

BURGHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Governance & Finance Committee Meeting

Date: Thursday 22nd September 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 18.35pm)

Attending: Clerk to the Parish Council

Apologies: Mr N Morse

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 23 June 2016, having been circulated, were confirmed a correct record and signed by the presiding Chairman.

3. Matters Arising on the Minutes

- i) The replacement gate for the Hatch Recreation ground has been purchased and installed accordingly.
- ii) Confirmation was provided to both the Community committee and the full council that all required documentation was in place for the upcoming Burghfest. Permission was granted for the event to go ahead.
- iii) The approved Equality Policy has been implemented accordingly.

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

Following a recent incident, members present reiterated the importance of ensuring personal views, when expressed to external bodies, are noted as such with a disclaimer at the footer of any correspondence. Whilst acknowledging there had been a breach of the Code of Conduct, members present deemed it an error resulting in an oversight of council policy. All councillors are to be reminded of the "Behaviour as a representative of Burghfield Parish Council" policy outlining the expected behaviour of councillors whilst providing specific guideleines.

5. Accounts

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

Members present gave consideration to a request presented by Berkshire Multiple Sclerosis Society for a grant of £600 to assist with the running their service provided for a number of Burghfield residents. **Resolved** unanimously to donate £600. Proposed by Mr I Macfarlane, seconded by Mr C Greaves and **resolved** unanimously.

Members present gave consideration to a request presented by the Burghfest organisers for a grant of £450 to assist with the provision of additional toilets and disabled toilets at the upcoming Beer Festival within the parish. **Resolved** unanimously to donate £450. Proposed by Mr I Macfarlane, seconded by Mr C Greaves and resolved unanimously.

Members present gave consideration to a request presented by the Duchess of Kent Hospice, Newbury for a grant to assist with running their service. Resolved unanimously to not donate at this time as unable to determine the level of support being provided specifically for Burghfield residents. Proposed by Mr I Macfarlane, seconded by Mr C Greaves and **resolved** unanimously.

Members present **resolved** unanimously to present a grant to the Macmillan Coffee morning group to match monies received up to a maximum of £500. Proposed by Mr M Paterson-Borland, seconded by Mr P Lawrence and resolved unanimously.

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

The budget comparison figures for the period 1 April to 22 September 2016 were presented and the figures noted. The current percentage expenditure of 24.1% 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 signed off external audit report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016

The Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2016 had been signed off and returned by Mazars, the external auditors appointed by the Audit Commission. Confirmation was provided that the Annual Return was in accordance with proper practices, relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had been met. Thanks were expressed by members present to the clerk for a successful audit

- iv) To give consideration to any financial implications further to the budget cuts implemented by WBC that specifically affect Burghfield

Members present received an update from Mr P Lawrence following a meeting with WBC to discuss the potential financial implications upon the council following the decision by WBC to make a number of cuts to local services. The following items were discussed:

- The library service provision within the parish – A needs assessment has been completed with a report due from WBC advising of the outcome early October. A meeting has been instigated by WBC for all stakeholders in October to share the information found.
- WBC wishes to discuss the devolution of services to the parish, specifically environmental services. A meeting has been scheduled to pursue further.
- Discussions are to be held in relation to the potential transfer of assets from WBC to BPC. Upon receipt of the list discussions will be held in committee to determine the costs involved.

- v) To give consideration to the funding required for the potential refurbishment of the skate park

Members present considered the finances required for the refurbishment of the Skate park. Members expressed concerns regarding the project due to the level of additional financing and resources required to cover the services being devolved to parishes from the local authority. After much discussion, it was determined the project be deferred due to financial commitment required. **Resolved** unanimously to review in 12 months' time. The Community committee are to consider whether any low cost repairs or improvements could be made to the existing equipment whilst ensuring any recommendations presented by RoSPA are complied with and implemented.

6. **Governance & Compliance**

- i) To review the Terms of Reference for the operation of the committee

The Clerk presented the draft Terms of Reference for the Governance & Finance Committee to operate within to members present. The committee resolved unanimously that the terms reflected the business to be transacted by the committee accurately. The terms are to be adopted for continued adherence with immediate effect. Proposed by Mr C Greaves, seconded by Mr I Macfarlane and **resolved** unanimously to accept the terms as presented.

