

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
OF BERSTED PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 18:30 ON TUESDAY
18th FEBRUARY 2025, AT BERSTED JUBILEE HALL, CHALCRAFT LANE.**

Present: Cllrs. A. Van Koolbergen (Chair), K. Greenway (Vice Chair), J. Spencer, P. Woodall, G. Yeates. Clerk/RFO, D. Holcombe and Deputy Clerk, S. O’Connell.

24367 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Smith and Wells.

24368 Declarations of Interests

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

24369 Public Session

No public present.

24370 Minutes of the Meeting of the 26th November 2024

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the 26th November 2024, having been circulated in advance, be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

24371 Matters Arising from the Minutes

None.

24372 Income and Expenditure 24/25

The Income & Expenditure was previously circulated for Members to review and approve. Clerk/RFO informed Members she had no concerns.

Members agreed to approve the Income & Expenditure report.

RESOLVED to approve the current Income & Expenditure report.

24373 Health & Safety Meeting-Clerk/RFO

The Health & Safety report from 20th January had previously been circulated to Members. H&S is under Clerk/RFO remit-so for information only.

1. Grounds – Jubilee Field and Spinney

H&S CC44-Fencing ordered at a cost of £421.20, delivery received on Thursday 23/1, Groundsman confirmed he will do ad hoc within his normal hours, so no additional charge for labour.

Chippings will also be spread ad hoc.

Spinney tidy up -suggested for Sunday 25/5, 2pm- Cllr Spencer to lead, flyers could advertise this at the Electors mtg 16/5, 6pm.

Clerk/RFO has arranged for Groundsman and Cllr Spencer to attend on 12/3 the course offered by WSALC to obtain the LANTRA qualification so they would be qualified to do tree inspections for Council. CC5=£165 each.

2. Hall/Meeting Room/Office

- Gent’s toilets – systemiser not working needs replacing as urinals are not being flushed- cost around £400-FY 25/26.

- Stacking Chairs for hall already in FY 25/26 budget. Members gave their views and requested some chairs with arms, Clerk/RFO agreed and will do some further research before a suitable purchase can be identified. Deputy Clerk will ask other local Clerks at the next Clerk networking meeting.
Deputy Clerk to liaise with Caretaker and Clerk/RFO before purchase.
 - PAT Testing-Deputy Clerk to arrange, date tbc.
 - Defib Battery-Gary to ascertain as part of his regular checks and advise Deputy Clerk.
- Members noted the work identified in the Health & Safety Report of 20th January 2025.

Cllr Greenway arrived.

24374 Reserves

A copy of the latest Reserves Statement was presented to Members for review and approval. Clerk/RFO gave an overview. Members having no questions, approved the latest Reserves statement.

RESOLVED to approve the current Reserves Statement.

Cllr Spencer gave a Declarations of Personal Interest regarding the BRAFD grant application as he is on their committee.

24375 Grants FY 24/25

Grants Applications available in the Councillors drive for review before this meeting.

Clerk/RFO informed Members that grant applications are reviewed in the order they are received and there is £250 remaining in the FY 24/25 and £3,000 is available for 25/26 grants.

	Requested	Granted
Tylers Trust	250	Defer to March FY 25/26*
St Wilfrid's Hospice	500	Defer to March FY 24/25*

Members reviewed the above grant applications and Grant Awarding Policy and confirmed they would like to make an award to these organisations but are unable to do so at present as our policy does not allow a grant award towards running costs.

Clerk/RFO offered to contact the applicants to request revised applications that contain information specific to Bersted or a project for Bersted and are not for running costs. Members agreed the revised applications could be re-considered at the next Finance Committee meeting in March 2025. Members also requested that an item is added to the March agenda for a review of the grant awarding policy.

RESOLVED to agenda for March a review of the Grant award Policy and defer the applications to be reviewed again in March, leaving a remaining grant fund balance for 24/25 of a total of £250.

ACTION Clerk/RFO to contact the applicants and invite them to re-apply and defer the applications to be reviewed again in March, leaving a remaining grant fund balance for 24/25 of a total of £250 for consideration in March.

24376

Grants FY 25/26

Grants Applications available in the Councillors drive for review before this meeting.

Clerk/RFO informed Members that £3,000 is available for FY 25/26 grants. Clerk/RFO reminded the Committee to air caution when awarding so early in the financial year, as grant applications are received all year.

	Requested	Granted
Air Ambulance	500	Defer to March FY 25/26*
BRAFD	500	300
4Sight	780	Defer to March FY 25/26*
FSW	500	500

Members considered the above grant applications, Members requested that Clerk/RFO contact applicants for Air Ambulance and 4sight to re-apply as grants appear to be running costs or lacked specifics relating to Bersted, and to defer these applications to be considered in March. Regarding the FSW application Members requested in line with our policy section 15 that with the award the Clerk/RFO advises evidence will be required from them that this has been used for the project specified.

Clerk/RFO confirmed this would leave a £2,200 balance for FY 25/26 and she would agenda grant applications again for March. Cllr Greenway requested that the grant application opportunity be advertised, Members agreed.

Deputy Clerk has agreed to do this.

RESOLVED that the Council, in accordance with its powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, should incur the above expenditure, which in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the area and its inhabitants and will benefit them in the manner commensurate with expenditure.

ACTION Clerk/RFO to defer the applications and to contact applicants to submit a revised application for consideration in March.

ACTION Deputy Clerk to advertise the opportunity for grant applications.

24377

ANNUAL REVIEW-Financial Risk Management Record (NALC/JPAG)

Clerk/RFO informed Members she had reviewed the National Association of Local Councils (NALC)/(JPAG) Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioners Guide which was adopted by this Council in 2024 which is recommended as best practice, to use as a checklist to ensure financial related documents are reviewed regularly by Council. Clerk/RFO informed Members, that there are no changes since last years adoption of this policy. Members reviewed and agreed to no amendments were required.

RESOLVED Clerk/RFO to add to next Council agenda for approval.

ACTION Clerk/RFO to add to next Council agenda for approval.

24378

ANNUAL REVIEW-Investment Strategy Policy

Members reviewed and approved the Investment Strategy Policy and confirmed no changes were required.

RESOLVED Clerk/RFO to add to next Council agenda for approval.

ACTION Clerk/RFO to add to next Council agenda for approval.

24379 Correspondence

Clerk/RFO informed Members, that she has received notifications of slight increases for FY 25/26 in water charges, security call outs and broadband/phone charges. Cllr Yeates recommended a water company worth looking at. Clerk/RFO noted and will research.

24380 Urgent Matters

None.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 19:38

Signed Chairman of the Committee Date