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MEETING OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 10th SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllrs Sharp (Chairman), Ballance, I Alexander, M Alexander, Johnson and S Alexander.
Clerk: John Fullbrook

Members of the Public in attendance: **1**
Meeting commenced: **7:30 pm**

MINUTES

ACTIONS

F &GP/24/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
15.1 Apologies were received from Cllrs Norcross, Foxwell and Trundle.

F&GP/24/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS
16.1 None

F&GP/23/17 QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR {in summary}
17.1 None

F&GP/23/18 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING
18.1 Cllr Sharp **proposed**, **seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that the draft minutes of the meeting held on the 9th July 2024 be agreed as a true and fair record. **Agreed**

F&GP/24/19 MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS – *These items taken as read*
19.1 Clerk to check and relay to members details of miss-postings **– Ongoing** **CLERK**

19.2 Clerk to add yet to be finished projects to next year's SPC Action Plan **– Actioned**

19.3 Clerk to respond to internal auditors and publish on website **– Actioned**

19.4 Clerk to add project ideas discussed to next year's provisional list **– Actioned**

19.5 Full members SPC projects discussion to be taken forward – **See item 20.4**

19.6 Clerk to update action/project list and add two further items as agreed **– Actioned**

19.7 Community engagement WP to further discuss social media idea and bring back to F&GP-**See item 21.1**

19.8 Clerk to complete MOU with High St owner of wall adjacent car park, and obtain signatures and progress project **– Actioned**

19.9 Deputy Clerk to start ILCA training programme **– Actioned**

19.10 Clerk to respond to FOI requests from Cllr Campbell when time allowed **– Actioned**

19.11 Clerk to respond to ICO & Cllr Campbell concerning recent decision notice **– Actioned**

F&GP/24/20 FINANCIAL MATTERS.
20.1 **To approve the list of SPC payments for June, July & August 2024.**
Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr I Alexander that SPC accept the June, July and August 2024 SPC Payment lists. **Agreed**
Clerk to check on what weedkiller is being used – to check that it is ecologically sound **CLERK**

20.2	**Income and Expenditure reports for F&GP, covering June, July and August 2024**. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr I Alexander that SPC accepts the F&GP Income and Expenditure reports for June, July and August 2024. **Agreed**	
20.3	**To agree which version of the Rialtus Income and Expenditure Reports SPC will be checking on a monthly basis henceforth.** The Chair explained the reasoning behind this council's request for an alternative I&E report, which although showing the main and important details such as annual budget for each separate coding item, and budget spent to date for those items, removes the 'phased' budget planning element which shows variance against expected costs or income to date. On the plus side, however, there is less information which makes it easier to read and some would argue therefore easier to understand. Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ballance that F&GP defers this item to allow the other committee members from Community and Planning & Premises at the next available opportunity, to feedback their thoughts to this committee. **Agreed**	**CLERK**
20.4	**To consider progress on the 2024/25 SPC Action Plan** The Clerk summarised the document details, as per supporting papers, and updated on the plan composition and the progress SPC was making with this year's projects. This item was also to discuss the 24/25 Business plan and Finance plan, but these will have to be dealt with at the next meeting as the drafts were not completed. The Clerk and Cllr Johnson to complete the details associated with the last two lines (out of eighteen projects).	**CLERK**
20.5	**Cllr Sharp as F&GP Chair, to report on in-house auditing checks recently carried out.** The Chair stated that there were 11 parts to this procedure of internal controls, and that he with the Clerk undertook the following - reconciliation of cashbooks; checking the validity of payments; checking VAT payments and claims; testing a sample of credits /validity of proper processes; Standing Orders/ Finance Regs; expenditure payments; Insurance check; Asset Register – (to be updated at next meeting); and agreeing employment returns to HMRC. He also stated that he hoped to be in attendance at the next interim Internal Audit appointment in early October.	**CLERK** **CLERK / Cllr Sharp**
20.6	**To agree a request for grant funding from the Allotment Association to cover AGM charge** Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that SPC agrees a grant for £84.60 to the Steyning Allotment Association. **Agreed 5 For, 1 Abstained**	**D Clerk**
20.7	**To agree a request for grant funding from St Barnabas House.** Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Johnson that SPC agree a grant of £300 for St Barnabas House as per supporting papers. **Agreed**	**CLERK**
20.8	**To agree the payment for High St. Lamppost testing – to enable Christmas lighting displays.** Members discussed why there was a continued need to test street lampposts and checked the process of continuing an arrangement with the previous service provider. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ballance that SPC accepts the proposal to pay the lamppost testing service provider {as per amount specified within supporting papers}. **Agreed**	**CLERK**
20.9	**The SPC budget setting timetable for 2025/26.** The Chair outlined the reasoning behind the need to agree the timescale noted within supporting papers. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that SPC accepts this (as per supporting papers) budget setting timeline. **Agreed**	**CLERK**
F&GP/24/21	**GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY MATTERS**	
21.1.1	**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 August 28th and agreed an updated representation arrangement for the August farmers market 'surgery'. It also put forward certain recommendations (to be dealt with later on this agenda) concerning social media roll out and other promotional merchandise. This group to discuss an SPC App at the next convening, plus a need to coordinate final arrangements for the	**CLERK**

