

BURGHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Governance & Finance Committee Meeting

Date: Thursday 26th May 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 Mr N Morse

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 28 April 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) An email was presented to the organisers of the May Fayre expressing the councils concerns regarding political groups being granted permission to attend this year's event. After deliberation by the organisers, the political groups were asked to not attend, reiterating the event as being a family occasion. Thanks were expressed for the response to the concerns raised.
- iii) The recommendation to adopt the General Power of Competence was presented at full council in May and subsequently adopted having being resolved unanimously by members present.
- iv) The review of the council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations has been completed with all councillors receiving a copy prior to their adoption at the next scheduled meeting.

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

All items requiring consideration by members are listed accordingly on the agenda.

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 for costs of £100 for the installation of the Centenary Bench on the Common Recreation Ground. Proposed by Mr P Lawrence, seconded by Mr I Macfarlane and **resolved** unanimously to donate the requested £100.

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

The budget comparison figures for the period 1 April to 23 May 2016 were presented and the figures noted. The current percentage expenditure of 5% 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 receive the final Audit report for 2015/2016

Current legislation requires the Parish Council to appoint an internal auditor. The final audit report for the year ended 31 March 2016 had been received. A copy was distributed to the members of the Governance & Finance Committee and it was noted that Auditing Solutions Ltd concluded the Parish Council continued to have effective systems in place to ensure transactions were reflected accurately in the Statement of Accounts and the Annual Return. No items were highlighted within the action plan to be addressed. Thanks were expressed by members present to the clerk for a successful audit.

iv) To receive the Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31st March 2016

Resolved that the detailed Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016 be endorsed and presented to the Parish Council for adoption accordingly. Following members approving the figures presented within the Statement of Accounts, the Annual return documentation was completed accordingly for presentation to the parish council for full endorsement and approval at the next scheduled meeting. Proposed by Mr P Lawrence, seconded by Mr I Macfarlane and **resolved** unanimously.

v) To review reserves currently held by the council and determine any movements required.

Members present resolved unanimously to transfer £43,463 from the current RCP fund. £25,000 is to be transferred to Devolved services and £18,463 to General Reserves. Proposed by Mr P Lawrence, seconded by Mr I Macfarlane and **resolved** unanimously.

vi) To give consideration to any financial implications following the recent WBC budget cuts affecting Burghfield specifically

WBC forwarded correspondence in relation to a proposed meeting on Thursday 2nd June for parties

who previously expressed their interest regarding the potential closure of Burghfield library. Representation from the parish council is to be determined with a full report to be presented at the next meeting.

6. **Governance & Compliance**

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

Following review of the additional details provided by the Scouts in relation to the license with the Montessori Nursery, confirmation from the council's solicitor that all points' queries have been answered satisfactorily was provided. The required documentation was presented, with an accompanying letter acknowledging the hire period with the Nursery exceeding the originally stated 48 hour period. Proposed by Mr P Lawrence, seconded by Mr M Paterson-Borland and **resolved** unanimously the documents are signed and completed by the Scouts for implementation as soon as possible.

- ii) To determine an action plan following the adoption of the General Power of Competence

Further details were presented in relation to the use of the General Power of Competence by the council following resolution by full council for its adoption. Members present expressed a need to explore the feasibility of setting up a CIC (Community Interest Company). Potential parties who are able to assist the parish council are to be identified accordingly. Proposed by Mr I Macfarlane, seconded by Mr C Greaves and **resolved** unanimously to investigate the source of potential help with a feasibility study.

- iii) To determine whether the council qualify for quality status according to the criteria as set by NALC and consider any actions required in progressing a full application for the status

Members present gave consideration to the criteria required to be met prior to the council being eligible to apply for the Local Council Award Scheme. A review of the criteria is to be undertaken by members and discussed at the next meeting.

7. **Policies & Templates**

- i) To undertake a full and detailed review of all policies held by the council for the ensuing municipal year

Members present gave consideration to the various policies held by the council. The clerk is to undertake a full review of each of the policies determining their implementation date and subsequent review. The policies are to be presented on a rolling basis to the committee dependant on the nature of the policy and upon expiration of the recommended review period.

- ii) To give consideration to the implementation of a "Vexatious & Habitual Complainant" Policy and review the draft document as presented

Members present reviewed the draft Habitual & Vexatious Complainant policy as presented. Proposed by Mr N Morse, Seconded by Mr C Greaves and **resolved** unanimously to accept the policy as presented. The policy is to be presented to the parish council at their next scheduled meeting for ratification.

8. **Administration: Burial Ground**

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

The clerk advised all items were being dealt with accordingly with no problems to report.

9. **Staffing**

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

A replacement cleaner for the Pavilion is being sought.

- ii) To confirm no further action is required regarding workplace pensions auto-enrolment for current employees

Eligible members of staff were advised of their right to a workplace pension with details relating to the NEST scheme being forwarded. All eligible members of staff did not express a wish to join a scheme; the relevant online documentation requires completion with an annual review.

10. **Matters for future discussion** – Succession planning for future Chairman of the parish council, Residency rules regarding Burial ground, Burial Fees table, Smallmead refuse centre.

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

Conclusion: The Chairman declared the meeting closed 19.35pm.

Chairman: