

Steyning Parish Council



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FINANCE & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEETING TUESDAY 5th January 2016 AT 7.45 PM IN THE STEYNING CENTRE

Present: Cllrs Lloyd, Bowell, Ness-Collins, Toomey, Willett, S Sullivan, G Sullivan, R Goldsmith

Members of the public: 4 including Cllr Muncey and Cllr Northam.

Clerk: Rebecca Luckin

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR:

1. Q – With regard to minute reference 87.4, F&C 01.12.15 minutes state that a working party meeting to discuss SAYS matters. When a SAYS reserve is held, there can be no justification for an increase in precept. When will the SAYS working party meeting be held?
A – Committee will be discussing the matter this evening.

The meeting was convened at 7.58pm

DRAFT MINUTES

F&C/15/94. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – none for this meeting.

F&C/15/95. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

- 95.1** To note Declarations of Interest – none declared.
- 95.2** Councillors considered requests for Dispensations from Cllrs Muggridge, Syred and Bowell regarding SAYS. (Request supported by Head of Legal & Democratic Services, HDC, for duration of terms of office).

Cllr Lloyd **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Toomey that Cllr Muggridge be granted a Dispensation with regard to SAYS matters. Three in favour, two against, three abstentions (Cllr Goldsmith requested that his name be recorded as an abstention). Therefore the Committee **Agreed** that recommendation should be made to Full Council, that Cllr Muggridge be **granted a Dispensation**.

Cllr Lloyd **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ness-Collins that Cllr Syred be granted a Dispensation with regard to SAYS matters. Four in favour and four abstained. Therefore the Committee **Agreed** that recommendation should be made to Full Council, that Cllr Syred be **granted a Dispensation**.

Cllr Lloyd **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Toomey that Cllr Bowell be granted a Dispensation with regard to SAYS matters. Three in favour, three against. Cllr Bowell and Cllr Willett abstained. The Chairman used his casting vote in favour of the dispensation being granted and the Committee **Agreed** that recommendation should be made to Full Council, that Cllr Bowell be **granted a Dispensation**.



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Cllr Bowell expressed concern regarding Councillors' abstentions from voting.
Cllr Willett abstained due to obfuscation of the matter due to regular emails circulated to Councillors.
Cllr S Sullivan, Cllr Goldsmith and Cllr G Sullivan wished to have it noted that they opposed the dispensation request by Cllr Bowell.

F&C/15/96. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Cllr Lloyd **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ness Collins that the minutes of the meeting of 1st December 2015 be accepted as a true record. **Agreed.**

F&C/15/97. MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS

97.1 (F&C/15/87.2) Internal Control request. Following a verbal confirmation of Internal Auditor's advice regarding SAYS, given at the F&C meeting of 01.12.15, the Clerk had been asked to provide written confirmation of advice (circulated 07.12.15) which confirmed that the statement in the SAYS accounts that the balances were the property of any body other than the charity was incorrect. Roger Taylor was correct in his statement that the charity should not have returned any funds. From an audit perspective, amounts requested were paid to the charity, authorised in the proper manner and paid over in the correct way. There is no audit issue at Steyning in this regard. The Auditor recommended the return of the funds to the charity without delay.

97.2 (F&C/15/87.3) HSBC Card reader update. HSBC is unable to provide a card reader that can be transferred between Councillors. The Clerk will ask HSBC to offer a solution.

F&C/15/98. NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDEN REPORT – circulated prior to the meeting.

98.1 Councillors noted that the Neighbourhood Wardens' report for December 2015.

F&C/15/99. ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS – None for this meeting.

F&C/15/100. FINANCE MATTERS

100.1 To consider and agree Income & Expenditure Report and Payments list (total £15,552.84) for December 2015. Cllr Lloyd **proposed, seconded** by Cllr G Sullivan that the I&E Report and payments list be accepted. **Agreed.**

The Clerk confirmed that the VAT Return for December 2015 had been submitted to HMRC.

100.2 Councillors considered the final draft budget for 16/17 in order to make recommendation to Full Council. Cllr Lloyd **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ness-Collins that a budget be recommended to Full Council that allowed for a 2% increase per band D household, to allow for pension provision for caretaking staff, be recommended to Full Council. Steyning Parish Council will request a precept of £225,747. **Agreed.**

100.3 Councillors considered a SWAB request with regard to financial matters. Councillors noted a request from SWAB that the sum of £4,480 allocated in the 15/16 to cover the planned shortfall in SWAB funds, be paid to SWAB prior to the end of the financial year, to assist with cash flow in the SWAB account. Cllr Bowell **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Willett that allocated funds be transferred to SWAB. **Agreed.** Cllr Lloyd **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Willett to recommend to Full Council that a joint parish letter should be sent to HDC regarding the withdrawal of funding (cc to other HALC councils). **Agreed.**

100.4 Councillors considered whether to go forward with a three year commitment to youth provision. SAYS had sought and obtained legal advice, as requested at the last F&C meeting, which confirmed that the SAYS charity was independent from local authority control and that SAYS was a validly created charity with charitable objects and for the public benefit. There was a lengthy discussion on the continuation of SAYS as the best vehicle for the Youth Service and because the committee believed SAYS retained approximately £48K in reserves which were no longer required that SAYS should be asked to draw on the reserves by contracting directly with Horsham Matters for 1 year. The committee was aware that this would incur the loss of VAT on these payments.

