

BUCKHURST HILL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE HELD AT 8.00 pm ON THURSDAY 17 MARCH 2022 AT BUCKHURST HILL LIBRARY, 165 QUEENS ROAD

PRESENT

Cllrs: Mr M Vance (Chair)
Mr K Williamson
Mr D Saunders

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

Cllr Vance welcomed all present to the Finance & Establishment meeting and on behalf of the Committee the Parish Council stand with the UK Government and its international partners on the unprovoked war on Ukraine in looking for a speedy return for peace and security within the area.

22/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr S Neville

23/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

24/22 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 18 November 21, circulated, were approved and the Chairman authorised to sign them.

25/22 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

One member of the public was present at the meeting. The member asked the Committee to see the financial reports being discussed. Cllr Vance informed the member of the public some financial reports are available to view and a formal request should be made to the Clerk. The Clerk also pointed out that the final figures for the end of year AGAR are available for 2 weeks in June to the members of the public following the year-end Audit.

26/22 CHAIRMAN'S AND CLERK'S COMMUNICATIONS

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

- Looking at the detailed income and expenditure report the overall total expenditure to 28 Feb is £347,169 against an income of £417,360. The report shows a current surplus of £70,192 and a balance of £984.880 as of 28 Feb 22 (see balance sheet). However, there will still be payments of approximately £75,000 to the end of the financial year which includes the EFDC Grass cutting bill and the elections bill of £8,345.16. To note, the elections budget will therefore be over budget by £4,331.00.

The halls income has increase in recent weeks this has resulted in our overall projected deficit at year end reducing to around £2,000 from £20,000.

27/22 FINANCE

1 A report of the Council's financial position as at 28 February 2022, circulated was received and noted. The report was accepted.

2 The Bank Reconciliations and Trial Balance as at 28 February 2022, circulated.

The report was accepted.

3 The payments and receipts for 1 November 2021 to 28 February 2022, circulated, were noted. The report was accepted.

4 A report estimating the halls income for the fourth quarter January – March 2022 was circulated and noted. The report was accepted.

28/22 BUDGET

1 To note budget for 2022/2023 as agreed at the Full Council meeting of 20 January 2022. The budget was noted. Cllr Vance thanked the work of the RFO and Clerk on managing to reduce the final budget from the first draft by £26,000 which helped with the overall projected deficit and setting the precept.

2 To note the precept for 2022/2023 as agreed at the Full Council meeting of 20 January 2022. It was noted that there was a 2% reduction in the final precept from the previous year.

3 To note the proposed EMRs for 2022/2023

These were noted but the RFO informed the Committee that the EMRs cannot be finalised until the final year-end figures are known. It was noted that as part of the Audit requirements the Council does need to allocate reserves to EMRs and along with keeping an amount in a General Reserve the EMRs will be finalised at the May Full Council meeting. The proposed EMRs are listed below:-

General Reserve	131133.00
EMR Neighbourhood plan	15000.00
EMR Playground	84668.00
EMR Woollard repairs	6000.00
EMR RVH repairs	6000.00
EMR Halls development	636516.00
EMR Climate Emergency	3000.00
EMR Street Lighting	4000.00

29/22 REVIEW OF CHARGES

1 COMMUNITY HALLS HIRE CHARGES

To review charges for the hire of the Community Halls, current charges circulated. These were noted and it was agreed that no further amendments to the charges were necessary at this time. Cllr Saunders asked how the charges compare with neighbouring halls. The Clerk informed the committee that the halls are competitively priced but no analysis has been done for the last 4 years. Cllr Williamson asked if we could review later in the year if necessary. The Clerk confirmed the Council can if required. It was also noted that our energy bills have been fixed for the next year.

2 PARISH MAGAZINE RATE CARD

To review charges for advertisements in the Parish Magazine, current rate card circulated. The Committee asked how this compares with similar magazines it was agreed that the rate was competitive and consistent but occasionally there are some empty advertising spaces. It was suggested that we need a process for the occasions when we have free space available. The proposal that will therefore be recommended to Full Council in March is that any free space available is raised by the Clerk with the Chair of the Council and a decision is then made on the content.

30/22 HALL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

To review and approve the updated Terms and Conditions for the Woollard Centre and the Roding Valley Hall. Circulated. The Terms and Conditions for both the Halls were unanimously approved. It was asked by the member of the public what the process was in terms of vetting new hires to the halls. The Clerk confirmed the

hirers sign our terms and conditions, are invoiced 3 months in advance and one-off hirers pay a contingency deposit.

31/22 BANK ACCOUNT SIGNATORIES

To approve the 5 new signatories for the Councils bank accounts. The Committee recommends that the requirement of 5 signatories is put onto the next Full Council Agenda in March. To note, the members present were happy to be signatories on the account and it was also noted we do have two members of the F&E Committee who were not present at the meeting but who are current bank account signatories. The RFO expressed concerns that with only two signatories currently this is becoming difficult to manage and delays are occurring when sending cheques.

32/22 ONLINE BANKING

To discuss the proposal circulated for the Council to consider transferring to online banking and to consider the proposal to move the Councils current account from NatWest to Unity Trust. Circulated.

The RFO summarised the proposal to Council and the advantages of moving to online banking. This was unanimously supported by the committee.

The RFO also summarised the proposal to move the Councils current account from NatWest to Unity Trust and the importance of a bank account that is in line with the financial regulations and the necessary authorisation processes that the Council has to adhere to.

This proposal was also supported by the committee and it was recommended that the Council proposes the transfer at the Full Council meeting on 31 March. Cllr Vance noted that it was time the Council moved to online banking and he is confident that the Unity Trust bank will work for the needs of the Council. Cllr Williamson asked that the mandate forms are ready for signing at the March Full Council so we can ensure this is processed as quickly as possible.

33/22 FINANCE AND ESTABLISHMENT ITEMS OF CONCERN

- (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 8.45pm.

Date

Chairman