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MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 9th SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 7.30PM

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

Members of the Public in attendance: **0**
Meeting commenced: **7:30 pm**

MINUTES

ACTIONS

F &GP/25/11 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
11.1 Apologies were received from Cllrs S Alexander, Foxwell, Norcross and Trundle.

F&GP/25/12 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**
12.1 None

F&GP/25/13 **QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR** **{in summary}**
13.1 None

F&GP/25/14 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**
14.1 The Chair reviewed the previous meeting in so far as it related to ongoing discussions with the SPC Action Plan, and reiterated that the Plan was about what SPC could achieve given a tighter budget restriction this year.
Cllr Sharp **proposed**, **seconded** by Cllr Ballance that the draft minutes of the meeting held on the 8th July 2025 be agreed as a true and fair record. **Agreed 4 For, 1 abstained**

F&GP/25/15 **MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS –** ***These items taken as read***
15.1 Clerk to help renegotiate wardens expenditure for 2025 due to the reduced service provision- **Item 16.5**

15.2 Clerk to bring back first part of SPC Business plan, to complete finance and action plan **– See Item 16.3**

15.3 Clerk to compile the 25/26 SPC Draft Action Plan **– See item 16.3**

15.4 Clerk's office to complete grant transaction with the Community Allotment Group **– Actioned**

15.5 Clerk to appoint internal auditor for the 25/26 period, following F&GP agreement **– Actioned**

15.6 Clerk to contact Steyning CC conveying SPC in principle not against a long lease agreement **– Actioned**

15.7 Clerk to confirm fee arrangement for the Cricket Club lease with the SPC Solicitor **– Actioned**

15.8 Clerk to take signed special motion to Full Council **– Actioned**

15.9 Clerk to complete & sign the Archway at Newmans gardens asset lease transference doc. **– Actioned**

F5GP/25/16 **FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY MATTERS.**
16.1 **To approve the list of SPC payments for June and July 2025.**
Members discussed and posed questions to the Clerk in consideration of a long list of payments covering this period. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Bell that SPC accepts the June and July 2025 SPC Payments lists. **Agreed**

16.2 **F&GP Income and Expenditure reports for June and July 2025**.

16.2.1 The Ill Health insurance payment was skewing the percentage on the reports and the Clerk agreed that he could change the figures (manually, not on the accounts system) to omit this unbudgeted figure from the total percentage noted, for the benefit of Cllrs for future meetings. **CLERK**

16.2.2 Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Johnson that the F&GP Income and Expenditure reports for June and July 2025 be accepted. **Agreed**

16.3 **To agree the second part of the SPC draft Business Plan & Finance Plan 2025/26 and to further consider project priorities and agree the 2025/26 SPC Action Plan.**

The members looked at the details of the Action Plan at the same time as the Finance and Business Plan document as it all related to total finances and time available, and many questions arose, and were further explored. An important point was that as per the previous period, even though the plan is agreed for the year, there was still a need to be fairly flexible, depending on what other issues may arise. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr I Alexander that members resolve to approve the 2025/26 SPC Business, Finance and Action Plans. **Agreed** **CLERK** **CLERK**

16.4 **To consider a grant application for an allotment association AGM room hire cover grant.** **CLERK**

This request comes in from the Allotment Association each year, and is an amount which covers the charge of hiring the Steyning Centre for their AGM.

Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Johnson that SPC pay the grant request for £87.15 to the Steyning Allotment Association. **Agreed**

16.5 **Clerk to notify with regards Wardens payment for this financial year and for members to consider a motion which further supports the Wardens service provision through and beyond the period of devolution.**

16.5.1 Following the last F&GP meeting, members requested to gain an idea as to whether there would be a reduction to the annual Wardens charge for this year, due to there being a period of reduced service cover (because only one Warden was available to Steyning following Michaels' departure), the Clerk has had it confirmed by HDC that indeed there will be a reduced charge.

16.5.2 Members considered a motion outlining further support for the service to ease any staff concerns. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr I Alexander that the F&GP Committee expresses its intention to protect the continued employment of Wardens beyond the end of the current HDC contract. **Agreed** **CLERK**

16.6 **To agree this year's SPC budget planning timeline as per supporting papers** **CLERK**

The timeline document simply outlines the framework by which this and other committees need to work towards, in order for the Council to come up with a thorough examination, reasonable methodology, and well-reasoned solution and final figure for the SPC Precept request to HDC for the next 26/27 financial year. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ballance that SPC accept this timeline {as per supporting papers}. **Agreed**

16.7 **F&GP to consider an amendment to the SPC Finance Risk Assessment and SPC Finance Regs as per supporting paper.**

16.7.1 Members considered an amendment to either SPC Finance Regs or to the SPC Risk Assessment in order for a procedural variation in SPC policies to be resolved. Two options were presented whereby one was changed to agree with the other or vice versa. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr I Alexander that Option 2 {SPC Risk Assessment be amended to agree with details contained within the SPC Finance Regs} be accepted {as per supporting papers}. **Agreed** **CLERK**

16.7.2 Members also considered changing SPC Finance Reg. # 6.7 back to what had been standard practice for SPC for many years, but the new wording had been missed when the new finance Regs were brought in in May 2025. Cllr Johnson **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Sharp that the following amendment be adopted as per supporting paper. **Agreed** **CLERK**

6.7 The RFO shall present a list of payments, forming part of the F&GP Agenda, and which covers every month of the year. The list shall be disclosed as a supporting paper, and members shall review the list for compliance and their agreement be duly noted within the minutes of that meeting.

