
MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 8th JULY 2025 AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllrs Sharp (Chairman), S Alexander, Ballance, and Johnson.

Clerk: John Fullbrook

Members of the Public in attendance: 0

Meeting commenced: 7:30 pm

MINUTES

ACTIONS

F &GP/25/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

01.1 Apologies were received from Cllrs Bell, Foxwell, Norcross and I Alexander, with Cllr Trundle being absent.

F&GP/25/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

02.1 Cllr S Alexander as Allotment holder – regarding item 07.5, potential grant for Community Plot

F&GP/25/03 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE FOR 2025/26 MUNICIPAL YEAR

03.1 Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ballance that Cllr S Alexander be duly elected as F&GP Committee Vice Chairman for the 2025/26 municipal year. **Agreed 3 For, 1 abstained**

F&GP/25/04 QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR {in summary}

04.1 None

F&GP/25/05 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

05.1 Cllr S. Alexander **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ballance that the draft minutes of the meeting held on the 13th May 2025 be agreed as a true and fair record. **Agreed 3 For, 1 abstained**

F&GP/25/06 MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS – *These items taken as read*

06.1 Clerk to communicate positive response to Street Cleaner re. increased bin emptying - **Actioned**

06.2 Farmers Market/ Cllrs to be informed re change of SPC Community engagement strategy - **Actioned**

06.3 Clerk to bring back Allotment grant request – **See item 7.5**

06.4 Clerk to begin discussion with WSCC engineers concerning Railings installation renewal – **Actioned**

06.5 Clerk to speak with Steyping Society concerning Railing post samples and compile comments - **Actioned**

06.6 Clerk to contact SPC solicitors to discuss lease options for Cricket Club renewal – **Actioned/ Item 7.7**

06.7 Digital Screens acquisition to be progressed, with Partnership support – **Actioned/ See item 7.10**

F&GP/25/07 FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY MATTERS.

07.1 **To approve the list of SPC payments for April and May 2025.**

Members discussed and posed questions to the Clerk in consideration of a long list of payments covering this period. The Clerk will check on a potential reduction of the Wardens fees due to recent reduced service provision. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Johnson that SPC accepts the April '25 and May '25 SPC Payments lists. **Agreed**

07.2	F&GP Income and Expenditure reports for April and May 2025.	
07.2.1	Cllr S. Alexander proposed, seconded by Cllr Johnson that the Clerk be delegated to renegotiate the Wardens expenditure for this year due to recent reduction of service level due to less staff. Agreed	CLERK
07.2.2	Cllr Sharp proposed, seconded by Cllr S Alexander that SPC accepts the F&GP Income and Expenditure reports for April and May '25. Agreed	
07.3	To consider the SPC draft Business Plan and Finance Plan 2025/26. The first part of the draft SPC Business Plan is shown under supporting paper 7.3 and is largely a repeat of what has been agreed in the previous two years, but with up-to-date financial data included, as per the agreed and audited 'End of Year' figures for SPC. Members considered these figures and what they mean to the general understanding of the strategy for completing tasks and projects over the next three years, with so many considerations laying ahead over this period. Members looked in detail specifically at what might happen in the event of a finance related emergency, and were content with what contingencies were in place. The Clerk asked that members consider agreeing the first part of the 25/26 Business plan. Cllr Sharp proposed, seconded by Cllr S Alexander that SPC agree to the 25/26 Business plan as per the supporting papers. Agreed	CLERK
07.4	To discuss project priorities for the 2025/26 period and decide upon the outline content of the forthcoming year's SPC Action Plan.	
07.4.1	There were three supporting papers for this item. One being last year's Action Plan and was for reference rather than greater discussion. The project list covered all the current elements members are still considering for next year. There was also a list which gave extra financial consideration for each proposed project. There were 33 projects noted for members to consider and reduce down to a final list which could be achievable both in terms of office time, and SPC money available. A final list would be taken to the next F&GP meeting in the form of a draft Action Plan for the period June 25 to June 26, and this could then be agreed so that Council knew what resources it needed to have in place.	CLERK
07.4.2	The list noted below contains the items which did not make the cut for the current year, but which would likely slip to the following year's project list. • <i>Part MPF Play Area Renewal - £Grant or Special project funded – 25-35K</i> • <i>MPF Car Park Bollards and possible planter installation - £3K</i> • <i>Bus Shelter improvements - £10K - £25K *</i> • <i>Work on Glebe Farm Play Area – £0K</i> • <i>Fletchers Croft, asset transfer - £0K ^</i> • <i>Bramber Brooks asset transfer - £0K ^</i> • <i>Car Parks potential asset transfers - £0K ^</i> • <i>Other SPC / HDC Open spaces / Twitten and other asset transfers - £0K ^</i> • <i>Glebe Farm Road names – might delegate to for example Steyning Society £0K</i> • <i>Twittens ongoing management – Staff costs</i> • <i>Youth Club permanent home – negotiate with WSCC for potential asset transfer - £0K</i>	
07.4.3	The following list of priority projects will be taken forward to be placed with a draft Action Plan for members to discuss and agree for the September F&GP Meeting. 1. Chandlers Way Play Park Development – Ongoing - £3K from Budget and successful grant 2. High Street Christmas Lighting Display – Budget£ 3. MPF Charlton Street entrance re-surfacing - access for potential disabled play install. - £0 4. MPF Entrance notice / interpretation boards - £4K plus already won Grant funding 5. Steyning Centre energy cost & carbon saving measures - £10K 6. CCTV installation (at least part commitment) - £10K to £18K {First Phase} * 7. Mouse Lane Funding application - £0K 8. Climate Action Travel Plan support - £?K, dependent on projects but likely little cost	CLERK

