

MEETING OF FULL PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 17th NOVEMBER 2025 AT 7.30PM

Councillors Present : Cllrs Norcross (Chairman), Hanson, Sharp, Foxwell, Johnson, I Alexander, S Alexander, Bell, Trundle and Ballance.
Clerks in attendance : John Fullbrook and Leanne Poole.
Members of the Public : 9 {inc. District Cllrs Victoria Finnegan & Nicholas Marks, plus Steyning Grammar Head Teacher}
Meeting commenced : 7.34 pm

MINUTES

ACTION

FULL/25/66 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

66.1 Apologies received from Cllrs Linfield, Lloyd, Young and M Alexander.
Cllr Campbell was absent.

FULL/25/67 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

67.1 None

FULL/25/68 QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR {in summary}

68.1.1 John Stephenson requested an opportunity to make a statement – summarised as follows:-
"I'd like to update you on what is happening at the **Steyning Ukrainian Refuge**. We have struggled with the numbers of our Ukrainian Guests over the past few months.

68.1.2 Since March 2022 our aim has been to give everyone sufficient English so they can find work, to enable them to stand on their own feet. We have nurtured them, looked after their wellbeing, socialised, taken them on holiday and managed to build a large family unit, where we have all helped each other. Lately attendance to our English lessons has reduced - So we have been successful!
Nearly 100 Ukrainians have passed through the Refuge, we have completely furnished rented accommodation for 18 families.

68.1.3 We decided that we should boost our numbers by facilitating more Ukrainians as there are still millions wishing to flee their war-torn home country. We contacted 4,200 local homes seeking potential Home Hosts, but received only one positive reply! Ukraine is off the front page. Also, our Church Street site where we operate from is being sold.

68.1.4 Fund raising will become more difficult with our falling numbers, and we are unable to continue as we are. Our Charity will continue, we will still have get 'togethers', commemorating & celebrating Ukrainian anniversaries. Our Charity can be fully reactivated at any time if the need arises. My colleague Trustees will still be available to mentor and help our Ukrainian Guests. Meanwhile, we must dispose of all the clothing and furniture and knickknacks that we have in stock at the Refuge! We had a Grand Sale on Saturday 8th November and managed to raise £2.319 for our charity. We are having a FINAL FREE CLEARANCE this coming Saturday 22nd Nov. to try to empty the site.

68.1.5 We all would like to thank the Parish Council and the people of Steyning and surrounding villages for their most generous help that they have given to our many Ukrainian Guests".

68.2.1 The Chair thanked John on behalf of the Council for his tremendous work over the last three and a half years, and that of his fellow trustees and many volunteers, saying that they were all a huge credit to Steyning

FULL/25/69 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 69.1** Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ballance that the minutes for the meetings dated the 15th September 2025 and 13th October 2025 be accepted as a true and fair record. **Agreed. 9 For, 1 Abstained.**

FULL/25/70 MATTERS ARISING – These items were taken as read

- 70.1** Cllrs requested to be involved in Bramber Brooks tour of site on 25th Sept – **Actioned**
- 70.2** High St Car Park shrubs to be cut down again – **Actioned**
- 70.3** F&GP to be charged with delegated responsibility to steer SPC through Devolution process – **Actioned**
- 70.4** Personnel Com. to compile impact assessment on the SPC business during sanctions period – **Actioned**
- 70.5** Bring back SPC Action Plan for further Full C. notification/ update – **Actioned / See item 76.2**
- 70.6** Insurance invoice to be paid – **Actioned**
- 70.7** Chair and Clerk to pursue further consideration of Council changing from Parish to Town - **See item 74.4**
- 70.8** Final version of Walking and Cycling Plan published, and Sustainable travel group thanked – **Actioned**
- 70.9** JPY Committee to convene in October and items brought back to Full C. – **Actioned**
- 70.10** Training course for staff to enable in house Play Area inspections to be organised – **Actioned**
- 70.11** To request to HDC the removal of recycling bins from Fletchers Croft for trial period – **Actioned**
- 70.12** Clerk to write to French contacts and working party members concerning twinning idea – **Actioned**
- 70.13** Clerk's office to arrange & send out invitations for the Chairmans function on the 12th Dec. – **Actioned**
- 70.14** Clerk's office to promote Community Award & collate nominations and bring back to Full C.– **Actioned**
- 70.15** Chair to seek solicitor/barrister to consider Cllrs emails & continued poor behaviour – **See item 74.1**
- 70.16** Chair to explore Steyning being more dementia friendly – **See item 75.1**

The Chair brought the next item forward from 10.3 on the agenda

FULL/25/71 COMMUNITY MATTERS

- 71.1** **A brief presentation from the Steyning Grammar School concerning the redevelopment of their site.** The Chair welcomed the Steyning Grammar School Headteacher and four representatives from the school, the Dept. for Education, Planners and approved contractors {BAM} who were in charge of the proposed major reconstruction of their main site in Steyning.
- 71.2** Aidan Timmons, the Headteacher explained that though the school was rich in character and blessed by the nature and quality of its staff and pupils, its buildings were generally in a state of disrepair. The good news, however, was that this meant that it qualified for government funding under the current *school rebuilding program*, and the subsequent proposed reconstruction of almost the entire site into a state of the art facility was extremely exciting news for the school and the town of Steyning.
- 71.3** He further explained that the new build would mean that all the students could be based in Steyning, and that therefore the Rock Road Campus and Towers would no longer be required.
- 71.4** The Contractor then, via a power point presentation, showed representational drawings and plans of the proposed construction and explained how the works would be undertaken over a period of approximately 4 years with, it was hoped, building starting in the summer of 2026. This presentation in effect was the beginning of the *Community Engagement* part of the pre-planning submission process, with a website due to be set up by BAM with some details of the

design and plans being made available to the public before Christmas, and with an application due to go to HDC in the new year. Approval was still required from the church diocese before it was possible to share more information or show the video recording of this meeting, and this had been agreed with the Clerk and Chair prior to the meeting. The school was also committed to presenting a much larger Q and A session at the SPC Annual Parish Meeting in March. In terms of the timescale involved, it was hoped that some of the buildings would be ready for use by the spring of 2028 with the demolition of the existing school buildings planned for April 2029. It was noted however that the Swimming pool and squash courts/ sports centre would remain in place.

- 71.5** A question and answer session involving Councillors and the School representatives / architects / contractors followed and is summarised below:
- 71.5.1** *Q – It sounds as though the plans might be submitted before the consultation process*
A – There will be a series of public consultations prior to submission with many aspects to be refined
- 71.5.2** *Q – When might the existing astro turf pitch be dug up*
A – Sep. 2028, right at the start of the project, with the MUGA remaining available for community use
- 71.5.3** *Q – Will the north of the site be maintained as playing fields*
A – Yes – no changes
- 71.5.4** *Q – So, no plans for houses around the perimeter of the land*
A – No, as its protected ‘Foundation’ land.
- 71.5.5** *Q – Re sustainable travel plans and green building regs. Has the local walking and cycling plan been taken on board, and will walking and cycling access be maximised to the site*
A – For the students then, yes. They will work with the school towards a sustainable travel plan
- 71.5.6** *Q – How many children would the new site cater for*
A – Approx. 2000, which is no real change from the current figure
- 71.5.7** *Q – Presumably you will be maximising green and sustainable power*
A – Yes, using DfE guidelines, there will be use of ground source heat pumps and solar panels
- 71.5.8** *Q – Looking at our Neighbourhood plan – have you taken on the policies and visions currently in there such as rain water harvesting the use of nature bricks for example*
A – There are many green areas covered in the site with DfE requirements catered for and ecologists working on the details of the plan, with for example no gas on site other than in the science labs.
- 71.5.9** *Q – is there a theatre planned in the new build*
A – Yes
- 71.5.10** *Q – With the consolidation of sites do you envisage a net loss of staff*
A – There will be a need to rationalise the workforce
- 71.5.11** *Q – The Council was hoping to ensure new houses were more affordable for younger families – might this be a consideration for attracting more staff to live in Steyning.*
A – This would be welcome as currently it’s too expensive for many school/ teaching staff to live in Steyning
- 71.5.12** *Q – Will the Towers remain part of the school*
A – No, this will go back to the Sisters
- 71.5.13** *Q – is there anything in the plans to smarten up the primary school*
A – No, this is separate to the plan
- 71.5.14** *Q – is the intention to keep access to leisure centre and swimming pool throughout the build*
A – Yes
- 71.5.15** *Q – Are you keeping part of the original theatre*
A – No, in fact the drama space can be extended into the chapel and into the adjacent hall making it very adaptable
- 71.5.16** *Q – the planning process and allowance of community comments is not just about an opportunity to raise objections – its also a chance for the community to react positively to new development – this is where Parish and District Councillors can spread the news.*
A – Exactly that, and this is why the presentation was planned for today - to garner support as we have considered the local ‘look’ and incorporated flints into brickwork for example.

