

**FINANCE & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY 3rd February 2015 AT 7.30 PM
AT THE STEYNING CENTRE**

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

Members of the public: Three

Clerk: Rebecca Luckin

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR:

1 Q – Regarding Item 11 Isolation & Loneliness. On the 22nd October 2014 I wrote to Steyning Parish Council and the Wilson Memorial Trust to propose that the Wilson Trust might part-fund the Steyning Area Youth Service (SAYS) and the Isolation & Loneliness project. On the 10th November 2014 Mr Henry Whitaker, Chairman of the Wilson Trust, wrote to me to state that "We would certainly be interested in supporting the items you mentioned." In 2014 alone it would appear from Steyning Parish Council financial records that Horsham Matters/ Steyning Area Youth Service (SAYS) was funded by the SPC and taxpayer to the tune of between £30,000 - £38,000, depending on whether or not a grant was made by Horsham District Council for £7,913.

As of the 31st March 2014, the Wilson Memorial Trust fund balance was £2,105,820 whilst their cash in hand was £128,890. If the Wilson Memorial Trust only paid £10,000 per year towards the Steyning Area Youth Service (SAYS) it would greatly reduce the present and future strain on the SPC budget particularly with respect to the anticipated SWAB Neighbourhood Plan costs.

Have Steyning Parish Council and SAYS Trustees requested funding from the Wilson Memorial Trust for the SAYS project? If so how much has been granted and if not do they plan to make a request for funding?

1 A – I am not aware that we have made a request, but we could consider that. My understanding, from Henry Whittaker that they will not put monies into projects that require annual funding, they will commit to 'one off' payments. You are suggesting that he would look kindly on SAYS. Cllr Lloyd will investigate and report back.

Q- Cllr Willett – how does the Isolation & Loneliness project connect?

A – Member of the public – they are initiatives which Steyning Parish Council are pursuing, they are linked in that way.

The meeting was convened at 7.35pm

MINUTES

1. **APOLOGIES** – apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Alexander, Bowell, Rogers and Toomey.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS** – there were none.
3. **MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS** – the Clerk reported that:
 - 3.1 The contract between Steyning Parish Council, HDC, WSCC and the Governing Body of Steyning Grammar School, regarding the swimming pool - further investigation with the Clerk and HDC Officer at the time, confirm that residents of Steyning put up a strong case, at a public meeting, to have the pool sited in Steyning. The contract does commit Steyning Parish Council to make an annual contribution (reviewed and increased annually, in line with RPI), with no compulsion for neighbouring parishes to contribute, until March 2060. Residents were made aware of the costs at the time.
 - 3.2 Documents have been drafted for consideration by the newly formed Working Practices Group. Date set for Monday 23rd February.
 - 3.3 A Councillor had asked if a record of Councillor activity, and attendance at meetings, could be placed on the website, in order that members of the public can better understand the commitment, in terms of time, required by the role. Councillors were of the opinion that time spent on Parish Council business was not the only measure of Councillor commitment, and that a record was not appropriate. Councillors' attendance could be found through the minutes.
4. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**
 - 4.1 Cllr Toms **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ness-Collins that the minutes of the meeting of 6th January 2015 be accepted as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman. **Agreed.**
5. **NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDEN SCHEME REPORT**
 - 5.1 The Neighbourhood Wardens report for January was circulated prior to the meeting.
6. **INFORMATION ITEMS** – The Clerk provided information on:
 - 6.1 Local Council Award Scheme. A summary of criteria was circulated prior to the meeting regarding Foundation, Quality and Quality Gold status. The Clerk outlined the standard required and advised that Steyning Parish Council was working towards Quality Gold, but needed to demonstrate that criteria were being met. The Working Practices Group could focus on drafting the documents that would demonstrate the good practice that is currently taking place. Councillors agreed that the scheme provided a framework upon which to base and measure improvement. The Clerk will assist the Parish Council in working towards Quality status during 2015, with a view to achieving Quality Gold status in the long term.
 - 6.2 The statutory General Power of Competence, under the Localism Act 2011. The Clerk outlined the benefits, eligibility criteria and process for a Parish Council to

adopt the General Power of Competence. At the commencement of the next term of office, Steyning Parish Council would comply with the criteria and would need to adopt the General Power of Competence at the first meeting of the new council, following parish elections. The status remains valid for four years.

- 6.3** Online banking / Parish Council debit card. Following advice from SALC and with reference to Governance & Accountability for Local Councils (2014) and revised NALC Financial Regulations, the Clerk had drafted a summary of benefits, risks, and actions to minimise the risk of using online banking and a debit card. Adoption of revised NALC Financial Regulations would enable Steyning Parish Council to proceed.

The Clerk will contact HSBC to request that a debit card be held by two signatories, the Clerk and Deputy. A new bank mandate will need to be signed. Councillors agreed that any changes must be approved by Full Council, with limits and controls in place.

7. ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS – none for this meeting.

Following on from a Steyning Centre Committee meeting, the Clerk confirmed that there were sufficient funds in the 2014/15 budget to complete some recommended works, with a small amount remaining in reserve. Since Parish Council reserves are below the recommended six months working budget any remaining funds could be carried forward to 2015 / 16 with a view to increasing reserves in the long term.

8. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

- 8.1** HALC – Cllr Muncey will report back on an Extraordinary meeting regarding the deferred HDC Planning Framework and the timeframe and strategy for re-submitting the plan.

9. FINANCE MATTERS AND STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

- 9.1** Income & Expenditure Report, Petty Cash Expenditure and a Payments List (total £16,288.99) for January 2015 were circulated prior to the meeting.

Cllr Ness-Collins **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Toms that the I&L, Petty Cash and Payments List for January 2015 be accepted. **Agreed.**

- 9.2** Cllr Lloyd had undertaken an Internal Control of Parish Council financial procedures on 19.01.15 and provided a report for the Committee, advising of practices that could be improved.

Cllr Willett **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Hopkinson that the report be accepted. **Agreed.**

10. GRANT REQUEST

- 10.1** Councillors considered a request from the Steyning Country Fair Committee regarding a grant towards use of rooms at the Steyning Centre on 25th May (Bank Holiday). Councillors were mindful that funds are limited but agreed that the fair was important for the town. The Clerk will request a copy of the accounts in order that a decision can be made at the next meeting and establish what caretaker costs would be for a bank holiday.

11. ISOLATION & LONELINESS

11.1 The Clerk reported that Cllr Rogers and the Isolation & Loneliness Working Group were still working to identify need and provision and focusing methods of contacting 'hard to reach' members of the community. Issues with volunteers and training requirements were identified. Lack of transport in rural areas was discussed.

12. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

12.1 A copy of the current CIL list was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting and will be revised following the Neighbourhood Plan process.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 3rd March 2015

The meeting closed at 20.28pm

Signed: Date: 3rd March 2015
Chairman

Next meeting 03.03.15

Actions 03.02.15

6.3 Online banking / Parish Council debit card.
The **Clerk** will contact HSBC to request that a debit card be held by two signatories, the Clerk and Deputy. A new bank mandate will need to be signed. Councillors agreed that any changes **must be approved by Full Council**, with limits and controls in place.

10.1 Steyning Country Fair Committee - The **Clerk** will request a copy of the accounts in order that a decision can be made at the **next meeting** and establish what caretaker costs would be for a bank holiday.