIAL MATTERS.

90.1.1 To consider SPC projects for 2024/25, and earmarking reserves for 2024.

Cllr Campbell under a point of order stated that he believed this committee did not have authority to Earmark SPC Reserves. The Clerk explained that the SPC Scheme of Delegation was a tool by which the council delegates authority to committee to enable them to make decisions, some points were generalised as not all precise points of delegated authority could possibly be specified in a concise and practical document.

90.1.2 The proposed project list for 2024/25 was again discussed with a view to it being agreed at the next meeting if possible. **CLERK**

90.1.3 Three possible Earmarked reserves were identified in supporting papers and considered by members, these being as follows:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------|---|
| 1. Marley Shed Roof | - £500 | This amount has been donated to us last year and should be used for the maintenance of this roof. |
| 2. Neighbourhood Plan | - £1,555 | These are unspent funds for work to be undertaken by The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee |
| 3. Steyning Centre Sinking Fund | - £5,000 | Funds set aside to offset long-term depreciation of the Steyning Centre |

90.1.4 Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Norcross that SPC accepts all three of these earmarked reserves (as per supporting papers). **Agreed 4 For, 1 Against** **CLERK**

90.2 Income and expenditure reports for F&GP, covering February and March 2024.

Members queried a number of budget line performances and the Chairman and Clerk explained reasons for variations. Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded** by Cllr I Alexander that SPC accepts the F&GP income and expenditure reports for February and March 2024. **Agreed**

90.3.1 **To approve the SPC Payments lists for February and March 2024.** There was a discussion about mis-postings. The Clerk explained that when input errors occur such as costs going against the incorrect expenditure budget codes, these are termed mis-postings, and they are shown as negative amounts on the payroll but more often than not, two equally positive amounts – one the mis-posting and one the correct input. The Clerk was asked to check and responds to members by Cllr Campbell in relation to some of these amounts. **CLERK**

90.3.2 Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ballance that SPC accept the February and March 2024 SPC Payment lists. **Agreed**

F&GP/23/91 GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY MATTERS

91.1 **To consider the Christmas light display on the Steyning High Street.** Members considered options provided via supporting papers and decided to defer final agreement to next meeting **CLERK**

- 91.2** **SPC Action Plan update.** Members considered the various projects that had been prioritised for action for this first year of the current council's term. Although several projects had been completed, there were still some that would need to be moved on to the following year's Action Plan. **CLERK**
- 91.3** **To agree the SPC response to the request for comments regarding the HDC Draft Greenspace Strategy 2024 – 29.** Members could not agree upon an informed response and therefore suggested the Clerk respond with 'No Comment'. **CLERK**
- 91.4.1** **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 May 1st and agreed representation arrangements for the May Farmers Market 'surgery', with Cllrs Ballance and Linfield kindly agreeing to provide the cover on this occasion. Cllrs Ballance and Young assisted the Clerk in terms of updating the information boards, and then coordinated the promotional literature for the event.
- 91.4.2** Cllr Trundle was tasked with drafting an article for the next 'Your Steyning' which précised the SPC Annual Parish Meeting. The draft was discussed, and amendments were considered and agreed. Members also agreed that there ought to be a half page promotion for the Youth Service and considered how to finalise arrangements considering the fact that final copy needed to be agreed by end of play on the following day {15th May}.
- 91.4.2** Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Norcross that SPC delegates responsibility to the Clerk regards the press release and the Clerk and Chair in regard to compiling a Youth Service promotion so that something was completed by end of play tomorrow {15th May}. **Agreed** **CLERK & Chair**
- 91.5** **Clerk to update members with notification regarding recent staff selection process** – with full update due at Full Council on the 20th May. The main point was that a candidate had been selected to fill the vacant Deputy Clerk and Community Centre Operations Manager position. **CLERK**
- F&GP/23/92** **PROGRESS REPORT**
- 92.1** *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.* **CLERK & Chairman**
- 92.2** *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.* **CLERK**
- 92.3** *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**

F&GP/23/93 **INFORMATION/CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS**

93.1 None

F&GP/23/94 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 11th June 2024 @7.30pm.**

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.58pm

Signed Date 11th June 2024
Chair

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

https://youtu.be/5sP_Bm7-h0I