MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 8th May 2012 AT 7.30 P.M

PRESENT:  Clr Rogers,(Chairman)
  Clrns Barling, Lloyd, Toomey, Ness-Collins, Alexander & Marshall
  Clr Toms – S.O 3(c)
  2 members of the public were present
  No members of the press
  The Clerk was in attendance.

1.  APOLOGIES
1.1 There were apologies for absence from Councillors Hoare & Devlin.

2.  DECLARATIONS
2.1 There were no declarations of personal interest from Councillors.

3.  MINUTES
The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd April 2012 were Agreed and signed by the Chairman.

4.  MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS
4.1 The Leader of WSCC has been written to regarding the Community Initiative Funding and the response is that the criteria is the same across the county, there is no appeals process and it is recommended that should we wish to place an application again that we speak to our County Councillor in the first instance. The Clerk to respond to other parishes who supported our query with the answer from WSCC.
4.2 HDC has been written to regarding the continuation of the Wardens contracts.
4.3 The revised Standing Orders were circulated to councillors and these will be for agreement at May Full Council meeting.
4.4 The Tennis and Bowls club have been informed about their grant towards the CCTV cameras.
4.5 Contact with WS Mediation Service is ongoing.

5.  NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDEN SCHEME REPORT/LAT REPORT
5.1 The Wardens report was previously circulated to councillors.
Punctuated by the Easter School break April was once again a quiet month for Anti-Social behaviour. No further Arson attacks have taken place. We have had a few problems with skaters in the Fletchers Croft Car Park and have had to move groups on that were using bollards and bins as improvised ramps.
We continue our patrols along Coxham Lane at end of school day following complaints about groups of pupils congregating outside of residents houses. We have spoken to two officers from parking services about parking congestion outside of Steyning Grammar and primary school and Steyning high street.
The Dog fouling campaign continues to gain pace as we now have had leaflets printed and Junior Wardens are delivering them door to door in the area. Junior Wardens have also taken part in a photo-shoot and press release as part of the campaign.

We have stepped up patrols in Toomey Rd following reports of domestic disturbances.

We have attended a second Youth Provision meeting in the wake of the rationalisation of services provided by West Sussex County Council. Officers from the Anti-social behaviour team are addressing issues involving harassment in the Penlands Rd Area.

There has been no pre LAT meeting this month and the next meeting is scheduled for early June.

6. INFORMATION ITEMS/QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

6.1 The CCTV cameras for the Memorial Playing Field are due to be installed week beginning 21st May.

6.2 Cllr Rogers gave an update on the recent Economic Development meeting with HDC and WSCC and reported that this meeting had been attended by Nigel Fitzsimmons –Horsham Town Economic Officer, The Steyning Community Partnership, Cllr Tim Lloyd, George Cockman, Nigel Patterson. Discussions surrounded the background to measurements of the economy in the District. There was a district wide focus on jobs and job creation. 54% of businesses in the district are home based. There are 550 businesses in our area. Unemployment currently at 1.6%. There was some discussion about clustering with surrounding parishes. There is no funding available from HDC to help with any initiatives. The district has an ageing population. Roger Patterson mentioned car parking and the possibility of moving responsibility for car park to Local Councils.

Cllr Toomey questioned whether bus services and subsidies were mentioned but this was not discussed at this meeting. It was agreed to place bus services on next H & L agenda.

Cllr Barling also met with the new chairman of Chamber of Trade and it was an interesting and informative discussion. The CoT will be trying to reach out to traders in surrounding areas as well as Steyning. They talked about another Microbiz show in the future.

Cllr Ness-Collins reported that the Wild flower garden at Abbey Road was now underway and has been planted. Committee expressed thanks to Karon Foxwell for the initiative and for organising and fund raising.

Cllr Alexander said the Scouts have chosen MPF for their community week topic and will be tidying up, painting the gate, varnishing benches and anything else they can include, weather permitting.

Questions from the floor:

- Would like to thank the PC for pushing for the Briton’s Croft options with Saxon Weald.

Cllr Barling said they had visited a Saxon Weald development of new homes for older people called Skylark and Nightingdale and were very impressed. There will be a consultation by Saxon Weald on 20th June at Steyning Centre. Public will be invited and the event will be published in Your Steyning.

- Would like to comment that the Traffic Officer that visited at the H & L committee was very good and involved the public which was very useful.

- Is there an update on the skatepark.
None at present but there should be an update on this available for Monday at Full Council.

- With the devolvement of Highway powers there is a need to be aware that the contractors do undertake the work properly if it becomes our responsibility.

There is no decision on any devolvement and we are at a very early stage. There is a lot to be discussed first.

7. STANDING ORDERS

7.1 It has been suggested that a change be made to Standing Orders in respect of the Steyning Centre committee and that this committee be re-titled Steyning Centre Management Working group and that in future it reports through Finance & Community committee for any policy or financial decisions required that exceed normal budgeted expenditure. This working group would continue to meet at its normal cycle but could be flexible about the timing of the meetings. This was discussed and Agreed. The Clerk and Cllr Barling to amend Standing Orders for agreement at the next meeting.

7.2 The current Code of Members Conduct ceased to exist on 1st April 2012 and Parish Councils are expected to adopt a new Code of Conduct on 1st July 2012. Horsham District Council is currently working on a new model code for both the District and Parishes but it is unlikely that this will be complete by 1st July. The Localism Act requires that all councils amend, adopt and maintain a Code of Conduct and the advice is that during this interim period Parish Councils agree to continue under the current Code of Conduct. It was Agreed to continue with the current code.

7.3 HDC is currently revising their Code of Conduct and it is their intention to issue a model for use by all parishes. Some of the delays in delivering this new code have been due to the lack of new regulations being published by government with regard to the Register of Members interests. It is expected that the new regulations for Register of Members interests will be available in May and HDC will put forward their recommendations for a new Code on 15th May with agreement for 29th June. Thereafter Parish Council will be able to adopt the code for themselves. The updates for councillor Register of Members Interests will still need to be signed as usual at the Full Council meeting in May but at some stage later, when available, a completely new form is required to be completed by all Councillors.

8. ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS

None for this meeting.

9. APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT AID

There are currently no requests for grant aid.

10. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

10.1 Cllr Lloyd said there was no new progress on the Community Plan and he will report at next meeting.

10.2 Cllr Barling said we had met with WSCC and Upper Beeding and Bramber regarding devolution of some small Highway functions. This was at a very early stage. We stated that we could be interested in this initiative but needed the funding and this could not be expected to be undertaken by volunteers. WSCC are to come back with a breakdown of expenditure in the parishes for these small
works and we could then explore in more detail. Cllr Rogers said there are concerns on this with the administrative and organisational resources and we need to look at this very carefully and we could find that in taking over functions we were raising expectations and it may not always be possible to exceed the current work done and frequencies. Cllr Toomey highlighted the extra administration this could create.

Cllr Alexander reported that the Neighbourhood Panel had met and the three current priorities were – to get higher press coverage, parking and dog fouling. Some of the panel members are meeting with BCDO about this year’s event.

10.3 Cllr Rogers reported that the recent Youth Review meeting was well attended by the school, churches and HDC. The School have stated that they do wish a youth service to continue at the Cuthman’s Centre. There now needs to be a lot of project work done to move the visions forward. There will be a joint meeting with Storrington to see if there are some joint initiatives. May need to discuss what contribution the Parish Council’s would be able to make and also the churches and other organisations to be approached as possible sources of funding.

10.4 Cllr Rogers attended the Annual Horsham District Community Partnership meeting where among other matters they discussed ‘Think Horsham website’ and Health and Well Being.

11. FINANCIAL REPORT AND STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

11.1 There were no petty cash payments in April.
The final year end Income & Expenditure statement and the finance report for April has been circulated to councillors.
The Risk Assessments that form part of the Annual Return have been reviewed by the Clerk and Chairman and whether any actions resulted from this review. The Chairman asked committee to re-affirm the Risk Assessments and that no actions are required. This was Agreed.
The Council’s Standing Orders were amended and adopted by this committee in March of this year. Committee are asked to agree the new Standing Orders and the existing Financial Standing Orders. This was Agreed.
Mulberry & Co. have carried out our Internal Audit for the last 3 years and their performance has always been satisfactory. Committee are asked to re-affirm their performance and to re-appoint them for the ensuing year. This was Agreed.
Cllr Rogers and the committee thanked the clerk for all the work she does for the audits.
Cllr Rogers suggested that new Councillors might like to contact the clerk for a brief explanation of the accounts. The clerk will send an email.

12. CORRESPONDENCE
- Ltr WSCC re: Purple bus and requests for the service
- Ltr Steyning First Responders thanking us for the grant
- Ltr WSCC re: Better Broadband to the County and a request that we all visit the website and complete the questionnaire.

13. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE Levy
There was nothing to add to the list this month.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 3rd July 2012 at 7.30 pm.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30 p.m.