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MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 14th APRIL 2026 AT 7.30PM

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

Members of the Public in attendance: **5**
Meeting commenced: **7:32 pm**

DRAFT MINUTES

ACTIONS

F&GP/25/59 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
59.1 Apologies were received from Cllrs Norcross, Trundle, Foxwell and Johnson.

F&GP/25/60 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**
60.1 None

F&GP/25/61 **QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR {in summary}**
61.1 None

F&GP/25/62 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**
62.1 Cllr Sharp **proposed**, **seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that the draft minutes of the meeting held on the 10th March 2026 be agreed as a true and fair record. **Agreed**

F&GP/25/63 **MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS – *These items taken as read***
63.1 Clerk's office to complete Cil payment for MPF interpretation board project **– Actioned**

63.2 200 hedging plants potted with volunteer support **– Actioned**

63.3 MPF Access improvements progressed **– Actioned**

63.4 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee convened to discuss Cricket Club and School plans – **Actioned**

63.5 CCTV Project working party to be convened **– Actioned / See item 65.7**

63.6 £100 Grant to SCO and £67.80 grant to Steyning PPG processed and groups informed – **Actioned**

63.7 4 Sight Vision Support group – unsuccessful application responded to **– Actioned**

63.8 Worthing Table Tennis group – unsuccessful application responded to **– Actioned**

63.9 S&D Good Neighbours Group contacted to discuss further grant application details **– See item 64.2**

63.10 S&D Partnership grant processed and group informed **– Actioned**

63.11 Clerk to contact Cambridgeshire FOI member of public to discuss matters via phone call **– Actioned**

63.12 Cricket Club working party to be convened to progress application for Lease and new build **– Actioned**

63.13 Action Plan Risk Assessment comments amended **– Actioned**

63.14 Potential data breach scenario dealt with through the ICO **– Actioned**

63.15 District Cllrs to assist with gaining understanding of Sports Centre lease agreement **– See item 65.5**

63.16 In-House Finance and Governance review to be completed **– Actioned / See item 65.6**

63.17 A3 Conservation interpretation Boards to be introduced to Abbey Road **– Actioned**

63.18 SPC finance signatory amendments to take place in March 2026 **– See item 65.3**

63.19 Steyning Grammar School development discussions and communications to continue **– Actioned**

63.20 CCTV project to be further discussed with contractors on site **– See item 65.7**

F&GP/25/64 FINANCIAL MATTERS.

64.1 To potentially agree to a grant application from the Steyning Community Table **CLERK**

{This item brought forward by the Chair as group representatives were in the room}
Four residents were in attendance and spoke in support of their newly formed group and their grant application. It was suggested that the Steyning Community Partnership Group could help cover the groups insurance. Though Cllrs were generally supportive, there was a feeling that more information was required in terms of the business plan and proposed financing of the operation, and it was suggested that the group representatives see the Clerk separately to enable a potential resubmission before the next F&GP meeting.

64.2 To potentially agree to a grant application from the Steyning & District Good Neighbours Association {This item brought forward by the Chair as group representatives were in the room} **CLERK**

A committee member from the group was in attendance and spoke in support of their application. Members were supportive but remained concerned that the operation appeared to be losing money, and needed to know more about precisely what the grant would be used for and then how the operation was going to remain solvent, over the longer period. The Clerk was asked to write to the Chairman of the group to outline the committees requirements.

64.3 To approve the list of SPC payments for February 2026.

Members posed questions to the Clerk in consideration of payments covering this period.
Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that SPC accepts the February 2026 SPC Payments List. **Agreed**

64.4 F&GP Income and Expenditure report for February 2026.

Members interrogated many aspects and budget lines from the report and the Clerk responded to these questions. Overall it was noted that the income and expenditure totals were in line with expectation for this time of year. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr I Alexander that the F&GP Income and Expenditure report for February 2026 be accepted. **Agreed**

64.5 Progress on the 2025/26 SPC Action Plan. **CLERK**

The Clerk updated on progress with 3 months to go in the current project year.

64.6 To consider initial preferred projects for the 2026/27 Business Plan / Action Plan. **CLERK**

The Clerk had produced an initial list as a supporting paper based upon previous discussions at all the SPC committees, and members began to consider their options for agreement. Instead of putting money towards redeveloping the small play area on the MPF, members preference was to upgrade the Main Play Area, and this will be taken to Community Committee.
Members wondered about the nature of the *Action List*, and whether it needs to be split into *Projects* and *Office Tasks*, or that it is a *Work List*. The Draft Plan will be discussed further in all SPC Committee meetings.

64.7 To consider some proposed new SPC Earmarked Reserves subsequent to End of Year review. **CLERK**

The Clerk had produced a supporting paper detailing the request for two unspent budgets being earmarked for the next financial year. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that SPC accepts the *earmarking* of *£9,435 for Special Projects* and {when finally calculated at Year End reconciliation} the left over amount for *Youth Services* being re-earmarked {potentially between £1,200 and £2,100}. **Agreed**

64.8 **The SPC Cil reports for 2025/26.** Two supporting papers detailing proposed year end draft HDC and SDNP Cil Reports were briefly discussed. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that the two draft Cil reports be approved and published by SPC. **Agreed** **CLERK**

F&GP/25/65 GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY MATTERS

65.1 **Members to consider the External Audit Report response and agree any actions** **CLERK**

65.1.1 There were 4 recommendations highlighted within the External Auditors Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the Year ending 31 March 2025. The Clerk had supplied a number of supporting papers including the Audit report, a briefing note, an explanation as to what Equality Impact Assessments were, two examples of assessments from other council's and a draft Equality Impact Assessment for the Chandlers Way Project produced retrospectively and as per suggested by the Auditors recommendation.