- ii) To consider the effectiveness of the councils Risk Assessment documentation for the current financial year

In accordance with the guidance in the updated Practitioners Guide, members reviewed the councils risk assessment, covering both financial and operational risks. Members were satisfied that the current system was effective in ensuring the council remained up to date with their responsibilities.

Proposed by Mr D Godding, seconded by Mr P Lawrence and **resolved** unanimously to adopt the Risk Assessment for full operation for a further financial year.

- iii) To receive an update on the potential initiation a feasibility study for the potential development and implementation of a Community Interest company

Members present expressed a need to explore the feasibility of setting up a CIC (Community Interest Company) in further detail. Upon receipt of the outcome of the needs assessment regarding the provision of library services within the parish a feasibility study is to be instigated with the assistance with local individuals identified as being specialist's within this particular field.

- iv) To give consideration to members contact details being available via the parish website and determine consistency

A request was presented to the committee regarding the display of councillor contact details on the parish website and App. At present there appears to be a level of disparity between the information published on the various sites and communications with local residents.

Proposed by Mr I Macfarlane, seconded by Mr M Paterson-Borland and **resolved** unanimously to initiate @burghfieldparishcouncil email addresses for the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and the Committee Chairman as the preferred method of communication with parishioners. The revised contact details are to be displayed via the parish council website, App and newsletter.

- v) To give consideration to the requirement for an Annual fee for the hire of the football pitches

and sports pavilion.

Members present gave consideration to the introduction of an Annual Fee for the use of the football pitch and changing facilities. Due to time constraints, the item is to be deferred until the next scheduled meeting.

- vi) To receive an update in relation to the Policy Review dates and associated Master file

Members gave consideration to the policies currently held. The clerk has undertaken a review of each of the policies determining their implementation date and subsequent review. The policies will be presented on a rolling basis to the relevant committee for their review, depending upon the nature of the policy and expiration of the recommended review period.

7. Policies & Templates

- i) To review the Facebook policy and determine any amendments required

Members present reviewed the "Facebook Policy" as presented. Proposed by Mr P Lawrence, seconded by Mr C Greaves and **resolved** unanimously to accept the policy as presented. The policy will be presented on a rolling basis, in accordance with the councils Record Management Policy, to the committee for their continued review.

- ii) To review the Complaint Handling policy and determine any amendments required

Members present reviewed the "Complaint Handling Policy" as presented. Proposed by Mr P Lawrence, seconded by Mr C Greaves and **resolved** unanimously to accept the policy as presented. The policy will be presented on a rolling basis, in accordance with the councils Record Management Policy, to the committee for their continued review.

- iii) To approve the Village Hall late payment form

Due to time constraints, the item is to be deferred until the next scheduled meeting.

8. Administration: Burial Ground

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

All items are being dealt with in accordance with council policy with no specific areas of concern or issues to note.

9. Staffing

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

No issues were raised for consideration. A new cleaner has been instructed for the pavilion.

10. To give consideration to the draft questions presented in preparation of the Parish Plan Refresh Questionnaire

Members present gave consideration to the draft questions presented by the Communications committee for the revised parish plan questionnaire to determine whether the remit of the Governance & Finance committee had been represented accordingly. Due to time constraints, the item was deferred until the next scheduled meeting.

11. To identify and give consideration to any potential "community based" solution to the Anti-Social behaviour issues being experienced within the parish

Due to an increase in Anti-Social behaviour within the parish, each committee has been asked to identify any "community based" solutions that could be implemented to reduce the crime and provide longer term strategies for addressing ASB.

Further investigations are to be made with the assistance of a local specialist to determine any specific actions that could be implemented. An action plan is to be considered and presented to full council for further discussion.

12. Matters for future discussion – Hire agreement for the Common Recreation Ground with outside bodies, Annual fee for football club usage, village hall late payment form, and Parish Plan questionnaire.

To receive items for information only - None

Conclusion: The Chairman declared the meeting closed 19.40pm.

Chairman: