

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE  
OF BERSTED PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 19:00 ON TUESDAY  
26<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023, AT BERSTED JUBILEE HALL, CHALCRAFT LANE.**

**Present:**

Cllrs. A.Van Koolbergen, P.Wells, J. Spencer, G.Yeates, Clerk/RFO-D. Holcombe and  
Community Clerk -J.Milson.

**23204 Election of Committee Chairman**

Clerk/RFO announced she had received two nominations for Cllr Van Koolbergen (current Vice Chair of Finance) and asked Members present to confirm if there are any further nominations for Cllr Van Koolbergen or any other Member.

Members confirmed there were no other nominations and they were all in favour of Cllr Van Koolbergen taking the position.

Cllr Van Koolbergen accepted this position and went on to chair the meeting.

**23205 Apologies for Absence- Cllr Smith.****23206 Declarations of Interests**

Members were reminded that should interests arise during the meeting they should be declared at that time.

Cllr Spencer declared an interest in the BRAFD grant application.

**23207 Public Session- None.****23208 Minutes of the Meeting of the 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023, having been circulated in advance, be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

**23209 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

Clerk/RFO informed Members that reference Minute 23091, the original proposal for a change to Financial Regulations .4 received from Cllr Lainchbury, has been withdrawn by Cllr Lainchbury before his recent resignation.

**23210 S137 Grant request**

The Clerk/RFO had previously circulated the S137 statement showing a current Balance for 23/24 of 1,000 and grant request from Bognor Regis Armed Forces Day (BRAFD) to Members.

**Requested**

BRAFD £300

**Granted**

£300

Members reviewed and approved their request for £300.

Balance remaining of £700, next grant applications will be considered in January 2024.

**RESOLVED** To approve BRAFD £300 grant request.

**ACTION** Clerk/RFO to inform successful applicant and arrange BACS payment.



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23211

**23/24 Reserves**

The Clerk/RFO invited Members to review the options presented for a mobile Speed Indicator Device (S.I.D) for the parish. Members reviewed and agreed with Clerk/RFO that more research is required before this item could go to Council for review and approval. Members requested Clerk/RFO to contact local Clerks to establish any viable options and contact Police and WSCC to see what procedures, consents/insurances are required and ask if there are any funds available, then feedback to Members. Members also requested Clerk/RFO to enquire if one could be borrowed from Sussex Police to ascertain evidence that this could be a viable purchase. Members suggested a trial as soon as equipment and arrangements can be available and offered to support arrangements once Clerk has further information.

**RESOLVED** Clerk/RFO to research further and report back to Members.

**ACTION** Clerk/RFO to research further and report back to Members.

23212

**24/25 Reserves**

With reference to deferred Finance minute 23090b, the Clerk/RFO invited Members to consider the request for a commitment to Emergency Resilience. Members reviewed and proposed a 1,000 commitment as part of next year's budget. Chair explained that the original meeting discussions were around supporting the parish as an initial refuge i.e purchasing generators etc so we could at least offer a basic support service and a hot drink etc. Clerk/RFO explained to Members that pre covid, Bersted Parish Council hosted the WSCC What if presentations, where they also invited local Parish Councils to attend, all those in attendance received from WSCC packs to use in an emergency i.e high vis waistcoats and road closure signs etc. Felpham Parish Council at the time had a very good Emergency Resilience Team and they offered to support Bersted, however after Elections this year Council is now made up of new Members, so Clerk/RFO will have to contact them again to confirm if support for Bersted is still available. Members requested that Clerk/RFO makes enquiries with the WSCC What if Team and Felpham Parish Council and report back to Members.

Regarding how the Parish Council can fit in with the services that the District, County and emergency services already provide, Members put forward their experience and asked Clerk/RFO to make enquiries, look at other plans and report back with her findings so a team can be set up. Cllr Wells offered to support Clerk/RFO with research.

**RESOLVED** Clerk/RFO to make enquiries and agenda for approval at the next Full Council meeting as part of next year's budget.

**ACTION** Clerk/RFO to make enquiries and agenda for approval at the next Full Council meeting as part of next year's budget.

23213

**Budget 2024-25- First Draft**

The Clerk/RFO presented the first draft of the 2024-25 Budget to Members for consideration, Clerk/RFO explained that the first draft included recent budget discussion meetings given by Clerk/RFO to give all Members the opportunity to ask questions and give their thoughts and the request from the External

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auditors to increase their Reserves. Clerk/RFO gave an update on actual income figures used for forecast and confirmed that she has regularly looked at these, including today and there is only an overall difference of a maximum of 2,000 to adjust. Based on actuals this comprises of slight increases in income to Hall 1. Regular lettings, Hall 2. Lettings, along with interest/dividend income and solar panel (FIT) income. Decreases based on actual are required on casual hall 1. income and field/football income. Members thanked Clerk/RFO for the update and agreed that the income and expenditure sections had been looked at sufficiently in detail so Members focused on looking at Reserve commitments CC40-CC49, after a lengthy review of Reserve proposals received, Members requested Clerk/RFO to combine CC48-50 with an ongoing commitment, funds to be put in Reserve accounts at the start of the next financial year and then trickled in, Members requested CC45/46 is reduced/deferred with an ongoing commitment and to make use of the Jubilee Hall foyer for art display rather than the field and perhaps the Community Action Committee could lead the project. Members would also like to include a 1,000 commitment to Climate Change. Giving an overall 24/25 budget of 185,159 minus income forecast at 31,186 gives a proposed precept request of 153,973.

**RESOLVED** Clerk/RFO to revise budget as requested by Members and agenda for next Full Council meeting.

**ACTION** Clerk/RFO to revise budget as requested by Members and agenda for next Full Council meeting.

**23214 Bersted Parish Council Expenditure**

The Clerk/RFO had previously circulated the current expenditure for Members to approve. Members discussed and having no further questions, approved.

**RESOLVED** to approve the current expenditure report.

**23215 Finance Committee Terms of Reference**

With reference to deferred Finance minute 23092, the Clerk/RFO made the changes requested and invited Members to consider and approve. Members approved.

**23216 Correspondence**

Notice of conclusion of audit received from the external auditors Moore Stephens, Clerk/RFO confirmed to Members that there were no material concerns, but auditors had submitted comments that they would like noted for next year i.e they would like to see Council increase their Reserves and a change to the format of the minutes for additional clarity.

**23217 Urgent Matters-None.**

**There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 20:41.**

**Signed ..... Chairman of the Committee Date .....**



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