

MEETING OF FULL PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 21st JULY 2025 AT 7.30PM

Councillors Present : Cllrs Norcross (Chairman), Hanson, Sharp, Johnson, Foxwell, Linfield, Lloyd, I Alexander, M Alexander, Campbell, S Alexander and Ballance.
Clerks in attendance : John Fullbrook
Members of the Public : 14 {inc. District Cllrs Victoria Finnegan and Nick Marks}
Meeting commenced : 7.30 pm

MINUTES

ACTION

FULL/25/34 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

34.1 Apologies received from Cllrs Bell, Young and Trundle.

FULL/25/35 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

35.1 Cllr Campbell sought, and was granted, dispensation to take part in the discussion {but not to vote} for all agenda items under FULL/25/41.

FULL/25/36 QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR {in summary}

36.1.1 Q - Mr Cree presented the Council with a copy of his self-published book entitled 'The Clock Tower Affair', and stated that *'the overwhelming evidence within my book, and from other sources, clearly demonstrates that the Steyning Parish Council are the rightful and lawful owners of the Steyning Clock Tower. Will the Council seek the legal opinion of the SPC solicitor & provide the solicitor with all of the evidence that is available, including my book?'*

36.1.2 A – *The Chair replied - No, yet again (in reference to the several similar requests from Mr Cree), the Council will not be seeking advice from solicitors, and as far as this council is concerned, the matter of the ownership of the Clock Tower is closed. We have not seen any definitive proof that we have ever owned it.*

36.2.1 Q – *A resident asked whether Cllr Campbell has or was going to apologise to the Clerk as per the HDC Standards sanctions*

36.2.2 A – *The Chair replied he had not, and Cllr Campbell further stated he would not be apologising because he has an outstanding appeal with the ombudsman, and would not do so until that is determined.*

36.2.3 Q – *The same resident wondered if HDC had a plan for devolution yet, and whether there would be assets they would let go that would affect Steyning and what extra costs could arise because of that?*

36.2.4 A - *The Chair decided this might be something the District Councillor could respond to, and Cllr Finnegan agreed she could deal with the latest position as part of her HDC report (which would be heard under item 40.1)*

FULL/25/37 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

37.1 Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that the minutes for the meeting dated the 16th June 2025 be accepted as a true and fair record. **Agreed. 7 For, 1 Against, 4 Abstained.**

FULL/25/38 MATTERS ARISING – These items were taken as read

- 38.1** Working Practices Group to convene to discuss policy amendments – **Actioned**
- 38.2** Clerk to distribute Walking and Cycling Plan and Cllrs to feedback – **Actioned / See item 42.3**
- 38.3** Clerk to attend Asset transference webinars and look to begin Business Plan – **Actioned / item 40.1.5**
- 38.4** Clerk to write to HDC to ensure their Steyning orientated Assets List could be delivered ASAP - **Actioned**
- 38.5** Declaration of Office forms signed and filed for Chair and Vice Chair – **Actioned**
- 38.6** Clerk's office to update and distribute Committee and Group membership listings for 2025/26-**Actioned**
- 38.7** Standing Orders, Financial Regs. Finance Risk Assessment policy Docs amended & published – **Actioned**
- 38.8** 20 SPC readopted SPC Policies, dates to be changed and published on SPC website – **Actioned**
- 38.9** Clerk to subscribe to HALC/NALC/WSALC/SLCC & Open Spaces Society for the next year – **Actioned**
- 38.10** Insurance Cover noted to 31st August – Clerk to begin Schedule review for next year – **Actioned**
- 38.11** Asset Register to be published, and review begun for the next municipal year – **Actioned**
- 38.12** SPC's General Power of competence renewal noted on SPC Website – **Actioned**
- 38.13** Progress report and Matters arising to be brought back for this agenda – **Actioned**

FULL/25/39 NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS REPORT

- 39.1** Warden Alison Page was in attendance to read through the pertinent points from the June 2025 Wardens report. She updated on progress with the Steyning refuge becoming a dog training centre, on electric scooter usage and user education via direct challenge and via social media promotions. Also the Boardgame café and its benefits were discussed. She also reported on the selection process for the Wardens job vacancy.
- 39.2** There was an issue raised concerning misuse of bicycles on the Steyning highways that Alison will look out for in the future.

FULL/25/40 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS (*In Summary*)

- 40.1.1** **Cllr Victoria Finnegan – (HDC) update, 1. HDC Local Plan latest** – Based upon the inspector's concerns, HDC will likely withdraw its current Local Plan, and rapidly prepare a new plan. On the 23rd July the HDC policies and scrutiny committee will be assessing recommendations and report to cabinet, and this will be voted on the 6th of August – this is likely to approve withdrawing the Plan. A new plan would likely be ready for submission in late 2027.
- 40.1.2** **2. Devolution / Local Government Reorganisation** – A number of variants were discussed, with one single authority option being considered too big. In March 26 the new mayoral strategy is to be voted in place. May 26 elections for the Mayor undertaken. May 27 elections for new authority.
- 40.1.3** **3. HDC Meeting for the South hosted by the Steyning Centre** – Meeting went well. A motion was put forward for a 20 mile per hour scheme in Storrington. HDC have said that they are happy to support similar Parish schemes elsewhere.
- 40.1.4** **4. Glebe Farm** – Ground and Air Source Heat pumps to be used instead of Gas. The Reserved Matters Application is still awaited.
- 40.1.5** **5. Asset Transfer** – There is a draft policy which could be approved within a week.
- 40.1.6** **6. High Street Wi-Fi installation** – Hoping for a revised plan from 'North' Wi-Fi company which would involve current infrastructure
- 40.1.7** **7. SPC Governance issues** – Victoria offered her help in assisting in resolution of any issues if any individuals were interested

- 40.1.8** **8. Questions** – Would the withdrawal of the Local Plan mean there is higher risk of speculative development? – This is unclear.
Have income figures for the Car Parks been given? Not yet, but these will emerge when Parish Councils request further details.
When might a revised Wi-Fi installation plan be forthcoming? This is also unclear, but there is a hope that the completed project would allow for a two-year, fee-free maintenance period.
- 40.2** **Cllr Nicholas Marks {HDC Update}**
Nothing to add
- FULL/25/41** **GOVERNANCE**
- 41.1** **The F&GP Committee resolved on the 8th July to put a special motion on this agenda and gained 9 signatures, stating that Full Council with immediate effect rescinds its decision of the 19th May '25, extending the sanctions against Cllr Campbell, contingent upon him also withdrawing the proposed Judicial Review proceedings.** **CLERK**
The Chair suspended the 2-minute rule for all Governance items at this meeting.
Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that SPC with immediate effect rescinds its decision of the 19th May '25, extending the sanctions against Cllr Campbell, contingent upon him also withdrawing the proposed Judicial Review proceedings. **Agreed 11 For, 1 Abstained**
- 41.2** **SPC to review its decision concerning agreement to send a code of conduct to HDC in order to extend the sanctions placed upon Cllr Campbell based upon his non-compliance.** **CLERK**
Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Foxwell that the Chair is delegated to submit a further Code of Conduct complaint to HDC about Cllr Campbell due to his refusal to apologise to the Clerk and to the Council (SPC) as mandated by the sanctions laid against him by HDC and adopted by SPC at the January 2025 Full Council Meeting. **Agreed**
- 41.3** **Update from the Clerk on Personnel Committee's compilation of the impact assessment on the business of the Council during the sanctions period.** **CLERK**
The Personnel Committee made a recommendation to Full Council to agree a decision to complete an impact assessment on the business of the Council during the sanctions period, and reaffirmed this at their meeting on the 14th July, with this time some more criteria being outlined for councillors to consider. In advance of the meeting the Clerk put together a flow chart, in which he tried to encapsulate the cycle of disruption over the last 14 years, which had become the norm for this Parish Council. The point being that this provides a juxtaposition to that period of investigation.
The Clerk reported there had been two short periods of near normality within the last 14 years, and this most recent nearly 4-month period which was being discussed is one of them. The next Personnel meeting will be in September at which time that committee will more comprehensively cover this threat to SPC's proposed future business model.
- 41.4** **When further considering a way forward to achieving a positive resolution, or to find alternative pathways in order for SPC to maintain a collaborative and productive working culture, members of the Personnel Committee resolved to recommend presenting to Full Council a vote of 'No Confidence' in Cllr Campbell.** **CLERK**
- 41.4.1** The Chair explained that a vote of no confidence indicates that the members of a group do not support the decisions or actions of the person in question. It has no actual ramifications but sends a message that those voting for it have no trust in or support for the person it is levelled at. In this instance it is designed to signal publicly that those members of SPC who voted for it have no "confidence" in Paul Campbell and his willingness to work collaboratively with either the Council or the Office.

- 41.4.2** The Chairs statement continued:
'Paul has, since the beginning of this Council term (May 2023) consistently demonstrated a refusal to work within the confines of SPC Policies and Procedures. He repeatedly flouts the Dignity at Work Policy, the Email Policy, and most egregiously the Code of Conduct.
- 41.4.3** *As you all know in January this year he was found by HDC to have breached the Code of Conduct on multiple occasions and was duly sanctioned. He has not only failed to abide by the most important sanction, that being to apologise to both SPC and the Clerk, but rather he has stated publicly that he does not believe he needs to apologise as he believes he has done nothing wrong. Consequently the very behaviour for which he was sanctioned in the first place, namely bullying, harassment and bringing the Council into disrepute, has continued and will continue.*
- 41.4.4** *Paul has chosen to use threats as a mechanism to achieve his ends. In the last few weeks alone he has threatened SPC with a Judicial Review. In order to mitigate this threat a motion was moved at the next Full Council to rescind the motion that Paul so objected to. Subsequent to the meeting his response to our attempt to resolve the situation was to threaten SPC with another Judicial Review, and to threaten both SPC employees and the Chair with a 'Contempt of Court' action. This is hardly the behaviour of someone who is interested in compromise and collaboration. But more importantly this is a pattern of behaviour that cannot be allowed to continue. The constant barrage of emails, often lengthy, almost always critical and frequently pejorative, are over burdensome and unnecessary. They do not result in any positive benefit to the running of the Council or to Steyning as a whole. The Council needs to be able to conduct business in a professional and non-confrontational environment. The residents of Steyning deserve a Council that is allowed to function as it should and Paul's continued behaviour and approach impedes this process.*
- 41.4.5** *As we have exhausted all avenues available to us for dealing with Paul's behaviour the only remaining course of action is to either accept that he will continue to disrupt, criticise and complain, with the consequent impact on both the Office and Councillors, or to pass a Vote of No Confidence. Thereby signalling that, as Paul has, and continues to, demonstrate that he has no respect for due process, Policies, his fellow Councillors or indeed HDC, we are unable to work with him.'*
- 41.4.6** Cllr Foxwell made a statement in support of a vote of 'no confidence' in Cllr Campbell, with particular reference towards behaviour not changing over the last year or so with continued in-fighting; aggressive bullying; threatened legal procedures; bringing the council into disrepute; loss of respect from local residents; wasting time and money; tit-for-tat bullying and gas-lighting code of conducts; and a lack of an apology.
- 41.4.7** Cllr I Alexander made a statement in support of a vote of 'no confidence' in Cllr Campbell and relayed the fact that over the last several years he had witnessed bullying of many previous staff members by Cllr Campbell, and noted that in a normal work place he would have been sacked many times over and that the continued behaviour was simply not acceptable.
- 41.4.8** Cllr Lloyd made a statement in support of a vote of 'no confidence' in Cllr Campbell and stated that as a new member of this council it had been astonishing and deeply disturbing to have to bear witness to the targeted bullying towards the SPC Clerk. And wanted to make it clear that there was no law which gives councils an ability to terminate the position of a Councillor, and that therefore he does what he does because he can.
- 41.4.9** Cllr S Alexander made a statement in support of a vote of 'no confidence' in Cllr Campbell and stated that public resources, energy and funds continued to be used to deal with the dysfunction and disruption caused by one Councillor, and that it simply had to stop. There have been many independent investigations, which all come to the same or similar conclusions, and he believes the Steyning residents deserve better.
- 41.4.10** Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that as per the recommendation from the Personnel Committee a vote of no confidence in Cllr Campbell. **Agreed 11 for, 1 Abstained**