71.5.17 *The Chair said from her personal point of view the plans and concept looked fabulous and thanked the school reps for their presentation this evening.*

FULL/25/72 NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS REPORT

72.1 Members received the Wardens reports for September and October and had no questions relating to the matters highlighted.
The new wardens supervisor has taken office this week.

FULL/25/73 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS (In Summary)

Cllr Victoria Finnegan – (HDC) update

73.1.1 **1. HDC Local Govt dates** – March 2026 - the date for the new strategic authority to be created; May 2026 - Mayoral elections to be held; April 1st 2028 - Vesting day of new Unitary Authority.

73.1.2 **2. Local Govt. Reorganisation consultation** – Accessible from end of Nov. 25, - There will be a questionnaire forwarded by Victoria to Clerk & members. By Spring 26, the Govt will respond to the LGR business cases.

73.1.3 **3. Water Neutrality** – As of 31st Oct Natural England confirmed via a statement, the withdrawal of their position as at Sept '21, following an agreement with the Environment Agency and Southern Water on a reduction to the licence cap on water extraction.

73.1.4 **4. SNOWS** – No longer going to be launched

73.1.5 **5. Local Plan update** – Letter from HDC has gone to inspector to see if the Local plan could be better received given the new planning regulations

73.1.6 **6. Rural and Market Towns Economic Alliance** – Set up in association with Coast Capital to assist with collective funding bids in the rural climate – involves Storrington, Pulborough, Billingshurst and Steyning. There will be stakeholders brought together including Parish Councils. Bi-monthly meetings rotating across the towns, starting early next year.

73.1.7 **7. Food waste** – Collections begin in spring of 2026. Each household will be provided with an indoors 'caddy' and a 23 Litre outdoor bin.

73.1.8 **8. Bramber Brooks** – Questions raised about potentially removing the style and flattening slightly a slope which compromises easy access from the Steyning / river side. HDC were not keen to pursue due to the cost of these works. Members continued to raise concerns that the matter should be dealt with as currently residents from Steyning with mobility issues do not have ease of access from either Steyning or Bramber access points.

73.1.9 **9. High Street Car Park** – Shrubs and Pot hole issues recently dealt with – Thanks to WSCC highways and local resident for swift action.

73.1.10 **10. Glebe Farm** – Updated Reserve matters Docs have gone onto the HDC portal

73.1.11 **Statement from the Chair** – Thanks go from SPC to Cllr Finnegan for her support, her attendance at meetings and the very many hours on a weekly basis which she has given over to assist Steyning residents, their causes and that of the Council, and especially in regards the continuing Glebe Farm planning application / development discussions.

