

BURGHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Governance & Finance Committee Meeting

Date: Thursday 3rd December 2015 **Time:** 7.00p.m.

Place: Burghfield village hall committee room

Present: Mr M Paterson-Borland Mr P Lawrence
Mr D Godding Mr I MacFarlane
Mr N Morse Mr C Greaves

Attending: Clerk to the Parish Council

Apologies: None

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 22 October, having been circulated, were confirmed a correct record and signed by the presiding Chairman.

3. Matters Arising on the Minutes

- i) The draft estimates were presented to the full council at the November meeting for their consideration.
- ii) The grant application documentation has been completed and is available for download via the parish council website.
- iii) The event application documentation is complete and available for download via the parish council website.
- iv) Letters have been forwarded to eligible staff regarding the auto enrolment for workplace pensions.

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

All items for consideration are listed on the agenda 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 Citizens Advice Outreach service to assist with the continued support within the parish for a further year. Proposed by Mr P Lawrence, seconded by Mr C Greaves and **resolved** unanimously to donate £1500 to assist with providing a continued service within the parish. An offer to use the West Wing committee room for the service to save further costs is to be presented for consideration.

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

The budget comparison figures for the period 1 April to 1 December 2015 were presented and the figures noted. The current percentage expenditure of 73.3% 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 determine the allocation and obtaining of grant funding for the refurbishment of the skate park

Members gave consideration to the allocation and split of funding to be achieved for the refurbishment of the skate park. It was determined by members to aim for 5% of the total project costs to be achieved by local fund raising, 75% from external grant funding and the remaining 20% from parish council reserves/CIL. An upper limit of £150,000 for the overall project was set. Upon clarification of funding available to the parish council from external grants, a maximum funding figure from the parish council will be determined. Proposed by Mr P Lawrence, seconded by Mr C Greaves and **resolved** unanimously.

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

The various committees upon the council reviewed each of the budget proposals from WBC relevant to their individual remits. It was determined by each of the committees that the proposals posed no financial implications at this stage. A further review will be undertaken upon confirmation of the various decisions taken by WBC regarding the proposals relevant to Burghfield parish.

6.

Governance & Compliance

- i) To receive an update of matters being dealt with by the parish council appointed solicitor
- Further to the meeting held to progress the issue of a licence renewal between the Scouts and the Montessori nursery, the parish council solicitor prepared a review of the documentation received. In response, a letter was forwarded to the scouts requesting clarification on a number of minor points raised by the solicitor. A further meeting was held to progress the matter to the satisfaction of all parties concerned. A verbal update was provided by the clerk confirming all points had been addressed with the exception of one condition requiring clarification from the council's solicitor as to how to proceed. The committee determined that upon the clerk forwarding the updated and amended lease to the councils approved solicitor for approval, written confirmation would be provided to the scouts providing agreement to proceed accordingly.
- ii) To approve the requests received for any capital schemes and projects for the financial year commencing 1st April 2016
- Members received a schedule of probable income and expenditure calculations, based on the anticipated outturn for the current year and the committed revenue expenditure for the following year. The figures were based on the revenue consequences of previous capital programs and the administrative and operational requirements necessary to meet the parish council running expenses and objectives.
- Members gave consideration to any alterations on the proposed figures and to policy decisions that would involve additional expenditure for new schemes. As in previous years, the pay structure for all staff would be reviewed prior to the financial year end.
- Following approval at full council in November, the revenue and capital estimates as presented, are to be implemented as of 1st April 2016. Proposed by Mr P Lawrence, seconded by Mr C Greaves and **resolved** unanimously.
- iii) To recommend the amount of precept to be served upon West Berkshire District Council for 2016/17
- Consideration was given to the amount of precept to be served upon the District Council. In arriving at the required amount, members were reminded of the need to ensure that the general balances, aside from those earmarked for specific purposes, were maintained at an appropriate level.
- Recommended** that a precept in the sum of £255,000 be served upon West Berkshire Council for the year commencing 1 April 2016. Proposed by Mr I MacFarlane, seconded by Mr Paul Lawrence and **resolved** unanimously.
- iv) To receive the interim internal audit report for the current financial year.
- The Interim Internal Audit examination of the Parish Council's accounts had recently been conducted, and an interim Audit Report received from Auditing Solutions Ltd. Reference was made to the clear and concise manner in which the council's records were presented, with no action points raised.
- v) To consider amending the Financial Regulations following the amendment to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015
- Member's attention was brought to the change in EU Regulations in relation to contracting and tendering, specifically the need to formally advertise any contractual work in excess of £25,000 in the "Governments Contract Finder Website". NALC are in the process of publishing revised Model Financial Regulations for presentation and formal adoption.
- vi) To confirm Members allowances for financial year 2016
- Members approved there would be no change to the member's allowances for the new financial year.

7.

Policies & Templates

- i) To give consideration to the protocol when communicating with planning & developers
- A policy and written protocol for dealing with developers in respect of pre-planning application developments was presented to members for their consideration. Proposed by Mr M Paterson-Borland, seconded by Mr C Greaves and **resolved** unanimously to accept the policy for immediate use.

8.

Administration: Burial Ground

- i) To receive an update & consider any administrative issues in the daily operation of the burial ground
- Rev. Lovell advised the council that the closure award for the existing Churchyard had been received from the Diocese. Rev Lovell advised that 12 months' notice would be provided to the parish council regarding the maintenance of the existing churchyard. A further update

will be provided at the next scheduled meeting.

- ii) To establish the criteria for the retendering of the maintenance contract for the burial ground

Members present gave consideration to the requirements for the maintenance contractor at the burial ground. Three quotations are to be obtained with a request for each of the potential contractors to provide a presentation to the Governance & Finance committee. Members present **resolved** unanimously to delegate powers to clerk for the instruction of suitable contractors during the interim period.

9. Staffing

- i) To consider any issues regarding council's employees

Any staffing matters requiring attention have been dealt with accordingly by the clerk.

Staff appraisals are to be carried out during December for presentation and consideration by members at the January meeting.

Members present resolved unanimously to present the Litter wardens with a Christmas bonus for the value of £75 each. Proposed by Mr M Paterson-Borland, seconded by Mr P Lawrence and **resolved** unanimously.

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

All eligible members of staff have been written to regarding their right to a workplace pension. Details relating to the NEST scheme have been forwarded to assist staff in determining contribution levels required. Upon confirmation from eligible staff the schemes are to be initiated accordingly.

10. Matters for future discussion – Burial fees

11. To receive items for information only - None

Conclusion: The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 20.24pm

Chairman: