

# Steypning Parish Council



The Steyning Centre, Fletcher's Croft, Steyning,  
West Sussex, BN44 3XZ

[www.steyningpc.gov.uk](http://www.steyningpc.gov.uk)  
[www.thesteyningcentre.co.uk](http://www.thesteyningcentre.co.uk)

Telephone: 01903 812042

## **EOM MEETING OF THE STEYNING FULL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 3RD NOVEMBER 2016 AT 7.30PM IN THE STEYNING CENTRE**

Present : Cllrs Muncey, Northam, Lloyd, Willet, Pearcey, Muggeridge, Trundle, Picking, , Hanson,  
S Sullivan, G Sullivan, , Goldsmith

Clerk : Liz Trundle

Members of the Public : NUMBER TBC

### **MINUTES**

<b>FULL/16/136 136.1</b>	<b>APOLOGIES</b> Cllr Bowell, Cllr Syed	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>FULL/16/137 137.1</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</b> None	
<b>FULL/16/138 138.1</b>	<b>QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR</b> Nick Hempelman, Sussex Produce Centre, estimated that car parking charges for visitors would reduce business in the High Street by around 20-25%, killing a corresponding number of businesses. He pointed out that in 2015 he ran a petition against the possibility of building a supermarket on Newlands Garden car park which resulted in 2,924 signed objections. He urged the PC to support what local people have said and emphasised that the sole benefit of a recent 20% increase in business rates was free parking.	
<b>138.2</b>	A resident commented that the High Street car park was historically 'gifted' to the town by the Acton family and to his knowledge there had been no change to the freehold. Mr [TBC] requested legal clarification therefore to the use and maintenance of the car park. Cllr Willet pointed out that use and maintenance not an assumption of freehold.	
<b>138.3</b>	A resident stressed that the High Street could be compared to a 'pack of cards' and that making a change in one area would have a knock on affect on all businesses. Mr [TBC] stressed that free parking drew	

people into the town and that the one remaining supermarket could potentially close if charges were imposed. He urged HDC to cover parking costs.

- 138.4** Michael Cromer requested clarification of what the increase in District rate would cover. Cllr Lloyd stressed that charges could not be avoided and Cllr Willet pointed out that £28,000 of the Government £4 million deficit would come through parking.
- 138.5** Kate Cover requested confirmation that the WSCC would be making the final decision on parking charges and Cllr Barling confirmed that this would be the case.
- 138.6** David Lawrence of White Horse Square asked how many other District car parks would be facing charges. Cllr Barling said that around 10 car parks would be affected. Cllr Lloyd stressed that the HDC wished to make the charging system as uniform as possible across the District. Cllr Muncey pointed out that Storrington and Billingshurst are proposing different systems of charging, and that although HDC aimed to bring all charging systems in line this was not essential.
- 138.7** Alan Marsh, Chair, Steyning Chamber of Commerce, questioned whether an increase in the precept would be extended to Bramber and, if so, whether this would reduce the impact on Council Tax. Cllr Barling clarified that this would not be the case and that, as far as he understood it, Bramber was unlikely to increase the precept to cover parking charges in its own (relatively small) car park.
- 138.8** Ian Alexander, Steyning Community Partnership, requested clarification of the costs that Steyning would be taking on. Cllr Willet reiterated the proposed three-tier system (see 3.1) and that the cost of running the car parks would be more than that received in charges.

**FULL/16/139** **RURAL CAR PARKS**  
**139.1** **INTRODUCTION**

3.1 – Cllr Muncey, Chair of PC Highways & Lighting committee, briefed the meeting on the background to the issue of potential parking charges in Steyning:

Currently HDC own and operate Fletchers Croft, Newlands Gardens & High Street car parks, used by residents, local people and tourists. Car parking charges have been raised in the past but it has always been felt that the car parks should remain free to protect local business and avoid parked cars clogging the roads.

In September the PC was informed that HDC was set to impose charges as part of its aim to recoup a £4 million shortfall of Government backing. HDC itemised the cost of operating the car parks at a total of £35,200/year. It suggested that the car parks should either be taken over by the PC or that the HDC should impose a three-tier system of charges.

