

BURGHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Governance & Finance Committee Meeting

Date: Thursday 28th April 2016 **Time:** 6.30p.m.

Place: Burghfield village hall committee room

Present: Mr M Paterson-Borland Mr P Lawrence
Mr D Godding Mr I MacFarlane
Mr C Greaves (arrived 6.50pm) Mr N Morse (arrived 6.35pm)

Attending: Clerk to the Parish Council

Apologies:

1. **To receive members apologies for absence and written requests for Disclosable Pecuniary Interest dispensations**

There were no items upon the agenda that necessitated a member to present a written request for dispensation for a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest.

2. **Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee**

The minutes of the last meeting held on Thursday 26 February 2016, having been circulated, were confirmed a correct record and signed by the presiding Chairman.

3. **Matters Arising on the Minutes**

- i) All previously approved S 137 donations have been allocated accordingly.
- ii) The contract for the maintenance of the burial ground was allocated accordingly with the approved contractor starting work with immediate effect.
- iii) Eligible staffs for the NEST pension have been provided with the relevant details to assist them in determining whether they wish to enrol into the scheme.

4. **To deal with any items requiring URGENT attention by the committee**

Members present were advised that groups of a political standing had been granted a stall at the upcoming May Fayre. Concerns were expressed in relation to politics forming part of what is considered within the community as a family day. Members present resolved unanimously to write to the BRA expressing the concerns of the council, requesting consideration is given to no political groups being permissive at the event. The hire agreement between the BRA and the parish council for the event is to be reviewed accordingly.

5. **Accounts**

i) To consider requests for donations under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972

Members gave consideration to a request presented by the Burghfield WI to assist with the costs for the hirer of the village hall during their Centenary celebrations during 2017. Proposed by Mr P Lawrence, seconded by Mr N Morse and **resolved** unanimously to donate £112.50 to assist with the associated costs for their various exhibitions within the community.

Members present gave consideration to the request presented by PACT for financial assistance of £1,500 towards victims or witnesses of domestic abuse. **Resolved** unanimously to not donate at this time due to concerns regarding the level of funding being requested not being commensurate with the number of local parishioners benefiting.

ii) To receive the budget comparison figures for the current financial year.

The budget comparison figures for the period 1 April to 31 March 2016 were presented and the figures noted. The current percentage expenditure of 101.3 % was based on the current year's budget and excluded those figures that related to the previous year's commitment but had been paid in the current financial year.

iii) To give consideration to any financial implications from the WBC budget proposals 2016/17

Members present gave consideration to the financial impact upon the council in relation to the potential of devolved services falling upon the parish. Details were provided by WBC regarding the Needs Assessment for library services within the district. It is anticipated the review will take 6 months in total with the findings being published as soon as possible upon completion.

It was determined that any potential service required careful financial management. Further investigations are to be made into creating a CIC (Community Interest Company) for the preservation of services under threat from closure by WBC. In identifying devolved services imminently forming part of the parish council's remit, members **resolved** by a majority vote

to present a **recommendation** to the full parish council to adopt the General Power of Competence. Adopting the GPC grants the parish council eligibility to form a CIC, therefore enabling further services and assets to be managed by the parish council as a business.

A meeting is to be arranged with WBC to discuss the future of the services within the parish, particularly those believed to be devolved within the near future.

6. **Governance & Compliance**

i) To receive an update of matters being dealt with by the parish council appointed solicitor

Further details have been provided by the Scouts in relation to the license with the Montessori Nursery. Upon conformation from the councils solicitor that all points queries have been answered satisfactorily, the required documentation will be duly signed and completed.

ii) To receive an update in relation to the Accounts year end process

The clerk advised members the Accounts Year end closedown is scheduled for May 3rd, with internal audit being scheduled for May 9th. The required preparation has been completed accordingly.

iii) To ensure the NDP Steering Committee are operating as per approved Terms of Reference and determine any points of action required

A request for an initial budget of £210 was submitted by the NDP group for consideration. **Resolved** unanimously by members present to allocate the initial budget requested.

7. **Policies & Templates**

i) To receive the Councils Standing Orders following their detailed review due to recent changes in legislation

Following the recent changes in legislation, a review of the council's standing orders has been completed to ensure the council remains fully compliant. Members present **resolved** unanimously to delegate powers to the clerk to undertake the review accordingly. The document is to be presented at the next meeting for approval.

8. **Administration: Burial Ground**

i) To receive an update & consider any administrative issues in the daily operation of the burial ground

The clerk advised that all items were being dealt with accordingly with no problems reported.

ii) To receive a report updating members following the allocation of the grounds maintenance contract at the Burial Ground

The clerk advised the allocation of the maintenance at the Burial ground had been instigated with the new contractor having started work. To date, the contractor has understood the requirements fully and complied with all works required at each visit. The clerk expressed satisfaction with all works being undertaken.

9. **Staffing**

i) To consider any issues regarding council's employees

The cleaner at the Pavilion has tendered their resignation. A replacement is currently being sought.

ii) To give consideration to any action required regarding auto-enrolment for parish council employees

All eligible members of staff were written to regarding their right to a workplace pension with details relating to the NEST scheme having been forwarded to assist in determining contribution levels required. The deadline date for a response of 20th April has now passed with no requests having been received. As all eligible members of staff have not expressed a wish to join a scheme, no further action is required.

10. **Matters for future discussion** – Residency rules regarding Burial fees, GPC

11. **To receive items for information only** - None

Conclusion: The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 19.38p.m

Chairman: