

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE HELD ON
TUESDAY 8th OCTOBER 2013 AT 7.30 P.M**

PRESENT: Cllr Lloyd - chairman
Cllrs Bowell, Toomey, Toms, Rogers and Ness-Collins
6 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 Devlin, Alexander & Hoare

2. DECLARATIONS

2.1 There were no declarations of interest from councillors.

3. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were no requests for dispensations.

4. MINUTES

It was **proposed** by Cllr Toms and **seconded** by Cllr Bowell that the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd September 2013 be adopted as a true record of the meeting. **This was Agreed.**

5. MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS

5.1. An energy certificate for the Steyning Centre is displayed.

5.2 Check Section 106 funding for water boiler. Ongoing.

5.3 Review of procedures – agenda item.

5.4 SiB grant to be included as part of budget procedure – ongoing.

5.5 Greg Charman – Wardens meeting – ongoing – to chase.

5.6 Older People in Isolation – agenda item.

5.7 Quotes for new boiler Steyning Centre – ongoing

5.8 Play equipment repairs on order.

5.9 Comments on revised Finance Regulations, no further comments have been received and these will now be finalised and circulated.

5.10 Cheque for St. Barnabas has been sent.

5.11 Frequency of consideration of grants to be agenda'd for November.

5.12 We now have the full complement of 52 stalls for Showcase and 7 have been accommodated from the waiting list. There are still 13 currently on the waiting list.

5.13 Information on vulnerable groups has been sent to HDC.

5.14 Salary increases have been implemented.

6. NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDEN SCHEME REPORT/LAT REPORT

6.1 The Neighbourhood Wardens report was circulated to councillors and is attached to these minutes.

There was no LAT meeting this month this is being held this week.

7. QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

The meeting was suspended to allow questions from members of the public.

Two written questions have been received:

7.1 What is the anticipated annual total cost of the proposed skatepark and its ancillary car park at the MPF with particular reference to the following:-

- 1 Insurance - £212 pa
- 2 Safety Inspections (annual and weekly) – with existing safety inspections
- 3 CCTV
 - a) Current capital cost amortisation – the existing CCTV array was never intended to cover the facility
 - b) Upgraded system additional capital cost amortisation – see (a) but new array costs unknown as we have yet to decide what CCTV will be required
 - c) Maintenance and insurance of existing system – not relevant to the facility
 - d) Additional maintenance and insurance of upgraded system – unknown until we have decided what CCTV will be required
 - e) Broadband fee – none, as existing
 - f) Data Protection compliance including fees and staff administration time calculated at £30 per hour – Firstly, we do not calculate hours at £30 per hour but at £25 and secondly, data protection compliance will come within the clerk’s remit
- 4 Graffiti removal – as required but done by Wardens where possible so no cost. If additional treatment is required this is on a job by job basis so unknown.
- 5 Repairs – First year under guarantee. Minor repairs only expected and these will be done by our maintenance staff and charged out at £20 per hour on a job by job basis.
- 6 Litter and leaves removal (including cleaning up hedgerows if there is no lavatory provision) – Litter removal will be within the new MPF contract. Toilets will be provided. Any maintenance of hedgerows will be that normally provided within the MPF contract.
- 7 Lavatory facilities
 - a) Capital amortisation if new facilities are to be provided - none
 - b) Cleaning and security provisions if to be provided at the pavilion or in new facility – within existing cleaning contract, but could be small additional cost. Unknown until operational.
- 8 Additional grass cutting costs (bunds cannot be cut using the tractor) – within contract for MPF.
- 9 Community warden and/or PCSO involvement in both monitoring and taking part in management meeting. This will form part of their remit.

10 Clerk's time in administering all aspects of the project calculated at £30 ph, specifying how the number of hours has been estimated – Not calculated at £30 per hour but at £25 IF outside of expected normal workload.

11 Any others – none

The insurance only known cost. Wherever a skateboard facility is sited within the town there would be costs.

7.2 Why does Regulation 9 permit the Parish Council to seek financial reimbursement by reducing the value of pension benefits and yet the Parish Council has decided not to do this - merely to refuse to return pension contributions (which the employee is not entitled to anyway)?

9. Exclusion of rights to return contributions due to fraud or grave misconduct Regulation A47(2)

If termination of employment is due to a fraudulent offence, grave misconduct, negligence or any work related criminal offence that results in financial loss to the employer then the employer will seek to reduce the value of pension benefits commensurate with the offence.

- Regulation 9 did have some wording missing which was not picked up by WSCC but, following discussions with them, we have made the necessary amendment which is now on the website as follows.

This will be referred to the Finance & Community committee on a case by case basis and SPC may exercise the right to refuse to return pension contributions to the member with less than 3 months service, if the employment is terminated due to fraud, grave misconduct or work related criminal offence.

7.3 The chairman then invited questions from the floor.

- The recent leaflet that when out when was this discussed.
- This question will need to be put to Full Council. At the working group meeting we make recommendations to council or committee. There was a lot of concern in the community and we realised as a parish council we had not put out any information for a long time and felt it appropriate to do so on what we believed to be correct and put our position. It had to be produced within a very tight limited timescale.
 - How much did the full page in Your Steyning cost.
- Nothing.
 - Is there a budget for the repair of benches.
- This is for Playing Fields but there is no dedicated budget.

The meeting was reconvened.

8. INFORMATION ITEMS

Cllr Lloyd said that it was time to be thinking about our Millennium Community Awards for this year and called for any nominations to be sent to the Clerk by the end of October for consideration at the November F & C meeting. This will be put on the website.

A letter of thanks has been received from St. Barnabas for the grant.

On the 14th August 2014 the country will be commemorating the outbreak of WW1. There will be lots of information from HDC. This will be put on the agenda for next meeting for councillors to feed in any ideas to the clerk.

Cllr. Bowell raised concerns over the current situation with regard to the planning application for skateboard facility.

Cllr Lloyd declared a prejudicial interest and left the room.

Cllr Ness-Collins proposed that Cllr Rogers should take over temporarily as Chair this was seconded by Cllr Toomey. **All agreed.**

An individual has some information about the second acoustic survey but feels uncomfortable about coming forward openly with it. We want to resolve the issue and don't need to know the person's name but do need to deal with the situation. It resolves around our desire to ensure that people didn't feel that there was somebody on the field with an electronic device that could have been a camera. If that part of the acoustic survey is in dispute so we need to try and take this out of the equation if required and to agree an amount of money if this should prove necessary to close this issue. I would like to propose an amount of money to do this part of the survey again if we need to. This should be no more than £500.

If the allegation is that the council falsified the situation for the sound test they must make it in the open. They should make it clearly and identify themselves.

I do not believe the Council has been accused of asking for additional noise to be made. A witness has said they were asked to make more noise by a person unknown. We are just trying to resolve the possible situation by having the survey done again if necessary.

I think we should do the survey again as this will always be in the background.

If we do another survey it could be seen that we are admitting that we are wrong.

Rather than looking at it that we have done something wrong is it better to get to a point where the report is reflective of the regular noise in the field otherwise there will always been concern.

If we can defuse the situation, rather than we have done something wrong is this not just recognising there are concerns and this is a way to resolve a difficult situation and is hanging over our ability to go forward.

This whole exercise is damaging to our community, if we can defuse the situation this is a good thing for us to do. I would like to see if we can or need to do another sound survey.

Alternative standard relative data could be inserted instead of a comparable situation to MPF and this could be used instead.

This would still give rise to criticism of this not being relative to MPF. I think we might owe it to the residents around the field to spend this money if necessary or required.

If we do again what will be the conditions won't we just get lots of interest and people taking note and maybe messing up the report.

This time we have to try and make sure this doesn't happen again. We will try and get an independent person to liaise with the sound engineer so that no-one will know other than these two people when the testing will be done.

Proposed by Cllr Rogers, seconded by Cllr Ness-Collins to spend up to £500, if required, for the part of the acoustic report to be re-done with an independent

observer and, to delegate to the Chairman and the Clerk to organise this. This was Agreed.

Cllr. Lloyd re-joined the meeting.

9. STEYNING CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP

Cllr Toms reported Energy certificate has now been done and is displayed. There has been no meeting this month. The Skylight damage - have only had one reply. Microphones have some information and need to discuss this. Cllrs Bowell and Toms to discuss. The quotes are in the region of £2,500.

10. ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS

10.1 None for this meeting.

11. OLDER PEOPLE IN ISOLATION

This item has been brought forward from the last meeting and Cllr Lloyd invited Cllr Rogers to report but there is no progress since last meeting so would like to carry forward to next agenda.