9. *Neighbourhood Plan Review completion - £13K*
10. *Neighbourhood Plan Phase II - £?K – To safeguard against future midterm developments*
11. *DMMO inquiry resolution – Committed priority £0K*
12. *SPC Tree management Plan – Committed to this from last year's Action plan £0K*
13. *Parish Flood Plan / Riparian responsibilities at Abbey Road – Committed £6K - budget*
14. *Railings on Roundabout - £0K to £?K*
15. *Implementation Plan to get signed off – HDC to complete £0*
16. *Cricket Club Lease and development of new club house – £4K Solicitor /admin*
17. *Parish Wide Bin installations – £Annual Budget*
18. *Stepping Centre – Front Doors replacement - £8K {potentially from Sinking fund}*
19. *Emergency Plan Update – Must do for 25/26 - £0K*
20. *Glebe Farm influencing and assisting Vistry - £0K*
21. *Devolution Business Plan ^ - £2K potentially for solicitor fees*
22. *Remembrance Event organisation - £0K*

- 07.4.4** * The CCTV project will cost more than it is possible to pay for in this financial year without going into our emergency reserves, and so it was proposed that this be a two- or 3-year commitment whose first phase is begun in the 25/26 project year. It does however need to be agreed via a public referendum. If the vote was to not proceed, then emphasis would shift to SPC pursuing completion of Bus Shelter works instead.
- 07.4.5** ^ In terms of the potential Asset transference of land and Car Parks from HDC, it was felt that any detailed negotiation and likely solicitor costs would be dealt with within the next financial year, and in the meantime these matters could be covered by the work involved in the compilation of the Devolution Business Plan.
- 07.4.6** Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that SPC proceed with the CCTV project public consultation & referendum, and that this process is delegated to the Community Engagement Group. **Agreed** **CLERK**
- 07.5** **To consider a grant application for an allotment community plot installation.** **CLERK**
We have been asked to receive a grant request from a group of plot holders at Canada Gardens Allotments for assistance with their community plot development
Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ballance that SPC agree to the grant application for the Community plot development {for the sum of £250} **Agreed**
- 07.6.1** **To agree a continued service arrangement with the current SPC internal auditor.** **CLERK**
Mulberry & Co are the most successful and best respected internal audit supplier and trainer in this region (and beyond). The Chair explained that whilst it is best practice to consider changing internal auditors once in a while to avoid familiarity, any councillor who has observed the audit process (in the room), and there have been 4 Councillors over the last 7 years who have done so, all say that they are impressed with the companies thoroughness and professionalism.
- 07.6.2** He further explained that both he and Cllr S Alexander have continued to, over the last year and a half, been 'putting the Clerk through his paces' as part of the ongoing internal control process, and as per the Financial Risk Assessment requirements.
- 07.6.3** Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that SPC retain the internal auditor for the next financial year. **Agreed.** There was also confirmation however that likely next year committee will need a more detailed understanding of any viable alternatives. **CLERK**
- 07.7.1** **Cricket Club Lease renewal update, and to consider the length of the new Lease.**
The Clerk had begun discussions with the SPC solicitor after being delegated to do so, and there was an indication that both parties are close to an agreed length of Lease, but it is important to further discuss clauses involving security provisions, security of tenure and rent reviews. The Clerk had provided a supporting paper which outlined progress to date. The Chair explained that in the first instance SPC needs to obtain the clubs accounts to understand what the basis of their business model could be and also what their new legal status is.