41.5	Following a recommendation from the Personnel Committee, SPC should consider that the Personnel Committee does not take any further complaints about the Clerk from Cllr Campbell. It was noted that there had been many unjustified criticisms and official complaints made by Cllr Campbell against the Clerk over a long period of time. Cllr Norcross proposed, seconded by Cllr Ballance that the personnel committee is authorised to not have to deal with any further complaints about the Clerk from Cllr Campbell. Agreed 11 For, 1 abstained	CLERK
41.6	'Have your say on Local Government reorganisation in West Sussex' consultation – to agree its promotion. It was noted that it is very quick and simple to complete consultation. Cllr Norcross proposed, seconded by Cllr M Alexander that SPC promotes the Local Government reorganisation consultation and that it is put on social media pages, every week for a number of weeks, and until it closes, and that there are other promotions to businesses and via posters. Agreed	Deputy Clerk & Cllr S Alexander
FULL/25/42	REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES	
42.1	Cllrs Hanson & Young – Isolation and Loneliness/ PPG – No meetings to report	
42.2	Cllr Lloyd – HALC representation. There had been a joint HDC and HALC meeting to discuss Neighbourhood plans/ Local plan; Local Government Reorganisation & Devolution ; Community Asset Transfer; and the Reform of Planning Committees. Cllr Lloyd spoke about the current reorganisation governance options available, in terms of what the split might look like when devolution occurs. She noted, The Secretary of State is trying to gain more power where planning is concerned. – Further details on all these matters to be forthcoming.	CLERK
42.3.1	Cllrs Johnson – Climate Action Group. – The group met in the previous week. A number of tools were discussed in terms what helped householders estimate energy usage and how to make savings. But these will be promoted when best to do so. There was a group from Sussex, who were promoting small scale wind farms, and this is to be discussed further at the next meeting.	
42.3.2	Update on the <i>walking and cycling plan</i> actions.- Councillors still need to send back comments please to Vicci. The Bramber 'Castle Lane Crossing' highways scheme has been submitted, and from the Steyning point of view there was an opportunity before the end of July deadline to consider options for bike rack installations on the High Street, and that the Clerk be asked to complete this submission if possible. The Clerk confirmed there had been an on-site visit with a Highways officer to discuss this potential installation, and that he was receptive to some of the ideas proposed. There will a chance for further scrutiny of the scheme before it is agreed.	
42.3.3	There are training opportunities for Councillors across Horsham who may be interested in actively assisting with positive Climate Actions. This month there was a briefing from the BN44 repair café.	
42.4.4	Cllr Johnson proposed, seconded by Cllr S Alexander that SPC delegate authority for the Clerk to make an application to the West Sussex Highways Scheme for Bike Racks before the deadline for submissions date in August. Agreed 11 For, 1 Against	CLERK
FULL/25/43	COMMITTEE MINUTES TO BE RECEIVED BY FULL COUNCIL	
43.1	Community Committee Cllr Norcross proposed, seconded by Cllr I Alexander that SPC receive the Minutes and Draft Minutes from the meetings held on the 8th April and the 3rd June 2025. Agreed 11 For, 1 Abstained	
43.2	Finance and General Purposes Committee Cllr Norcross proposed, seconded by Cllr S Alexander that SPC receive the Minutes from the meetings held on the 13th May 2025. Agreed	

43.3 Planning and Premises Committee

Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Hanson that SPC receive the Minutes and Draft Minutes from the meetings held on the 28th April, 27th May and the 23rd June 2025. **Agreed**

43.4 Personnel Committee

Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Lloyd that SPC receive the Minutes from the meetings held on the 15th May 2025. **Agreed**

43.5 Neighbourhood Planning Steering Committee

Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that SPC receive the Minutes from the meeting held on the 1st May 2025. **Agreed**

FULL/25/44 PROGRESS REPORT - To receive the following ongoing items, which will be taken to next meeting

CLERK

- 44.1** Chair & Clerk to speak with representatives to discuss parish wide disability awareness & bring back to Full Council
- 44.2** Youth service team to make future presentation to SPC Full Council
- 44.3** Clerk's office to work with Jane Eaton's team to elaborate upon potential HDC assets to be transferred details
- 44.4** Alternative Play Area inspection service provision to be sought
- 44.5** Cllr Campbell to provide an apology to Council and Clerk
- 44.6** Clerk to bring back Privacy Notice amendment to future Full Council
- 44.7** SPC to support the main two priorities of the LWCP – Pedestrian crossing at Castle Lane, and White Bridge cycle route
- 44.8** Clerk to take 3 LWCP actions to Community Committee {Bike Racks, Twitten Scheme & Convex mirror install}
- 44.9** Clerk to initiate 'Open' discussions on Devolution with other Parishes subsequent to HDC Asset List receipt
- 44.10** Clerk to move SPC towards Town Council status and bring back to Full Council
- 44.11** Clerk to inform all outside bodies about new SPC Cllr representation
- 44.12** Personnel Committee to compile an impact assessment on the business of the Council during the sanctions period
- 44.13** Clerk's office to transfer pre 2000 signed Minutes hard copies to Chichester Records Office
- 44.14** Digital screen electrical supply query to be brought back to Community Committee
- 44.15** Subject Access Requests to be dealt with by the Clerk

FULL/25/45 CORRESPONDENCE AND INFORMATION ITEMS

CLERK

- 45.1** SPC have been approached by a film company who are involved with the Brighton based Police TV Series 'Grace' - They are wanting to complete some filming by the old quarry on Newham's Lane and then at some locations by the river – likely this will start to happen from the 1st August with all traffic restriction permissions needing to be granted through WSCC.

FULL/25/46 DATE OF THE NEXT FULL COUNCIL MEETING: 15th September 2025 at 7.30pm

Meeting closed at 8.58 pm

Signed by the Chairman Date 15th September 2025

A recording of this meeting is available at - <https://youtu.be/5pnl2rtpKdw>