

BEARSTED PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance and General Policy Committee meeting of Bearsted Parish Council held at Madginford Hall, Egremont Road, Bearsted on Tuesday 28th May, 2019 at 7:30pm

Present: Cllr Helena Goodwin (Chair)
Cllr Richard Ash MBE (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Denis Spooner
Cllr Frank Jagger
Cllr Jon Hughes
Cllr Michael Bollom

Also in attendance was the Assistant Clerk Erin Sugden (AC).

Reports from members of the public: There were no members of the public.

1. **Declarations of intention to record.**
The Assistant Clerk informed the meeting of her intention to record for transcription purposes.
 2. **Apologies and absence**
No apologies have been received.
 3. **Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying**
None were received.
 4. **To resolve to go into closed session and to exclude the press and public at item 19 (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 in accordance with standing order 10 (xi) for consideration of HR matters.**
This was agreed by a unanimous vote.
 5. **Signing of minutes.**
The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of Tuesday 23th April, 2019 were agreed as a true record and duly signed.
 6. **Matters arising from the last minutes and action points.**
AC to get update on error with Advantedge
AC to get appointment with Cllr Ash, Clerk and the Business Account Manager at Maidstone branch of Natwest bank.
AC to ensure that Peppercorn rents are kept updated and requested in good time in the future years.
AC to check with Unity Bank that Cllrs Jagger and Cllr Tribley have been granted access as signatories.
- ACTION: ASSISTANT CLERK**
7. **Finance**
 - a) **Resolution to authorise payments:**
Payments presented were agreed for recommendation of authorisation at the next meeting of the Full Council and will be detailed on subsequent Full Council minutes.
 - b) **Finance Reports:**
There are currently no finance reports due to the 2018-19 year not being closed. Once the audit for the previous year has been completed next week, work will begin on the finance reports for 2019-20.

- c) **Balances of accounts:**
These have not been circulated as they do not give a true reflection of the accounts due to the 2018-19 year not being closed.
- d) **Multi-card expenditure.**
There was one payment made for the Market on the Green TEN. This was agreed by a unanimous vote.
- e) **Grants and Donations requests:**
No such requests had been received.

8. Policies for approval

Revision of Terms of Reference: This was agreed by a unanimous vote.

Policies agreed for recommendation were:

Pre-paid Debit Card Policy: This was agreed by a unanimous vote.

Complaints Policy: This was agreed by a unanimous vote.

Equal Opportunities Policy: This was agreed by a unanimous vote.

Community Engagement Policy: This was agreed by a unanimous vote.

Tree Management Policy: This was agreed by a unanimous vote.

Maternity Policy: This was agreed by a unanimous vote.

Councillor Co-option Procedure: This was agreed by a unanimous vote.

Inclusion & Exemption for Publishing Data Policy: This was agreed by a unanimous vote.

Publication Scheme Policy: Cllr Ash suggested that the name of previous the clerk is removed. The office opening hours need to be amended and an additional 'staffing Structure' be added, once these changes are made, councillors agreed this policy will be approved by a unanimous vote.

AC to email Cllr Ash with outstanding policies that need updating.

ACTION: ASSISTANT CLERK

9. Payroo Direct Debit

There was an explanation that due to a difference in staffing numbers throughout the year the fee to use Payroo as the payroll system will vary between £105-£125. It was recommended that rather than incur a £10 month fee for an invoice a direct debit should be set up. This was agreed by a unanimous vote.

AC to inform Nicola Brittain to arrange this.

ACTION: ASSISTANT CLERK

10. Payments During July- August

As there will be no Finance or Full Council meetings taking place at the end of July and throughout August it was requested by the Assistant Clerk that a resolution is made to approve payments electronically. It was unanimously agreed that when the payments are emailed to the Finance Committee for approval, 3 votes in favour will be required to approve them. The list will then be circulated to all councillors for reference.

11. Summer Playscheme

Tickets have been released for sale (48 sold to date), leaflets have been printed and will be given to schools to go in book-bags. Banners have been produced free of charge and will feature at the Market on the Green this weekend. Notices will be included in the Downsmail along with messages on Facebook and our website.

12. Market on the Green

The Income and Expenditure was reviewed. The income of the tote bags was not accounted for and will be added to the budget.

Cllr Bollom gave confirmation that when visitors enter the market and buy a tote bag 30p is given to the chosen charity. The Assistant Clerk informed the committee that wording has to be clearer on advertising as the 'word' donation is not to be used.

The layout of the document will be adjusted to allow for additional months and areas where income is received.

ACTION: ASSISTANT CLERK

Suggestion for local groups to be able to request themselves to be the monthly beneficiary will be put to the working group.

13 Update on VAT Recommendations

Cllr Jagger updated the committee on his findings around VAT requirements. Advice has been given by KALC, NALC, BPC Internal Auditor and the HMRC website.

Due to the complexities of the subject, should the council acquire premises whereby income is generated the Parish Council should seek professional advice as it may need to register for VAT.

The other areas where clarification is required would be the Playscheme and Market on the Green should these fall in to the category of having commercial advantage.

14 Update on 2018-2019 Audit

The AC updated the committee about the preparations ahead of the annual audit next week. Many policies have been adopted and put on to the website however there are still some to update. These have been categorised on the website as 'draft' and work will continue on these in the coming months.

Nicola Brittain is working on the finance reports for the AGAR and the asset register is being updated.

15. Additional HR Cost

A consultant was sought to provide HR advice at a cost of £800 for 10 hours and £60 per additional hour. Cllr Goodwin informed the committee there has been a need to request a further 10 hours for ongoing advice. This was voted on and the committee unanimously agreed.

16. Cost of seeking professional advice from KALC

Advice is no longer required and so not discussed.

17. Future agenda Items

Report from Communications Committee
Audit feedback
Market on the Green

18. The next meeting of the Finance and General Policy Committee will be held on 25th June, 2019

19. Discussion about HR matters

The Assistant Clerk left the meeting at 20:50 as it went into closed session for item 19.

Signed..... Date.....