

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
OF BERSTED PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 18:30 ON TUESDAY
24th SEPTEMBER 2024, AT BERSTED JUBILEE HALL, CHALCRAFT LANE.**

Present:

Cllrs. A. Van Koolbergen (Chair), K. Greenway, A. Smith and G. Yeates.
Clerk/RFO, D. Holcombe and Deputy Clerk, S. O'Connell.

24217 Apologies for Absence- Cllr Spencer & Cllr Wells.

24218 Declarations of Interests

Members were reminded that should interests arise during the meeting they should be declared at that time.

24219 Public Session- None.

24220 Minutes of the Meeting of the 25th of June 2024

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the 25th of June 2024, having been circulated in advance, be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

24221 Matters Arising from the Minutes - None

24222 Income and Expenditure Report

The Clerk/RFO had previously circulated the current expenditure for Members to approve. Members discussed the report and Cllr Greenway requested if the income and expenditure for Operation Watershed could be shown as an actual total spend for transparency. The Clerk/RFO explained that as this report is on actual spend within the 24/25 budget, she had shown this as the 3,000 budget/3,000 spent and noted the total spend in the note's column in the report, Clerk/RFO confirmed she was happy to make the amendment if that was preferred. Members agreed to approve the report with an amendment on how Operation Watershed income and expenditure is shown. Clerk/RFO invited Cllr Greenway to come in for a finance review to look at budgets etc.

RESOLVED to approve the report with an amendment on how Operation Watershed income and expenditure is shown.

ACTION Clerk/RFO to arrange a review with Cllr Greenway.

24223 Health & Safety

The Clerk/RFO had previously circulated the current Health & Safety Report for Members to note. The Deputy Clerk explained that money from CIL could be used to repair or replace outdoor equipment and buy replacement litter bins. Members asked that some costings were given for recycled plastic benches, litter bins with cigarette stub plate and new flushing system for the men's urinals in time for the November Finance Committee Meeting.

ACTION the Deputy Clerk to seek the costs for recycled plastic benches, litter bins and new flushing system for the urinals.

24224

24/25 Operation Watershed Application Costs

The Deputy Clerk explained that a replacement footbridge was required for The Oaks and compensation for the replacement of natural riverbanks on the main site were offset on Bersted Brooks. This required 2 planning applications to be lodged at Arun DC because the Parish Council was not the landowner and therefore will incur a fee of £316 for each application, however the Prish Council do get a 50% reduction in fees. The request was being put to the committee as they were additional costs not accounted for. Members discussed and approved the costs, Cllr Greenway suggested that a contingency could be agreed by Council to enable the Clerk/RFO to address any unforeseen small additional costs like this. Members agreed.

RESOLVED to recommend to Council to approve the fees for 2 planning applications at a cost of £316.

ACTION Clerk/RFO to itemise for the October Council meeting.

24225

24/25 Reserves

The Clerk/RFO invited Members to review the Reserve Statement. Members asked questions on Operation Watershed and requested this be reviewed again at the next Finance Meeting. Members approved the Reserve Statement.

RESOLVED Clerk/RFO to update the Reserves statement for the next Finance meeting.

ACTION Clerk/RFO to itemise for the November Finance meeting for the next review.

24226

25/26 Hall Charges

The Deputy Clerk explained that it was proposed to increase the weekend hire charge for the hall only and field hire for football. Members discussed the field use by football teams and queried the lack of income from football. The Deputy Clerk explained that football hire was weather dependant, and teams did not always have enough players to make a team. Cllr Greenway proposed setting up a working group to look at optimising field hire, seconded by Cllr Yeates. The Clerk/RFO reminded Members that if after a year the field hire had not improved Members could consider ceasing football hire of the field and utilise the changing room for storage for hall users. This continues to be in demand and brings in a regular income rather than the inconsistent football income which has been the case for many years. Members approved the proposed hall charges for 1st April 2025 and the setting up of a working group to look at optimising field hire.

RESOLVED to recommend the proposed hall/field charges for 01/04/2025 to Council for approval.

ACTION Clerk/RFO to itemise for the October Council meeting for approval.

24227

25/26 Business Parish Plan Objectives

Members reviewed the Business Parish Plan Objectives and agreed to recommend to Council for approval, further objectives were discussed for Clerk/RFO to add to the current plan.

- Short term objective - Accessibility - for hearing loop for the hall and push button opening of the front door.
- Long term objective - Environment - more solar panels on the community centre roof.

- Short term objective – Emergency Resilience/Climate Change.
RESOLVED to recommend to Council for approval.
ACTION Clerk/RFO to itemise for the October Council meeting for approval.

24228 25/26 Budget -First Draft
 The Clerk/RFO presented the first draft of the 25-/26 Budget to Members for consideration. The Clerk/RFO explained that the first draft included recent budget discussion meetings given by Clerk/RFO that gave all Members the opportunity to ask questions and give their thoughts and the request from the External auditors to increase their Reserves. Clerk/RFO explained that now the hall charges have been approved she will update the income sections.
RESOLVED Clerk/RFO to revise budget as requested by Members and agenda for next Full Council meeting.
ACTION Clerk/RFO to revise budget as requested by Members and agenda for next Full Council meeting.

24229 Conclusion of Audit
 Members reviewed comments from auditors on Notice of Conclusion of Audit and noted for next year. Members noted the corrected Internal auditor errors. Members also noted there were no material concerns and no mention had been made this year with regards to reserves being low.

24230 Correspondence -None.

24231 Urgent Matters-None.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 20:38.

Signed Chairman of the Committee Date