73.2 Cllr Nicholas Marks – (HDC) update

73.2.1 **1. Community Engagement** – Nick made a case for SPC to continue to use every opportunity to more fully engage with its residents – as the demise of HDC and introduction of the unitary authority will require a more local representation at the lower level and therefore there is a need for SPC to step up in terms of networking and also to be aware of associated greater expectations.

73.2.2 **2. Community Kitchen** – This pop-up catering facility for events idea/concept is nearing reality with financial support almost secured. This is a Partnership project, which was for some time needing match funding. It's anticipated that it will be seen at for example the Steyning Festival and will be a type of social enterprise facility.

73.2.3 **3. The Bikery** – Remains available as a place for bike repair but more than that, a general community space.

Cllr
Finnegan

FULL/25/74 GOVERNANCE

74.1 The Chair to update on matters relating to an SPC Councillors continued poor behaviour

74.1.1 The Chair had contacted two legal firms, following the previous recommendations and in response both of them said there were steps that could be taken. The Barristers firm came back saying they could provide written advice explaining what could be achieved by formal and legal means and by engaging their services and that this would be at a cost of £1,500.00. The Chair explained that this would only be the start of the process and that it would potentially cost a lot of money, but that however if nothing continued to be done the costs could be considerably more. She went on to explain that yet again the content of emails sent were proving the point. Cllr S Alexander pointed out there might be something that could be done in the meantime and suggested the following:

74.1.2 Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Foxwell that subject to a legal check SPC restrict Cllr Campbell to only emailing internally {in terms of using his own Parish Council .gov email address}, not externally except when given delegated authority to do so, or he could send via Chair or Clerk so that it could go to an external source. **Agreed 7 For, 2 Against, 1 Abstained.**

74.1.3 Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that SPC instruct the firm of Barristers to provide SPC with written advice as to the next steps. **Agreed**

CLERK

Cllr
Norcross

74.2 Notification of SPC comments following meeting with developers and Cllr Finnegan, in response to the 'Reserved Matters' planning application for Glebe Farm by the Vistry Group.

74.2.1 There was a meeting with Vistry and Newgate representatives including the SPC Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Cllr Norcross and Russell Barnes in attendance (As Steering Committee Rep.). Also in attendance were the HDC Chief planning Officer and Cllr Finnegan. The agenda was based upon the most recent SPC Comments (in reference to the reserved matters planning application) submission listing. The first draft of notes/minutes produced by Newgate from this meeting were not as detailed as SPC reps required, and so Cllr Finnegan met with the Clerk and Deputy Clerk to compare notes once again and compiled a list of those items it was felt were missing from the Newgate /Vistry note/minutes account. This was then sent to them in the hope they would amend their account. The amended version was released just before this meeting and has as yet not been checked to see if all notes were included.

74.2.2 SPC has also received notification from HDC stating the final chance to make comments on the Glebe Farm Reserved Matters application. There were 14 days to make any such submission from the date it was sent – that being the 13th November. SPC had planned the next N. Plan Steering Committee meeting for the 26th Nov to discuss N. Plan design codes, and so with very little choice, the new plan is to discuss this matter for a large part of that meeting instead! A pre-meeting meeting will attempt to reduce the number of Docs down from (currently) 531 on the HDC portal to a more manageable dozen or so. For committee members to consider.

CLERK
&
N. Plan Com

74.3 To agree that the N. Plan Steering Committee have delegated authority to produce a response to the SDNP consultation request for a new site identified within the South Downs Land Availability Assessment (LAA) which is currently being updated to inform the Regulation 19 version of the emerging South Downs Local Plan Review.

74.3.1 SPC received a letter from the South Downs National Park Policy Planning Team which asks for comments concerning their review of potential sites in the LAA, and Bayards Field has been put forward. Again the consultation period is prohibitively small and so the Clerk, Chair and Steering Committee Chair have suggested members consider the N. Plan Steering Committee members confer via email and submit their preference via delegated authority.