- Resident permits for two hours parking in any HDC rural community towns at a yearly charge of £12 for the first household car, free for the second and £6 for the third
- Outside visitor charge of 75p/hour
- Long-term permits at a cost of £130/year

The HDC also stressed that it wished to make the system of car parking charges uniform across HDC communities

In October 2016 Steyning PC ran a survey to gain feedback of local views. The survey was completed by 900 local households and business establishments. A total of 733 favoured retaining free parking with a levy on the precept to cover costs, as opposed to the HDC three-tier charging system.

WSCC Cllr Barling, emphasised the influence that both Steyning PC and its HDC representatives (Cllrs Lloyd and Willet) could have on the decision taken by County on parking charges. He therefore urged as many of those present to attend a County discussion on parking charges on 23 November at 7pm at Storrington & Sullington Community Centre. Both Steyning PC and HDC require County Council consent to proceed with parking charge plans. Cllr Barling said that he would use the debate this evening to informally advise the relevant County committee

- 139.2** Referring to the two sets of figures currently received by the PC regarding the running of the car parks (the latest being emailed to councillors on 2 November, just a day before the EOM), Cllr Lloyd pointed out that in order to accommodate a 'sinking fund' to cover maintenance and enforcement of the car parks, he thought that it was unlikely that the increase in Band D precept would be less than £25.32/year. However he saw no reason why the District couldn't take on enforcement and maintenance if the PC were to run the car parks. He stated that the cost for this would be £15,000/annum covering 21 Hours/week
- 139.3** Cllr Muncey pointed out that the original HDC financial breakdown received by the PC stated that maintenance and enforcement would be excluded if HDC continued to run the car parks, but that the latest figures (received on 2 November) stated that these would be included. The situation is therefore unclear and as there is a discrepancy between the financial costs issued HDC.
- 139.4** Cllr Pearcey urged the PC to consider taking ownership of the three car parks in order to 'maintain our own destiny'. Cllr Northam questioned whether the PC had the competency & skills to do this and Cllr Muncey stressed that as a team of volunteers with minimal clerking capacity she felt that this was not a viable option and should be cancelled out straight away.
- 139.5** Cllr Pearcey pointed out that with the closure of two of the three town banks, any further changes to the High Street need to be paced. Cllr Hanson felt that with a thriving leisure centre and care home in

the town it would be very unfair to charge for parking and that everyone needed to contribute to keep the car parks free-of-charge. Cllr Muggeridge also emphasised that the survey response had been decisive in its opinion & that the introduction of a scratch-card payment system would be confusing & probably result in increased congestion/ illegal parking. This was echoed by Cllr S Sullivan who felt that charges would increase illegal parking particularly during times of congestion eg during 'school run'

**139.6** In summary , Cllr Lloyd said that he felt it was lamentable that we were being asked to make a decision on the basis of inconsistent & unclear financial figures [supplied by HDC – see 5.1/2] & that the current meeting could only result in a proposal in principle until the figures were clarified. He also felt that, although an increase in precept would impose an 'unfair' charge on non-drivers, he felt that most residents would prefer to ensure that Steyning retains a thriving High Street with free-parking available.

**139.7** Cllr Muncey **proposed** and **seconded** by Cllr Pearcey that the PC write to the HDC voicing its concerns about the negative effects of parking charges on the town's businesses, residents and visitors and stating that it is unable to make a firm decision due to the discrepancy in financial figures submitted to Steyning PC by HDC for running, maintaining and enforcement of Newlands Gardens, High Street and Fletcher's Croft car parks.

**139.8** Cllr Northam **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Willet, that the letter be drafted by Cllrs Muncey and Northam. The proposals were **accepted** unanimously.

**139.9** Cllr Barling also urged that the Clerk researched and clarified the freehold ownership of the three car parks in question.

**FULL/16/140** Date of next meeting – 7.30pm on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2016

Meeting closed 8.50pm

Signed .....  
Chairman

Date