attendance for 'Farmers', plus who picks up and drops off supporting material.

21.1.2 Cllrs S Alexander & Sharp thought there was also a need for the group to consider information posters being placed on Lampposts near problematic areas with a slogan saying '*See it, Report it, Don't ignore it*' and using QR codes to make reporting easier. **Cllr S Alexander**

21.2 **To review draft social media postings/ pages and to agree the details of the SPC social media roll out.** Members considered the principle of starting this undertaking. **CLERK**
Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr I Alexander that F&GP recommend that the social media work and plans which have been prepared by the Deputy Clerk for a scheduled roll out, is taken to Full Council for final approval and for publication as soon as possible. **Agreed**

21.3 **To consider whether to purchase a pop-up promotional banner and agree content.**
The Community Engagement Group had suggested that F&GP approve a banner and its design content mainly for use at the Framers Market (as represented within the supporting papers). **CLERK**
Members thought this might be useful for inside events, but preferred the concept of a banner instead saying simply '*Steyning Parish Council – Meet your Local Councillors*' or similar.
Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Johnson that SPC purchase a banner with 'eyes' so that it can be attached to stall structure and include a simple message and SPC logo & design (as per mentioned within discussion). **Agreed**

21.4 **To discuss continued service arrangement with the current SPC internal auditor.**
Although its generally good practice to look at occasionally changing internal auditors, members further considered that with recent continued questioning of audits costing time and money, it was prudent to continue to use the current, well respected and widely used (within the sector and the district) service provider. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that SPC continue to use the services of Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd as their internal auditor provider. **Agreed** **CLERK**

21.5 **To agree details of the all-member working party which is to be tasked with agreeing project and associated budget priorities for 2025/26.** The Chairmen explained the process, content and reasoning for this working party. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Johnson that SPC create an all-member working party (to be moderated by a third party) which would follow immediately after the next Full Council meeting. **Agreed** **CLERK**

21.6 **Chairmans Function – To discuss arrangements for the next Chairmans function.**
Members considered catering arrangements, preferred date and perhaps new awards categories including *Contractor of the Year* and *Steyning Young Person of the Year.* There was discussion about perhaps expanding the event, and it was suggested to take it to Community Engagement Group for further discussion. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that the date for this year's Chairman's Function is to be the 6th December. **Agreed** **CLERK** **CLERK**

F&GP/24/22 DATA PROTECTION AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

22.1 **Update on SPC Data protection and Freedom of information requests**
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 been responded to and a review of the decision has been requested so therefore the FOI panel will have to be convened. **FOI Panel**

F&GP/24/23 PROGRESS REPORT

23.1 *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**

23.2 *F&GP/22/68.3 Set up Working Party to discuss Storyboard/Tourist Signs involving District Partnership –* ***This now being dealt with by the Community Committee - Actioned***

23.3 *F&GP/24/08.2 CCTV project to be further discussed with contractors on site –* ***Ongoing with Cllr S Alexander working with company to get another on site meeting sorted out.*** **CLERK & CCTV W. Party**

23.4 *F&GP/24/13.1 Clock Tower working party to convene in efforts to locate relevant documentation –* ***Ongoing with many archived documents to be checked. The Clerk also pointed out that the Clock Tower owner had been in touch to meet on site to potentially discuss details about one-off co-maintenance arrangements – Cllr Sharp as Chairman to also participate in the meeting on site*** **Working Party**

F&GP/24/24 INFORMATION/CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS

24.1 None

F&GP/24/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 8th October 2024 @7.30pm.

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.38pm

Signed ……………………………………………………. Date 8th October 2024
Chair

A video recording of this meeting can be found using this link:
https://youtu.be/QCNXvbITl1g