

BUCKHURST HILL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE HELD AT 8.00 pm ON THURSDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2021 AT BUCKHURST HILL LIBRARY, 165 QUEENS ROAD

PRESENT

Cllrs: Mr M West (Chairman)
Mr S Heap
Mr S Neville

In attendance: Mrs C Carroll (Locum RFO)
Mrs E Petyt-Start (Clerk)

11/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mrs A Redelinghuys
Mr G Chambers-Bagshaw

12/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members in any item on the agenda.

13/21 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 01 July 21, circulated, were approved and the Chairman authorised to sign them.

14/21 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present

15/21 CHAIRMAN'S AND CLERK'S COMMUNICATIONS

A few key highlights to mention for the period up to the end October:-

- New sink base unit and flooring has been installed at the Woollard centre rear kitchen.
- Annual PAT (portable appliance testing) testing has also been carried out on both of the Halls and all Office equipment. Annual alarms contracts for the Halls completed
- Some of the ceiling tiles need replacing at the Woollard centre following the roof repairs and the Caretakers are looking into the replacement tiles.
- The Interim Annual Audit is taking place on 10th January remotely.
- Since the last meeting on 1st July the second instalment of the precept from District has been received on 17th September.
- We have been informed that unfortunately the PSCO due to join us in November will not be appointed they are still in the vetting process and they are unlikely to be with us before the Spring. However savings on this budget line are now likely to be around £10K taking overall projected overspend down to the end of March 2022.

16/21 FINANCE

1 A report of the Council's financial position as at 31 October 21, circulated received was noted.

The report was accepted.

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2 The Bank Reconciliations and Trial Balance as at 31 October 21, circulated.
The report was accepted.

3 The payments and receipts for 1 June 2021 to 31 October 21, circulated, were noted. The Clerk informed the meeting that to have the reports up to the end of October for this meeting was greatly appreciated and thanked the Finance Assistant for her work on this.

4 A report estimating the halls income for the third quarter October-December was circulated and noted. It was noted the Halls income remains reduced due to the COVID pandemic.

17/21 EAR-MARKED RESERVES

A proposal by Cllr West was made to look at the Council's ear-marked reserves and re-allocate funding as appropriate and to ensure we were holding money in reserves for the correct purposes. A summary document was shared with Councillors and the following was proposed:-

EMR Recreational Amenity - £25,000 transfer to EMR Playground Fund

EMR Neighbourhood Plan - £47,000 transfer £32,000 of this to EMR Playground Fund

EMR Capital Receipt £95,568 to be transferred to EMR Halls Development

EMR Woollard Centre repairs and Maintenance transfer £42,676 to Halls Development

EMR Roding Valley Hall repairs transfer £30,069 to Halls Development. The proposed revised EMRS are therefore as follows; (note in addition to the below the General Reserve may be 50% of precept at £178K):-

EMR Street Lighting - £4,000

EMR Neighbourhood Plan - £15,000

EMR Playground Fund - £84,668

EMR Halls Development – £581,649

EMR Climate Change - £3,000

EMR Woollard Centre repairs - £6,000

EMR Roding Valley Hall repairs - £6,000

18/19 AUDIT

1 External Audit - It was noted that there was a clean audit of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2019/2020 and all statutory notices have been published.

Councillors thanked the Office for their work in completing this.

19/21 REVIEW OF CHARGES

1 Allotments

a) To note the Buckhurst Hill Leisure Gardens 2020/2021 annual accounts
These were noted and the Councillors commented on how well run the allotments were with no concerns were raised.

b) To review the rents for allotments as charged by Buckhurst Hill Leisure Gardens. Noted and it was unanimously AGREED that the allotment rents should remain at the current rate of £4.40 per rod with no recommendations

to be made to the BHLGCIC

20/2 RISK REGISTER

1 Committee's Risk Register

To consider and agree the draft risk register for this committee, circulated and Cllr West made one observation on the register around Covid Compliance for Community Centres which the Clerk confirmed was the case. It was then unanimously AGREED the Risk Register would be recommended to Full Council for

adoption.

2 Council's Risk Register

To consider and agree the Council's draft Risk Register for recommendation to Full Council. It was unanimously AGREED the Risk Registers would be recommended to Full Council for adoption.

21/2

BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2022/2023

1 Budget

The budget for 2022/2023, draft circulated, was considered for recommendation to Full Council.

Following discussion on the Ear-Marked Reserves Cllr West set out proposals for the budget for 22/23 and the proposed precept. Cllr West explained the options outlined in the precept calculations summary document.

Cllr West explained it is best practice to have 50% of reserves in our general reserve which would amount to £178,489.50 (based on current precept). Councillors were advised that in the last financial year 20/21 the Council went into reserves by £55,918. For the projections for the remainder of this financial year we may use further reserves in the sum of £58,902 should all the projected expenditure remain.

Looking at the budget for the next year 22/23 it would seem if spent, the general reserves would be used by a further £122,000. This is not sustainable and whilst we have healthy reserves these are allocated to community projects through EMRs. One being the major halls development project. If the precept is not raised in 22/23 the Council would use more reserves and therefore this funding against this projection would be compromised and a larger PWLB loan would need to be considered.

2 Precept

To recommend the level of Precept for 2022/2023 to Full Council.

Following discussion on the budget and recommended precept calculations, based on the precept options summary distributed to Councillors in the meeting, it was unanimously AGREED that that the F&E committee would recommend to Full Council the increase in precept would be £85,235. However to be noted there could be a deficit of around £31,000 should the complete budget for 22/23 be spent as proposed which was shown on the precept options summary document.

FINANCE AND ESTABLISHMENT ITEMS OF CONCERNS

(a) There were no items of concern.

(b) There were no items requested for inclusion in the next F&E agenda:

There being no further business the Chairman thanked Members for attending and closed the meeting at 8.41pm.

Date

Chairman