07.7.2	Cllr S Alexander proposed, seconded by Cllr Sharp that in principle SPC is not against a long lease, however SPC needs to seek legal advice on a number of clauses that need to be added in order to protect the Community and its Asset. Agreed	CLERK
07.7.3	Cllr Sharp proposed, seconded by Cllr S Alexander that SPC agrees to the fee from the solicitor for them to complete the task of compiling a new Cricket Club Lease agreement. Agreed	CLERK
07.8	Following an agreed motion at Full Council on the 16th June which involved a reversal of a previous Council resolution in non-observance of SPC Standing order 7(a), for F&GP to consider recommending to the next Full Council meeting a motion to avoid any potential ultra vires decision in consideration of that matter. The Clerk had prepared a written motion to be signed by Cllrs – which stated the following – F&GP Committee resolves to put a special motion on the agenda of the 21st July Full Council Meeting to the effect that Full Council with immediate effect rescinds its decision of the 19th May 2025, extending sanctions against Cllr Campbell, contingent upon him also withdrawing the proposed Judicial Review proceedings. Cllr S Alexander proposed this motion and Cllr Sharp seconded, and it was therefore agreed to proceed. All Councillors present signed the motion in agreement with it. And the Clerk therefore needed to gain at least 4 other signatures before the required date which was the 14th July.	CLERK
07.9	To complete the asset lease transference forms from HDC of the ‘Archway at Newmans Gardens’. Cllr Sharp proposed, seconded by Cllr S Alexander that SPC agrees that the Clerk completes and signs the Asset Lease Transference document from HDC relating to the ‘Archway at Newman’s Gardens’. Agreed	CLERK
07.10	Notification regarding the signing of a Licence agreement for the Steyning Car Park digital screens. The Supporting paper 7.10, gives the details of the Licence document SPC is being asked to sign in regard to the Car Park Digital Screens. This is a notification rather than an item to be discussed, as it has already been dealt with via a motion at the March F&GP Meeting.	
F&GP/25/08 PROGRESS REPORT		
08.1	<i>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 deputy clerk.</i>	D. Clerk
08.2	<i>F&GP/24/08.2 CCTV project to be further discussed with contractors on site</i>	CLERK & CCTV W. Party
08.3	<i>F&GP/24/53.4 Spotlights onto the Clock Tower as a proposed project to be brought back</i>	CLERK
08.4	<i>F&GP/24/53.6 Digital Screens acquisition to be progressed, with Partnership support</i>	CLERK
08.5	<i>F&GP/24/53.7 Communications continuing with Cricket Club concerning proposed clubhouse development</i>	CLERK
08.6	<i>F&GP/24/53.7 Clerk to contact SPC solicitors to discuss lease options for Cricket Club renewal</i>	CLERK
08.7	<i>F&GP/24/53.7 Clerk to contact WSCC to obtain advice in consideration of WSCC property disposals policy</i>	CLERK
08.8	<i>F&GP/24/53.7 Clerk to contact NALC to obtain legal advice behind note LTN 56</i>	CLERK
08.9	<i>F&GP/24/53.10 Clerk to install double socket in Clock Tower for future camera installation</i>	CLERK
08.10	<i>F&GP/24/53.10 SPC to publish strategy for the future of clock tower clock-face future renewal</i>	CLERK
08.11	<i>F&GP/24/54.1 A3 conservation signs to be purchased for Abbey Road</i>	CLERK
08.12	<i>F&GP/24/63.6 WSCC to rectify issues with High St railings foundations, wall and posts with support from SPC Clerk</i>	CLERK
08.13	<i>F&GP/24/64.1 Clerk to add Asset items transferred to SPC to 2025/26 SPC Asset Register</i>	CLERK

F&GP/25/09 INFORMATION/CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS
09.1 None

F&GP/24/10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 9th September 2025 @7.30pm.

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.31pm

Signed Date 9th September 2025
Chair

A video recording of this meeting can be found using this link:
<https://youtu.be/sJ74AQSy2ZY>