Cllr Lloyd **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Willett that SAYS should contract with Horsham Matters for one year to draw upon reserves. Prior to June 2016 the way forward with SAYS should be discussed. Representatives of the four councils should meet, as councils, following the Full Council on 11.01.16. The proposal was dependent upon SPC returning the funds that were incorrectly rebated, and confirmation from SAYS that they have sufficient funds to cover the cost of Horsham Matters contract for one year. **Agreed.**
Cllr Bowell abstained.

- 100.5** To consider and agree whether tendering process should be undertaken with regard to ongoing youth provision. Decision deferred to next meeting.
- 100.6** Councillors considered a request from the SAYS Treasurer that incorrectly rebated funds of £11,372.94 should be returned. The Internal Auditor had recommended that the incorrectly rebated funds should be returned without delay. Cllr Lloyd **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Toomey that funds be returned. **Agreed.**
Cllr Bowell abstained.
- 100.7** To receive and consider request from West Sussex Mediation Service for grant support (1 referral from Steyning). **Decision deferred to next meeting.**
- 100.8** To receive and consider request from Steyning in Bloom for grant support (£1,000 allocated).
Decision deferred to next meeting.
- 100.9** To receive and consider request from 4Sight for grant support (24 Vision Impaired residents in parish, £950 currently available from general grant allocation). **Decision deferred to next meeting.**

F&C/15/101. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

- 101.1** Joint Parishes Burial Board – no report for this meeting.
- 101.2** HALC– no report for this meeting.
- 101.3** SAYS– no report for this meeting.

F&C/15/102. STEYNING PARISH COUNCIL LOTTERY PROPOSAL

- 102.1** Cllr Northam reported that the resourcing of the project was a key issue. Mr Paul Meeton attended and Cllr Northam asked that he be allowed to join the Working Party meeting to discuss the proposal. Volunteers from the community will be sought, with an independent committee raising funds for the community, reporting to F&C. Terms of Reference would be drafted and awards criteria agreed. Seed money of approximately £1,000. The Clerk to check whether it is permissible for the council to 'loan' this money to the lottery organisation. A working party will be set up.

F&C/15/103. INFORMATION ITEMS AND CORRESPONDENCE

- 103.1** Councillors noted an item of correspondence from member of the public regarding proposed Lloyds Bank Closure (circulated prior to meeting).
- 103.2** Councillors noted the Chairman's letter to Lloyds Bank regarding proposed closure (circulated prior to meeting).
- 103.3** Councillors noted the Chairman's letter to HSBC Bank regarding continued service (circulated prior to meeting).
- 103.4** Late item – Tom Crowley, CEO at HDC, confirmed that he would be free to speak at the Annual Parish Meeting, 07.03.16. APM. Councillors to advise of topics to be covered.

F&C/15/104. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY – none for this meeting.

F&C/15/105. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 2nd February 2016



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F&C/15/106. CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

Due to the nature of the item, regarding an employee of Steyning Parish Council, the Chairman **proposed** that under section 3 e) of Steyning Parish Council Standing Orders, the remainder of the meeting be discussed in confidential session. **Seconded** by Cllr Ness-Collins.

The Clerk left the meeting at 10.15pm

Cllr Goldsmith left the meeting at 10.20pm

As the meeting had reached the allotted 2.5 hours under Standing Orders it was **proposed** by Cllr Lloyd and **seconded** by Cllr Toomey that due to the importance of the confidential item the meeting should continue. **Agreed**

106.1 Councillors noted a complaint made by a Councillor against a member of staff regarding the last council meeting on the 7th December. The Chairman had asked Cllr Willett, who had not attended the meeting, to review the complaint. Cllr Willett determined that there was no case to answer and had written to the Councillor concerned but had had no response. If the Councillor accepts the findings then the matter is closed but if not a review panel will be convened. Cllr Lloyd **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Ness-Collins that the Full Council should be informed and Cllr Willett would confirm that the Councillor concerned had received his email with his findings. 5 in favour, 2 abstentions. Cllrs G Sullivan and S Sullivan requested that their abstentions were noted.

106.2 Councillors noted a grievance complaint made by a member of staff against the Council and naming a specific Councillor. Cllr Lloyd advised that he had discussed this with the Chairman and due to the seriousness of the complaint recommended it should be passed to SALC. SALC had confirmed that they could hear the grievance on behalf of SPC if necessary, and could appoint their Head of HR Legal to do so. As this would be beyond the remit of the annual membership of SALC there would be an additional charge of up to £700.

Cllr Lloyd **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Toomey that SALC be appointed to hear the grievance on behalf of SPC and to agree the additional spend of up to £700. Recommendation to be made to Full Council. **Agreed**

The meeting closed at 10.55pm.

Signed: Date: 2nd February 2016

Chairman



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Action list F&C 05.01.16

- 97.2** (F&C/15/87.3) HSBC Card reader update. HSBC is unable to provide a card reader that can be transferred between Councillors. **The Clerk** will ask HSBC to offer a solution.
- 102.1** Cllr Northam reported that the resourcing of the project was a key issue. Seed money of approximately £1,000. The Clerk to check whether it is permissible for the council to 'loan' this money to the lottery organisation. A working party will be set up.
- 100.3**
Cllr Bowell **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Willett that allocated funds of £4,480 be transferred to SWAB.
Cllr Lloyd **proposed, seconded** by Cllr Willett to recommend to Full Council that a joint parish letter should be sent to HDC regarding the withdrawal of funding (cc to other HALC councils). **Agreed.**
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