

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF BERSTED COUNCIL
AT 19:00 ON TUESDAY 16th MAY 2023
AT BERSTED JUBILEE HALL, CHALCRAFT LANE, PO21 5TU**

Present: Cllrs, K. Greenway, W. Kapp, D. Lainchbury, M. Lury, P. Ralph, J. Spencer, A. Van Koolbergen, P. Wells and G Yeates.

Mrs D. Holcombe (Clerk/RFO), Mrs S. O'Connell (Deputy Clerk) and June Milson (Trainee Clerk).

In attendance: 0 members of the public.

Cllr Spencer, the current Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

23001 To Elect the Chairman of Council

The Clerk informed Members she had received a nomination for Cllr Spencer only. Members voted by ballot and Cllr Spencer was announced as Chairman of Bersted Parish Council, Cllr Spencer received a majority vote.

RESOLVED that Cllr Spencer was duly elected Chairman of Bersted Parish Council.

23002 Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Spencer signed the Acceptance of Office Declaration.

23003 To Elect a Vice Chairman of Council

The Clerk informed Members she had received nominations for Cllr Lainchbury and Cllr Ralph. Members voted by ballot and Cllr Lainchbury received the majority vote.

RESOLVED that Cllr Lainchbury was duly elected Vice Chairman of Bersted Parish Council.

23004 Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Lainchbury signed the Acceptance of Office Declaration.

23005 Apologies for Absence

None.

23006 Declarations of Interests

None.

23007 Public Session

None.

23008 Reports from County & District Councillors

C. Cllr Greenway informed members he had visited Nyewood School with Nick Gibb MP and attended the Sussex Club for young people at the arena to find out what they would like to see at the Phoenix Centre. The Litter Pick at Stroud Green Drive was well attended in April.

District Councillors

D. Cllr Greenway reported he had been attending induction training at Arun DC.

D. Cllr Lury reported he had attended a planning committee meeting at Arun DC where some applications had been refused such as a fence being erected on an open plan estate.

D. Cllr Mrs Yeates reported she had also attended the planning committee meeting and represented Bersted and residents opposing polytunnels behind Babsham Lane. She is also continuing to support residents at Bersted Green Court.

23009**Financial Matters**

- a) To receive and approve the Income & Expenditure Reports for April 2023.
The April Income and Expenditure Reports were previously circulated to all Members.
RESOLVED to approve the Income and Expenditure Reports for April 2023.
- b) **To note the Internal Auditor's report on the 2022-2023 Accounts**
The Clerk/RFO had previously circulated R.S. Hall's report. Members noted the report as below.
FINDINGS
1) Monies paid and received during the year have been accurately recorded and reconciled to the bank and cash balances 2) The accounting records, minutes, standing orders and other financial information were found to be in good order 3) I reviewed the Council website to ensure that the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 had been correctly implemented and adhered to.
SUMMARY AND OPINION
One of the functions of internal audit is to give assurance to members of the council that the financial systems are operating correctly and can be relied upon. In connection with my examination, and having regard to the items reported herewith, no matter has come to my attention that gives me reasonable cause to believe in any material respect that the regulatory requirements have not been complied with. The accounting arrangements, procedural controls, records and documentary evidence are considered to be satisfactory, and accurately record the Council's financial position.
Cllr Lainchbury congratulated the Clerk/RFO for another successful audit.
Clerk/RFO also thanked the Deputy and Trainee Clerk for their assistance.
- c) **To approve Section 1 of the Annual Governance & Accounting Return (AGAR)**
The Clerk/RFO had previously circulated the Annual Governance & Accounting Return to Members and explained that by approving the Annual Governance Statement Section 1, which consists of nine statements they confirm they acknowledge their responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements and confirm, to the best of their knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023. Members confirmed they understood and approved Section 1.
RESOLVED to approve Section 1 of the Annual Governance & Accounting Return.
The Chairman and Clerk to sign and date the Annual Governance & Accounting Return.

- d) **To approve Section 2 of the Annual Governance & Accounting Return (AGAR), Declaration of Acceptance of the 2022-2023 Accounts.**

The Clerk/RFO asked Members to confirm they had read and understood Section 2 of the Annual Governance Statement along with the Internal Auditors Report and confirm they approve the Accounting Statements in this Annual Return; Members also verified these correctly present the financial position of this Smaller Authority and they understood and approved Section 2.

RESOLVED to approve Section 2 of the Annual Governance & Accounting Return. The Chairman and RFO to sign and date the Annual Governance & Accounting Return.

- e) **To note subscription costs for 22-23.**

Members noted the subscription costs.

- f) **Approve the proposed design of the Finance Committee for the Bersted Jubilee Hall exterior signage.**

Cllr Lainchbury explained the committee's recommendation and Members agreed.

RESOLVED to agree recommendation of the Finance Committee for Bersted Jubilee Hall exterior signage.