16.8 **To agree payment of Christmas Lights invoice**
Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Johnson that SPC pay the invoice for £2,458.76 for Christmas Lighting. **Agreed** **CLERK**

16.9 **To agree payment of invoice to design code consultants for the first part of their work in assisting the SPC Neighbourhood Plan update works.**
Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Bell that SPC pay the invoice for £5,280.00 (inc VAT) for Neighbourhood Plan consultancy work undertaken. **Agreed** **CLERK**

16.10 **Report on work undertaken so far on potential asset transference, with a view to future Car Park management options**

16.10.1 The Office has been working on gaining information both from HDC officers, the Land Registry and other Parish Council Reps and via webinars information to help SPC move the process of potential asset transference forward. On 2nd September '25 the Community Committee were asked to consider a number of potential assets such as Bramber Brooks, Fletchers Croft and other Car Parks and certain other parcels of land in terms of whether they were interested enough to ask the Clerk to write to HDC in order to *'express an interest'* in these assets.
HDC will by following their new asset transference policy, complete an internal review to see if the expression of interest submission meets certain criteria, and will decide whether SPC can then submit a formal application – and this would involve much more detail from SPC in terms of its ability to maintain that asset.

16.10.2 The Car Parks are obviously a very important part of this discussion for SPC – they provide an income generation, but also a fair cost liability. In any discussion concerning the Car Parks and how the income might benefit SPC, members need to be mindful that any excess, or profit, likely ought to be put back into their maintenance or something to do with highways or something associated with better sustainable travel practice. Management of Car Parks could be undertaken by an experienced company rather than attempting to utilise existing staff from HDC – and all options are being explored and currently remain open. Members advocated for the benefits of 'Free Parking', and for the money that has been put to one side for HDC to complete a renewal of Newman Gardens Car Park to be used for that purpose in advance of the potential asset transference to SPC. **CLERK**

16.11 **Following the fact that two residents have raised objections to SPC's 2024/25 AGAR, and have sent these to the external auditor, for F&GP members to gain an understanding of the process and likely cost implications.** **CLERK**
The Clerk reported on the nature of the procedures and processes involved when residents raise objections regarding the annual AGAR submission and therefore the SPC finance and governance. The Clerk estimated the likely cost to SPC of these current enquiries to be in the region of between £1,000 and £3,000.

16.12 **To consider a grant application from the Tyler Trust organisation.** **CLERK**
Members agreed that it was a very worthy cause but that there was a strong argument to suggest the benefit to Steyning Residents was somewhat tenuous. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr I Alexander that SPC does not make a grant to the Tyler Trust. **Agreed**

F&GP/25/17 **PROGRESS REPORT**

17.1	*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 deputy clerk.*	**D. Clerk**
17.2	*F&GP/24/08.2 CCTV project to be further discussed with contractors on site*	**CLERK & CCTV W. Party**
17.3	*F&GP/24/53.4 Spotlights onto the Clock Tower as a proposed project to be brought back*	**CLERK**
17.4	*F&GP/24/53.7 Communications continuing with Cricket Club concerning proposed clubhouse development*	**CLERK**
17.5	*F&GP/24/53.7 Clerk to contact WSCC to obtain advice in consideration of WSCC property disposals policy*	**CLERK**

17.6	*F&GP/24/53.7*	*Clerk to contact NALC to obtain legal advice behind note LTN 56*	**CLERK**
17.7	*F&GP/24/53.10*	*Clerk to install double socket in Clock Tower for future camera installation*	**CLERK**
17.8	*F&GP/24/53.10*	*SPC to publish strategy for the future of clock tower clock-face future renewal*	**CLERK**
17.9	*F&GP/24/54.1*	*A3 conservation signs to be purchased for Abbey Road*	**CLERK**
17.10	*F&GP/24/63.6*	*WSCC to rectify issues with High St railings foundations, wall and posts with support from SPC Clerk*	**CLERK**
17.11	*F&GP/24/64.1*	*Clerk to add Asset items transferred to SPC to 2025/26 SPC Asset Register*	**CLERK**
17.12	*F&GP/25/7.4*	*Clerk to organise Community Engagement working party to consider CCTV referendum*	**CLERK**

F&GP/25/18 INFORMATION/CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS

18.1 None

F&GP/24/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 14th October 2025 @7.30pm.

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.11pm

Signed ………………………………………………….. Date 14th October 2025
Chair

A video recording of this meeting can be found using this link:
https://youtu.be/wGp7amMkt9M