74.3.2 Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Sharp that the N. Plan Steering Committee members confer via email and submit their preference for comments to the Clerk's office, for these to

CLERK
&
N. Plan Com

then be collated by the office and submitted via delegated authority to the SDNP by the final submission date – that being the 24th November. **Agreed**

74.4 The Chair to update members on news concerning Steyning PC's desire to become a Town Council, to consider a new Steyning Town Council emblem.

74.4.1 The Chair had met with the Arundel Town Council Mayor and the CEO of WSALC who were in favour of the idea of Steyning becoming a Town Council and indeed in some respects thought it was overdue. Having discussed this idea previously members then considered a motion.

74.4.2 Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that Steyning become a Town Council. **Agreed.** The Clerk pointed out there was much to do, especially administratively, to ensure this happened effectively.

74.4.3 Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that Steyning Parish Council becomes Steyning Town Council with effect from the Annual Parish Council Meeting in May of 2026. **Agreed**

74.4.4 Members further considered a collection of new draft Town Council emblems as per supporting papers. Cllr Johnson **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Hanson that SPC announces on social media that as SPC is becoming a Town Council in May, that we welcome any graphic designers to present a logo for SPC to consider in the January Full Council meeting. **Agreed**

CLERK

CLERK

FULL/25/75 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

75.1.1 **Cllrs Hanson & Young – Isolation and Loneliness/ PPG** – Cllr Hanson did attend a meeting, but has not been able to complete a report. The AGM is convening this evening (17th Nov) – Details of the minutes will follow.

75.1.2 There was a separate request to assist with the convening of a meeting of the Horsham District Older Peoples Forum, and it was suggested the Clerk contact their Chairman and confirm the cost of room and refreshments required, then suggest if they want to use the Steyning Centre facilities, that they submit a request for a grant to SPC to potentially cover that cost.

75.2 **Cllrs Johnson – Climate Action Group.** – The group met on the 15th October, and the minutes were available to members as a supporting paper. Main points arising involved a good networking of ideas and opportunities for best practice. Shared volunteer App. for biodiversity / conservation volunteers is going to be taken forward by Greening Steyning. There are some good green 'drinks' coming up and an oversubscribed and well publicised Power Station film. In January there is an intention to update members on progress concerning the climate action plan. There was a suggestion that all members could get used to bringing their lap top or tablet to help avoid the printing of so many supporting papers. In this instance members were requested to please inform the Clerk in advance to help meeting planning. All CAG associated Councils have now endorsed their part of the walking and cycling plan.

CLERK

CLERK

75.3 **Cllr Foxwell – Ukrainian Refuge** – Cllr Foxwell spoke in support of further backing for the Ukrainian refuge and the Clerk suggested the group considered submitting a grant request to SPC.

CLERK

75.4 Cllr S Alexander - Joint Parishes Youth Committee update following recent meetings and to agree the recommendation concerning next years 'Memorandum of Understanding'.

75.4.1 Cllr S Alexander updated on the huge progress involved with the Youth Service programme and its administration. JPYC Members and staff are actively discussing Key Performance Indicators, are receiving/ providing more regular reports for all members (now to be half termly), and with further policies, contracts and procedures put in place and receiving JPYC approval.

75.4.2 Cllr S Alexander **proposed, seconded** by Cllr I Alexander that SPC agree the *memorandum of understanding* {as per supporting papers} & send it to F&GP subject to finance agreement. **Agreed**

