

**FINANCE & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY 6th January 2015
7.30 PM AT THE STEYNING CENTRE**

Present: Cllrs Lloyd, Rogers, Toms, Ness-Collins, Toomey, Hopkinson, Willet.

Members of the public: Three

Clerk: Rebecca Luckin

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR:

1. Q – Regarding confirmation that the costs of the skatepark would be provided in writing?
A – the letter will go out tomorrow.
2. Q – Regarding budgets, with the Youth Club, the Parish Council are paying for the Youth Service, why do we not get any report of what is happening there? We don't know how many are attending.
A – The Clerk advised that the Youth Worker provided excellent reports and will be asked for a regular copy.
3. Q – Swimming pool reports? Use of a loyalty card?
A – Cllr Ness-Collins advised that funds were used mainly for repairs.

The Chairman convened the meeting at 7.35pm

MINUTES

1. **APOLOGIES** for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Bowell and Cllr Alexander.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** - there were no declarations of interest.

The Chairman reminded Councillors that the Minutes of the previous meeting would be agreed confidentially at the end of the meeting as they related to staff salaries.

3. **MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS** – the Clerk reported that:
 - 3.1 Following a question raised at the previous F&C meeting, regarding costs to date of the skate park application, a list of payments would be provided in writing.
 - 3.2 Following a question raised regarding the contract with HDC to provide annual financial support toward the swimming pool, the Clerk confirmed that the agreement signed in 1999, valid until 2060, stated that payments should be made

to DC Leisure (a not-for-profit organisation) and that the amount would increase incrementally. Contributions from neighbouring parishes can only be requested. Cllr Rogers advised that Steyning fought to have the pool and it was a district facility, Steyning residents use other facilities within the district. The Clerk will investigate the history of the agreement.

- 3.3** A note of thanks had been received from Steyning in Bloom regarding a grant made by Steyning Parish Council.

4. NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDEN SCHEME REPORT/LAT REPORT

- 4.1** The Neighbourhood Wardens report was circulated prior to the meeting and placed on the Parish Council website. Cllr Toomey noted that a baggie had been found on the MPF. Wardens continue to be vigilant.

- 4.2** Local Action Team (LAT) report – none for this meeting.

5. INFORMATION ITEMS

- 5.1** Steyning Councillors had received an invite from pupils of Steyning Grammar School to attend a presentation and showcase of Year 7 student's work on Project Based Learning. Cllrs Muggridge, Ness-Collins and Lloyd will attend the event on 19th January.

- 5.2** The Clerk advised that the Quality Council scheme was to be replaced by the Local Council Award Scheme, with three levels of Award available; Foundation, Quality and Quality Gold. A Parish Council can progress through the levels during its term of office. There is a fee in the region of £250. Some Parish Councils have questioned the benefits of joining the scheme and NALC are of the opinion that benefits would include improved performance, recognition and continued development of a Council. The current Quality Council status will expire on 31st January, but an application for automatic transition to the Foundation Level of the new Local Council Award Scheme has been submitted (at no cost). The Clerk will advise Councillors of the revised criteria when they become available, in order that Steyning Parish Council can progress through the levels. The Clerk will research The General Power of Competence and report back to Councillors.

- 6. ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS – none for this meeting.**

7. GRANT REQUESTS

- 7.1** Following a grant application made in December 2014 by the Steyning Music Society, further clarification had been provided regarding the timing of the grand piano service which is due to take place in March. The Clerk advised that only £150 remained in the grants budget.

Cllr Rogers **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ness Collins that a grant of £150 be made. **Agreed.**

- 7.2** Councillors considered a grant request from Steyning Allotments Association toward the costs of meeting room hire and photocopying.

Cllr Toms **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Rogers that a grant for room hire only be made at times when the rooms were not being hired to others. **Agreed.**

8. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

9. FINANCE MATTERS AND STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

9.1 The Income & Expenditure Report, and Payments List (total - £31,554.73) for December 2014 were circulated prior to the meeting. There were no Petty Cash payments made during December 2014. Cllr Toomey **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ness Collins the I&E Report and list of payments be accepted, subject to the Clerk clarifying expenditure under code 4050. **Agreed.**

Following the meeting, the Clerk confirmed that the WWI memorial clock and plaque had been funded under code 4050.

