

**THE FULL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
MONDAY 13<sup>th</sup> April 2015 AT 7.30 PM  
THE STEYNING CENTRE**

**Present:** Cllrs Bowell, Lloyd, Barling (also WSCC), Rogers (also HDC), Ness-Collins, Toms, Toomey, Hopkinson, Willet, Staines, Marshall, Trundle, Muncey and Muggridge.

**Members of the public:** 28

**Clerk:** Rebecca Luckin

**QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

1. Q – I think it was a shame that only 60 members of the public attended the Annual Parish Meeting when Norman Dingemans gave a very interesting talk on the SDNPA , somehow the public need to get more interested.  
A – We did thank Norman Dingemans.

Response to written question:

A written answer had been provided to a written question regarding SWAB Neighbourhood Plan.

A late written question had been received – a response will be provided when available.

**The meeting was convened at 7.34pm**

**MINUTES**

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Alexander.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF ABSENCE AND DISPENSATIONS** – there were none.
3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**
  - 3.1 Cllr Ness Collins **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Marshall that the minutes of the meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> February 2015 be accepted as a true record. **Agreed.**
4. **MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS** – the Clerk reported that:
  - 4.1 (Q2 09.02.15) Regarding SAYS, the audited accounts for 2013 / 14 have been placed on the Parish Council website, along with the SAYS Reserves Policy. Some minutes have been uploaded, with more to follow.
5. **POLICE, NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDEN AND YOUTH WORKER REPORTS**
  - 5.1 Chief Inspector Howard Hodges had provided a report, circulated to Councillors and uploaded to the website. Cllr Rogers confirmed that the new Police model

will change operations. The style of response will be very different in terms of how PCSO's are deployed. There is no cause for concern regarding emergencies, but neighbourhood policing may be affected. Steyning is unlikely to have a PCSO in future.

- 5.2** Neighbourhood Wardens provided a report for March. Circulated prior to the meeting and placed on the Parish Council website. The report covered anti-social behaviour, cannabis use and dog fouling. Wardens have taken part in Youth Club activities. A vandalised dog bin in the Church yard will be replaced by HDC.
- 5.3** Youth Worker, Emma Edwards, provided a report, display and update on her work within the SAYS area. A copy (with names and sensitive matters removed) will be placed on the Parish Council website. Future projects and work with young people were outlined. The display board will remain in the Steyning Centre for a brief time. Posters advertising events are on the SPC website. 95% of young people involved are from the Steyning area.
- Councillors thanked Ms Edwards for an excellent report and great service that Steyning are receiving.

#### **Cllr Staines arrived at 19.45pm**

#### **6. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Cllr Muggridge provided an update on the Neighbourhood Plan. The new SWAB website is available. The public consultation survey received a 25% response rate. A written question to Cllr Muggridge had been answered (the response is attached as an appendix to these minutes). The Steering Committee have concerns regarding lack of response from younger residents and will target younger adults and families. The draft survey report has been received by the Steering Group. It was noted that a significant number felt that Steyning had enough housing already, which conflicts with the purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan. A call for sites letter has been posted. Sites will be reviewed and assessed with a specific range of selection criteria. A public consultation will follow. Focus Groups will provide a community view for the Stage One Report. A youth survey and also a business survey will be drafted. Bramber will undertake a Housing Need Survey shortly. Councillors discussed the report. Evidence must be provided to the Examiner that younger people have been given every opportunity to take part. Criteria for site selection will be discussed at the Steering Group meeting of 14.04.15. There is no minimum turnout for the referendum process.

#### **7. COMMITTEE MINUTES, REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

##### **7.1 Finance & Community Committee – Minutes of 3<sup>rd</sup> March and 7<sup>th</sup> April 2015.**

Cllr Lloyd provided a summary of the meetings.

Cllr Toms **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ness Collins that the minutes of 03.03.15 be adopted. **Agreed.**

Cllr Toms **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Rogers that the minutes of 07.04.15 be adopted. **Agreed.**

Councillors considered a recommendation by F&C to adopt revised Standing Orders (following the NALC model). Subject to an agreed amendments (time limit

of meetings 2.5 hours) Cllr Lloyd **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ness-Collins that revised Standing Orders be adopted. **Agreed.**

Councillors considered a recommendation by F&C to adopt revised Financial Regulations (following the NALC model).