CLERK

FULL/25/76 COMMUNITY MATTERS

- 76.1 To agree to discuss within an SPC working party a proposal from a resident concerning possible ideas to assist with the development of Steyning's Art and Culture** **CLERK**
- SPC had been sent a draft document which requested support for ideas associated with potential development of some lesser-known elements of Steyning's art and culture scene. It was thought that members of SPC could help with an informed discussion and the potential forming of ideas as to what could be achieved in the future, and that therefore some SPC members could join an already formed working party and to effectively help convene a first meeting in the Steyning Centre. Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that subject to the existing working party's approval, SPC agrees that their three representatives are Cllrs Johnson, Norcross and Sharp. **Agreed** **Working Party**
- 76.2 Clerk to updated on the SPC Action Plan progress** **CLERK**
- Members were brought up to date with the progress on each line of this annual plan. In particular, thanks were given to those involved in a highly successful Armistice Day event. Regards Railings renewal on the High Street, the Clerk reported the following: WSCC have a company and a quote, but the amount is prohibitively expensive. The Clerk has asked for details from the highways engineers but has not received this yet, and potentially they will not send the details on anyway. Cllr Linehan is backing this project and has helped cause some positive movement, and the Clerk is in constant touch with reps from the Steyning Society should there be a need to ask for financial assistance. WSCC may be asking for as much as 50% to go towards the cost, as the project is a higher specification than they would normally countenance. Discussions to reduce costs continue and likely this will be brought to F&GP for potential financial support.
- Cllr Johnson suggested, given the workload in the Clerk's office currently, that potentially moving the SPC Bank Account to one with greener credentials should be put back by two years. **CLERK**
- 76.3 The Steyning Grammar School, concerning the redevelopment of their site. To agree to convene a pre-meeting working party** **CLERK**
- Following the presentation, which is noted under item 71.1, there was a need to agree member representation for a working party to discuss in greater detail the schools plans. Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that SPC convene a working party to liaise with the school to discuss their development and that the SPC representatives for this working party be Cllrs Ballance, S Alexander, Hanson and Bell. **Agreed**
- FULL/25/77 PROGRESS REPORT - To receive the following ongoing items, which will be taken to next meeting** **CLERK**
- 77.1** Chair & Clerk to speak with representatives to discuss parish wide disability awareness & bring back to Full Council
- 77.2** Youth service team to make future presentation to SPC Full Council
- 77.3** Cllr Campbell to provide an apology to Council and Clerk
- 77.4** Clerk to bring back Privacy Notice amendment to future Full Council
- 77.5** Personnel Committee to compile an impact assessment on the business of the Council during the sanctions period
- 77.6** Clerk's office to transfer pre 2000 signed Minutes hard copies to Chichester Records Office
- 77.7** Digital screen electrical supply query to be brought back to Community Committee
- 77.8** Subject Access Requests to be dealt with by the Clerk
- 77.9** To meet representatives from Lassay-les-Chateaux and convene a working party to discuss potential twinning idea
- FULL/25/78 CORRESPONDENCE AND INFORMATION ITEMS**
- 78.1** Cllr Foxwell notified concerning the passing of a well-respected resident - Mr Peter Thorogood
- 78.2** Official opening of the White bridge to take place on the 21st Nov and at 10.30am

FULL/25/79 CONFIDENTIAL SESSION

Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Balance that SPC resolve, under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, in accordance with Standing Orders 3d to exclude the press and public on the grounds that the confidential matters to be discussed under agenda items 14 & 15 may involve disclosure of personal or privileged information which would be inappropriate to put in the public domain. **Agreed**

FULL/25/80 SPC COMMUNITY AWARDS

80.1 To agree upon the recipients of this year's SPC Community Awards - to be announced at the Chairman's Function

Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that SPC agree to two nominations for the Community Award out of the many discussed {Names to be revealed and awarded at the Chairman's function on the 12th December}. **Agreed**

FULL/25/81 STAFFING MATTERS

81.1 To agree recommendations concerning SPC salary & wage payments for the 2025/26 financial year

Cllr Norcross **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Bell that SPC agree to the recommendations as per noted within the minutes of the 30th September Personnel Committee meeting, concerning staff members rising up their pay scales due to passing their appraisals, and as per contractual agreements – These staff being the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk and the Administrative Assistant. **Agreed**

FULL/25/82 DATE OF THE NEXT FULL COUNCIL MEETING: 19th January 2026 at 7.30pm

Meeting closed at 9.48 pm

Signed by the Chairman Date 19th January 2026

A recording of this meeting is available at - [https://youtu.be/ tT4Ojbx0h4](https://youtu.be/tT4Ojbx0h4)