9.2 Councillors considered the draft budget for 2015 / 16. Cllr Lloyd thanked all the chairs of the committees for their hard work in preparing the budgets so that there would be a nil increase in the precept. Cllr Rogers **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ness Collins to make recommendation to Full Council that the budget be approved. **Agreed.**

The Clerk thanked Chairs and Vice-Chairs of all Committees, but particularly Cllrs Lloyd and Bowell for their work on the drafting of budgets.

9.3 Cllr Lloyd advised that he would fix a date to undertake internal control measures, as set out in the Steyning Parish Council Financial Risk Assessment.

10. ISOLATION & LONELINESS / PRIDE OF PLACE

10.1 Cllr Rogers reported that the meeting of the I&L Steering Group will take place on 15th January, she expected actions to result from the meetings. The Clerk will offer support where possible.

11. RISK ASSESSMENT

11.1 Councillors considered a draft Risk Assessment for Caretaking Staff, circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk will add new tasks as and when they occur. The Accident Book will be used to report near misses. Cllr Ness collins **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Hopkinson that the Caretaker Risk Assessment be approved. **Agreed.**

12. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY – none for this meeting. The Clerk will distribute the current list and work towards adding further detail to projects that have been identified.

13. WORKING PRACTICES WORK GROUP

13.1 Following advice from the Internal Auditor, that Councillors should convene a meeting for the sole purpose of revising Parish Council documents, the Clerk recommended the formation of a Working Practices Group whose main function would be to review Council policy and procedure documents and all matters relating to the employment of staff. Terms of reference could include review of statutory documents, contracts, salary reviews, protocols and codes of practice, health & safety issues and risk assessments. The Working Practices group could meet as required and make recommendation to Full Council, in order that

documents could be researched and discussed fully to save time at Finance & Community meetings.

Cllr Ness Collins **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Toms that F&C recommend to Full Council that a regular Working Practice Group, made up of chairs of all committees and co-opt others as required, to a maximum of 10, meeting as required. **Agreed.**

14. ONLINE BANKING / PARISH COUNCIL DEBIT CARD

14.1 The Clerk asked Councillors to consider the **principle** of using of online banking and a Parish Council debit card. This was discussed and Cllr Toms **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Rogers that the Clerk prepared a full report for the next meeting. **Agreed.**

15. MINUTES of the previous meeting CONFIDENTIAL

Under Standing Order 1d), the Chairman **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Toomey that the minutes were discussed and agreed in confidence, since they included an item regarding staff salaries. **Agreed.**

Members of the public left the meeting at 20.35pm

Cllr Toms **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ness Collins that the minutes of Finance & Community Committee 2nd December 2014 be accepted as a true record and duly signed. **Agreed.**

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 3rd February 2015 at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 20.37pm

Signed: Date: 3rd February 2015
Chairman

ACTION LIST F&C 06.01.15

3.2 Following a question raised regarding the contract with HDC to provide annual financial support toward the swimming pool, the Clerk confirmed that the agreement signed in 1999, valid until 2060, The Clerk will investigate the history of the agreement.

5.2 Local Council Award Scheme, with three levels of Award available; Foundation, Quality and Quality Gold. The current Quality Council status will expire on 31st January, but an application for automatic transition to the Foundation Level of the new Local Council Award Scheme has been submitted (at no cost).
The **Clerk** will advise Councillors of the revised criteria when they become available, in order that Steyning Parish Council can progress through the levels.

Clerk will research General power of competence

7.2 Councillors considered a grant request from Steyning Allotments Association toward the costs of meeting room hire and photocopying.
Cllr Toms **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Rogers that a grant for room hire only be made. **Agreed. Send letter to Allotments Assoc.**

9.3 Fix a date to undertake internal control measures, as set out in the Steyning Parish Council Financial Risk Assessment. **Report back at next F&C**

12. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY The **Clerk** will distribute the current list and work towards adding further detail to projects that have been identified.

13. WORKING PRACTICES WORK GROUP

13.1 The **Clerk** will continue drafting policies and add the item to Full Council Agenda for 9th February

14. ONLINE BANKING / PARISH COUNCIL DEBIT CARD

14.1 **Clerk** prepares a full report at next meeting.