12. REVIEW OF PROCEEDURES

Cllr Lloyd reported that revised Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are nearly completed and will be circulated to councillors as soon as possible.

Cllr Lloyd confirmed that he has reviewed the current Risk Assessments with the clerk and there are no significant changes to last year.

Cllr Lloyd reported that the Risk Assessments needed re-formatting and he would be reviewing these with the clerk in due course. They were reviewed a couple of years ago and added to. The Risk Assessments had not been seen this year by councillors so would be circulated and brought back to next meeting for acceptance.

Cllr Lloyd was also looking at the way we prepare minutes which are getting lengthier and need to save a huge amount of the clerk's time that these take and he will put through some proposals for councillors to consider.

13. APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT AID

13.1 Steyning town Community Football Club have requested a grant to help towards the cost of either a new cash till at £250 or dishwasher at £450. Some discussion took place and councillors would like more information on what the club is doing to raise funds and bring back to the next meeting. It was thought a meeting with the club would be beneficial. Cllrs Bowell, Lloyd, Rogers to arrange this.

13.2 The Royal British Legion have requested the cost of their room hire for the Steyning Centre for their Poppy Appeal lunch and branch AGM at a cost of £106.91 as in previous years.

It was proposed by Cllr Lloyd and seconded by Cllr Rogers to grant £106.91 to the RBL as in previous years. This was Agreed.

The RBL have a budgeted grant of £160 each year towards the maintenance of the Memorial Garden. This is usually paid on receipt of an invoice. In future Cllr Lloyd proposed that payment of this grant is agreed at this committee each year as a general contribution towards the maintenance, seconded by Cllr Ness-Collins. This was Agreed.

13.3 Cllr Toms declared an interest in this item.

An application has been received from the Steyning Allotments Association for a grant for their use of the Steyning Centre for a maximum of 3 evenings per year (only when there is another booking at the centre) and for photocopying facilities. Cllr Lloyd proposed, seconded by Cllr Rogers that a grant of £135 room hire and £24 photocopying be granted.

This was Agreed.

14. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

14.1 None for this meeting.

15. BUDGET

Cllr Lloyd reported that the budget process needs to begin for 2014/15 and proposed that a working group be set up of committee chairman to bring recommendations for a draft budget back to the next F & C meeting and committee meetings, seconded by Cllr Rogers.

This was Agreed.

It may be that central government will introduce capping for the next financial year but we have no definite information on this.

16. FINANCIAL REPORT AND STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

16.1 There were no petty cash payments in September.

16.2 The Income & Expenditure statement for September will be circulated to councillors when completed.

The income and expenditure statement for August has been circulated to councillors and it was proposed by Cllr Lloyd, seconded by Cllr Toms that the expenditure and accounts for this period be agreed. This was Agreed.

16.3 As councillors are aware a new Parish Meeting is being arranged in order to call a Town Poll. As no poll cards are sent out by HDC it is felt that the Parish Council need to let the Town know this is happening. Cllr Rogers proposed, seconded by Cllr Ness-Collins that a maximum £750 be agreed to cover the cost of printing a leaflet to be hand delivered to all households by Councillors to come from reserves. This was Agreed.

16.4 The External Auditors report has been received back and states that “no matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met”. They have commented that figures in boxes 4 & 6 differ from those shown on last year’s return but that the figure in box 7 (balances and reserves for the end of year) remains unchanged. Last year a figure was recorded in box 4 (payments to employees) and should have been recorded in box 6 (total expenditure or payments), this correction was made last year and accounts for the different figures being shown this year.

The Annual Return has been circulated to Councillors and will be displayed on the notice board in accordance with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.

Cllr Lloyd proposed that committee recommend approval of the completed Annual Return and Annual Governance statement to Full Council, seconded by Cllr Rogers. This was Agreed.

16.5 A letter has been received from Smith of Derby (who service the Town Clock) offering a reduction in the annual maintenance fee if we agree to a 3,4,5 or 6 year deal. On a 3 year deal this would save us a total of approx. £107 and on 4 year deal approx. £143. It was suggested that alternative quotes be sought and bring back to committee.

17. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

There was nothing to add to the list this month.

18. PRIDE OF PLACE

This item is for all committees to think about at meetings to consider older people in the community. The disabled parking spaces in the Fletchers Croft car park have been done.

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 5th November 2013 at 7.30 pm.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.55 p.m.