Cllr Lloyd **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Muncey that revised Financial Regulations be adopted. **Agreed.**

- 7.2 Highways & Lighting Committee** – Minutes of 17<sup>th</sup> February and 24<sup>th</sup> March 2015. Cllr Muncey provided a summary of the meetings, including a meeting with Mouse Lane residents to discuss drainage options and an Operation Watershed grant application. Footbridge lighting is currently being investigated along with funding. Improvements to High Street toilets are being considered. Cllr Rogers suggested that Martin Brightwell HDC was invited to H&L to discuss proposed changes by the Environment Agency in addition to attending the Bramber Annual Parish Meeting. Cllr Muncey **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Willett that both minutes be adopted. **Agreed.**

- 7.3 Playing Fields Committee** – Minutes of 24<sup>th</sup> February 2015. Cllr Ness-Collins provided a summary of the meetings, including request for noticeboard on the MPF. Full Council indicated that they agreed in principle. The matter will be discussed further by Playing Fields. An allotment holder had cut a hedge without permission. Allotment holders have been reminded of rules. Cllr Ness-Collins **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Trundle that the minutes be adopted. **Agreed.**

- 7.4 Steyning Centre Committee** – Minutes of 17<sup>th</sup> March 2015. Cllr Staines provided a summary of the meeting. Safety signage had been updated, water savers and pipes had been replaced in the gents toilets. A new caretaker had been appointed. Film nights were extremely successful and a great source of revenue. Councillors thanked residents for attending. Cllr Staines **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Toms that the minutes be adopted. **Agreed.**

- 7.5 Planning Committee** – Minutes of 17<sup>th</sup> February, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> March and 7<sup>th</sup> April. Cllr Muncey provided a summary of the meetings and noted that there was concern regarding works being undertaken in the Conservation Area, a one page leaflet will be delivered to all households in the Conservation Area reminding property owners of their obligations. Work at the Chalk Pit, Newham Lane has been reported by a member of the public to HDC Enforcement. Cllr Muncey **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Toomey that the minutes be adopted. **Agreed.**

## **8. INTERIM BANKING ARRANGEMENTS**

- 8.1** Councillors discussed Parish Council bank account signatories, to ensure continuity of business.

Cllr Howell **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ness-Collins that Cllr Howell, Cllr Muggridge, Cllr Muncey and Cllr Willett be added to the list of bank signatories.  
**Agreed.**

## **9. REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

- 9.1** Cllr Rogers summarised her time with SPC and highlighted some of the projects and achievements including High Street toilets, finger posts, Newham Gardens car park, youth service, neighbourhood wardens, grit bins, a winter weather plan, film nights and the Steyning showcase. Cllr Rogers was of the opinion that the last two years had been difficult and hoped that there would be a halt to corrosive actions against SPC. Steyning and the people of Steyning deserve better. Cllr Rogers was applauded by Councillors and members of the public.
- 9.2** Cllr Barling summarised recent initiatives by WSCC including a new website, 'Pots Tubs and Trays' – an expansion of the recycling service. New initiatives included 'The Beautiful Outdoors', a major WSCC initiative to support the economy of SDNPA to encourage visitors and upgrade the South Downs Way (and some footpaths) encouraging visitors to nearby pubs, cafes and businesses. The WSCC Highways service has been re-designed in order that it is aligned to districts. Chris Stark will cover the entire Horsham Area. The Highways website has proved a success for reporting pot holes. Church Street will be included on the 'Better Roads' programme. The Big Society Grant Fund has been expanded and the Chanctonbury Local Committee is able to offer small grants. Cllr Barling spoke regarding his six years as Councillor. He had enjoyed the experience, but wished to let everyone know that there very nearly was no Parish Council recently, since so few of the current Councillors were mindful to nominate themselves for the new term of office. He was of the opinion that the town deserved better than to lose its Parish Council. The spirit of Steyning is strong. Cllr Barling was applauded by Councillors and members of the public. The Chairman thanked Cllr Barling and Cllr Rogers for all the hard work undertaken on behalf of Steyning Parish Council.

## **10. ITEMS FOR PRESS RELEASE – none for this meeting.**

## **11. INFORMATION**

- 11.1** HDC Litter & Cleansing Team Leader had informed SPC that the paper re-cycling bank in Fletcher's Croft car park would be removed, due to the provider going into administration. Councillors will discuss at the next Highways & Lighting meeting, whether the remaining recycling banks should be removed.
- 11.2** Visitor & Tourism Group update on Walks for All project. Press release circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting and placed on the Parish Council website.
- 11.3** Path closure, Kings Barn Lane. Until a dispute is resolved and WSCC can designate the path a public right of way, the path will remain closed to members of the public.
- 11.4** Horsham Neighbourhood Policing Team confirm that at this time, there is no replacement PCSO for Steyning.

## **12. CORRESPONDENCE – none for this meeting**

**13. MEETING DATES**

**13.1 Date of Annual Full Parish Council Meeting – 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015.**

Cllr Bowell confirmed that some Councillors were stepping down and that the work of Cllrs Barling, Rogers and Cockman was much appreciated. The Chairman looked forward to working with new Councillors.

**14. CONFIDENTIAL ITEM**

Cllr Bowell **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Lloyd that the remainder of the meeting be taken in confidence under 1 d) of previous Standing Orders, OR 3 e) of revised Standing Orders. **Agreed.**

**Members of the public left the meeting at 9.10pm**

**14.1** Councillors discussed an item of correspondence received by the Parish Council and considered an appropriate course of action. The background to a tribunal, appeal and letter was outlined.

Cllr Bowell **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ness Collins that the Clerk would send a copy of the letter to the Parish Council solicitors and ask:

- a) should SPC provide a response?
- b) if so, how should SPC respond?
- c) is there a way to stop the process without causing further expenditure by SPC?
- d) can SPC cease to enter into correspondence with the sender, since the Parish Council are awaiting an appeal which is dependent upon the Dransfield V North Devon County Council case?

In order that legal advice is sought and costs are kept to a minimum, the limit on legal expenditure on this occasion should be set at £2,000. **Agreed.**

**14.2** Councillors received a performance appraisal and salary review regarding the Clerk.

**The Clerk left the meeting.**

Councillors agreed that the performance appraisal was satisfactory and that an addition salary point would be awarded, as stated in Clerk's contract of employment. Allowance had been made in the 2015 / 16 budget.

Signed: ..... Date: 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015  
Chairman

## Appendix one

With reference to your emailed written questions dated 22nd Feb 2015, I have discussed these in detail with Nick Mills & our consultants AirS before responding. We are sorry to understand that you are still concerned about the security measures in SWAB NP residents survey and the quality of the data gathered. Your preface and your four headline questions (nine questions in all) seem to overlook our stated premise that residents of the four parishes can be trusted to complete the survey as we intended and that there would be negligible/nil motivation for any deliberate "abuse". As we have already explained this survey aims to gather residents views and future needs in relation to the Neighbourhood plan. It is simply a data gathering exercise to inform our NP work, along with many other data sources; it is also not a referendum. The approach we used is similar to that used successfully in many other communities, and the security measures employed were proportionate to the potential risks. Indeed our far greater concern was whether enough SWAB households would take the time & trouble to complete just one 8 page survey at a busy time of year, rather than complete duplicates.

Anyway, I am now pleased to be able to confirm to you that there is no evidence whatever of any abuse of the SWAB survey process at all. (One resident did submit a duplicate online response from overseas apparently to prove that he could. This was then excluded from the results, as he requested. Even he would surely not suggest that other residents would take similar action to abuse the survey). We have every confidence that the scale of our overall survey responses, the high proportion returned on original printed & folded forms and much lower proportion of online responses, render any minor abuse, that hypothetically could have taken place, largely irrelevant.

We had 844 responses overall, of which 664 were paper-based and 180 online; we delivered 3434 to SWAB households, and a few more were issued individually on request only. (I personally collected or handled all the paper-based responses and only about 5 were downloaded copies).

The overall response rate was 25% compared to the number delivered to households in each parish. We are very pleased with this level of participation and we are confident that we have plenty of data to inform our eventual plan. (We used the household response rate measure generally used in NPs, as the expectation is that households will normally submit just the one form delivered to cover their joint needs) We did make clear it was also acceptable and legitimate to submit more than one survey response for the same household should the residents needs or views be significantly different and therefore warrant the extra effort to do that. We know that a few did just that. Many online responses were simply an expression of choice of media rather than "additional" responses. I am sure you will also appreciate that there are many reasons nowadays why residents currently living in one household in the area may have more than one future housing need over the lifespan of the NP; they are relevant and legitimate and far more likely than hypothetical so called "duplicates". Indeed one might ask what would be the point of taking the additional time to submit a duplicate in a survey of this scale?

The survey was designed to be "anonymous" in order to encourage every SWAB household to respond; personal contact details could be optionally added for those interested in winning the £50 cash prize. It is interesting to note that the majority of

SWAB households prioritised the privacy of their responses over their interest in a cash prize. This privacy allowed them to express their needs & particularly views more fully. There is no evidence that any non-SWAB residents completed the survey, and all but a tiny handful indicated their specific parish.

Finally, may I add on behalf of the SWAB NP Steering Group that we have a huge amount of work outstanding to produce our draft Neighbourhood Plan. Please bear in mind that we are all resident volunteers working for the common good; the future health & sustainability of our special & diverse community. We would ask you to keep yourself informed on the SWAB NP from our websites, news items, uploaded documents and occasional public events, in common with all other residents. There will be ample opportunities for our residents (& you) to ask questions at scheduled open events at appropriate times in this important community project.

Regards

Nick Muggridge

SPC Councillor & SWAB Neighbourhood Plan Vice-Chair