65.1.2 Members discussed the matter. The first two recommendations concerned the fact that the Council did not follow its own SPC Finance Regulations properly in terms of in-house auditing procedure. This was because the SPC Finance Risk Assessment was misaligned with the details noted within the finance Regulations, and this matter had been discussed and already resolved at the September F&GP meeting when both policies were amended.

65.1.3 The third point recommended reviewing the planning steps taken in relation to the Chandlers Way Play Park and completing an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) – this being appropriate to the size and scale of the park, and consider any relevant findings. Members understood that though protected characteristics during the planning process for the replacement of the Chandlers Way slide had been considered, there had not been a formal assessment undertaken at the time and its findings discussed. As suggested, the Clerk had produced a retrospective EIA for the Play Park as suggested by the External Auditor. Members discussed the Assessment and its findings. There was agreement that the EIA produced was adequate but ideally would need a scope of works and background information relating to this project, and all future projects as standard, and that this should be included an amended document which could go to Full Council. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that the Equality Impact Assessment drafted as per supporting paper, and to include amendments as stated {above}, be recommended to Full Council for approval. **Agreed** **CLERK**

65.1.4 The fourth recommendation noted that, going forward, written notes, records or reports are kept of any Equality Impact Assessment needing to be undertaken so that the resultant decision can be seen to logically follow on from that assessment. And that the necessary characteristics and other relevant matters be considered. Members thought that a procedure ensuring EIA's were always considered for projects could be incorporated into the annual SPC Business Pan and be part of the process for assessing each of the projects identified for development each year and as per designated within the Action Plan. Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr I Alexander that going forward SPC will make sure that within every Action Plan which lists projects there is a requirement for Equality Impact Assessments to be considered. **Agreed** **CLERK**

65.2 **Chair to update concerning Cricket Club working party and progress of this project**
The Chair relayed the fact that a number of Cllrs had now seen the new Clubhouse plans, and it appeared most of the issues raised within objections raised appear to have been dealt with.

65.3 **SPC Signatory considerations and if necessary any suggested associated amendments to SPC Finance regs.** Members considered two options, and finalised the discussion whilst considering What this meant in terms of future convening of In-house auditing meetings. Cllr S Alexander proposed, seconded by Cllr Sharp that Cllr Bell and Cllr Sharp be agreed as the two new SPC signatories. **Agreed** **CLERK**

65.4 **Community Governance Review**
Members had asked the Clerk to write to other nearby Parish Councils to seek opinions and suggest the convening of a meeting to discuss potentially reaching a joint agreement. 3 out of 4 had since replied positively to the suggestion with one response still awaited. **CLERK**

65.5 **Update concerning *Devolution* planning** **CLERK**
The Clerk updated that the proposed Business plan was yet to be drafted due to time constraints. There is agreement, however, on SPC being involved with initial discussions concerning the Sports Centre with the current contract expiring in December 2027.

65.6 **Update concerning the latest in-house finance audit review** **CLERK**
Cllrs Sharp and S Alexander came into the office to undertake an in-house audit on the 7th April and both Cllrs reported on a full and successful completion of the process.

65.7 **To consider recommendations form the CCTV working party** **CLERK**
65.7.1 The CCTV working party met on the 10th April and their recommendations including an amended consultation result paper be taken forward to the F&GP committee, and these papers were presented as supporting papers. Members then reviewed these documents
Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that SPC put out the results of the consultation as per supporting paper on SPC Website and via SPC social media. **Agreed**
65.7.2 Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that following the results of the consultation, Full Council agree to take this project forward and progress with {the working party} getting a new quote for the works to be completed. **Agreed** **CLERK**

F&GP/25/66 **ONGOING ITEMS** - The following items will be taken to the next F&GP meetings

66.1	*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**
66.2	*F&GP/24/53.4 Spotlights onto the Clock Tower as a proposed project to be brought back*	**CLERK**
66.3	*F&GP/24/53.7 Clerk to contact WSCC to obtain advice in consideration of WSCC property disposals policy*	**CLERK**
66.4	*F&GP/24/53.7 Clerk to contact NALC to obtain legal advice behind note LTN 56*	**CLERK**
66.5	*F&GP/24/53.10 Clerk to install double socket in Clock Tower for future camera installation*	**CLERK**
66.6	*F&GP/24/53.10 SPC to publish strategy for the future of clock tower clock-face future renewal*	**CLERK**
66.7	*F&GP/24/55.3 Staff & Cllr Data Protection training date & trainer confirmed with Cllr S Alexander to assist*	**CLERK**

F&GP/25/67 **INFORMATION/CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS**
67.1 The Chair updated re previous Youth Service provider insolvency. He had been in touch with the Liquidators and found that they were still to resolve the situation

F&GP/25/68 **CONFIDENTIAL SESSION**
68.1 Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Bell to 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 item 69 may involve disclosure of personal or privileged information which would be inappropriate to put in the public domain. **Agreed**

F&GP/25/69 **GOVERNANCE MATTERS**
69.1 **To discuss the criteria and items associated with a new Cricket Club Lease, so that a draft document can be requested from the designated solicitor.** The Cricket Club working party had compiled a confidential supporting paper and members discussed the details. **CLERK**
Cllr Sharp **proposed, seconded** by Cllr S Alexander that the SPC agree that the draft document presented as a supporting paper, plus agreed amendments, by sent via the Clerk (when the Club house plans are available) to the SPC Solicitor to enable the first drafting of a new Cricket Club Lease. **Agreed**

F&GP/25/70 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 7th July 2026 @7.30pm.**

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.50pm

Signed **…………………………………………………** **Date 7th July 2026**
Chair

A video recording of this meeting can be found using this link: https://youtu.be/MGI0FheDSfc