23010 Minutes of the Council of 11th April 2023

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Council of 11th April 2023, having been circulated in advance, be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

23011 Matters Arising from the Minutes

None.

23012 Committee Minutes

To note the minutes of the following Committees and receive any questions from Members.

- a) **To note report of Infrastructure Meeting held on 13th April 2023.**

- b) **To note the Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 25th April 2023.**

Cllr Lainchbury informed Members, election costs will be put in the general reserves gradually throughout the year, this item has been referred to the June Finance Committee meeting.

- c) **To note the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 2nd May 2023.**

The Committee Minutes were noted.

23013 Deeds and Assets and Insurance

- a) Members noted the Asset Register 2023 which was previously circulated.

Cllr Wells queried why only the building was included and not the land owned by the Parish. The Clerk informed him historically it had not been included on the Asset Register, but she would make enquiries with the Councils insurance company and Internal Auditor.

- b) Members noted the Insurance Premium for 2023 from Zurich which was previously circulated.

- c) To continue to appoint Messrs Wannops LLP as Solicitors to the Council and holder of the Deeds.

RESOLVED to appoint Messrs Wannops LLP as Solicitors and holder of the Deeds.

- d) To continue to appoint R. S Hall as Internal auditor.
Cllr Greenway queried how long had R. S Hall been the Internal Auditor and should the Council look at changing. The Clerk explained that previously it was a legal requirement to change their Internal Auditor after 7 years, if there had not been a change of Clerk/RFO, but this is no longer compulsory. She had checked NALC guidance and it now states it is only advised as best practice so is up to each individual Council. Cllr Greenway asked that the Council may consider a change in the future. Members agreed to continue with R S Hall as the Internal Auditor for this year.

RESOLVED to appoint R S Hall as Internal Auditor.

23014 To appoint Representatives to represent.

- a) NALC, WSALC, ADALC and SSALC – Cllrs Spencer & Yeates
- b) Bognor & Bersted Charities - Chairman and Cllr Greenway
- c) Council for the Protection of Rural England – Cllrs Kapp & Van Koolbergen
- d) Bognor Regis Chamber of Commerce - Cllrs Yeates & Greenway
- e) Action in Rural Sussex (AiRS) – Cllrs Van Koolbergen & Yeates
- f) Rampion – Wind farm – Cllr Wells
- g) Schools – Cllrs Greenway & Lury
- h) Notice Boards – No change to those looking after notice boards.

23015 Committees Choices

- a) **Planning, Amenities & Environment:** Cllrs Lainchbury, Ralph, Spencer, Van Koolbergen and Yeates.
- b) **Community Action:** Cllrs Kapp, Lainchbury, Lury, Ralph and Spencer,
- c) **Finance & General Purposes:** Cllrs Greenway, Lainchbury, Spencer, Van Koolbergen and Wells.

23016 Councillors

Members were reminded to complete the following for issue to Arun DC

- a) Register of Interests and Code of Conduct forms
 - b) Candidate Election Expenses Forms
 - c) Sharepoint agreement forms
- Members were asked to let the Clerk and Deputy Clerk know what training they would like to attend and whether they needed new cards or name badges.
- d) Councillor Training – The Clerk reminded members there was GDPR training at the hall on Thursday 22 June at 7pm.
 - e) Councillor Cards and name badges
 - f) Councillor Photographs – the Deputy Clerk will take photographs of those not already on the Parish website.

23017 Reports

- a) **Chairman**
Cllr Spencer's report had previously been circulated and is appended to these minutes.



- b) **Clerk/RFO**
The Clerks report had previously been circulated and is appended to these minutes.
- c) **Deputy Clerk**
The Deputy Clerk gave a verbal report that she had been helping the Clerk with preparing the year end documents for the internal auditor, attended the clerks meeting, providing support for the Trainee Clerk, ongoing internal training with the Clerk, obtaining quotes for Parish signage, hall bookings, general enquires from the public, met with Hannah Wales regarding social media and website support. Attending the Sussex Police Focus Group at Rustington on Wednesday 17 May.
- d) **Trainee Clerk**
The Trainee Clerks report had been previously circulated to members.

23018 Correspondence
None.

- 23019 Meeting Reminders**
- a) Community Action, **6pm**, 23.05.23
 - b) Finance Committee, **7.30pm**, 23.05.23
 - c) Forward Plan/ Personnel, 7pm, 30.05.23
 - d) Planning, 7pm, 06.06.23
 - e) Council, 7pm, 13.06.23
 - f) GDPR training, 7pm, 22.06.23

- 23020 Parish Litter pick Schedule – 3rd Saturday each month at 11am- Lead - Cllr Greenway**
- a) 20 May-Central Ave/Royal Parade
 - b) 17 June—Shripney
 - c) 15 July—Bersted Park
 - d) 19 August—Bersted Green

23021 Urgent Matters
None.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 20:40

SignedChairman Date