

Upper Beeding Parish Council

Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held at the Gladys Bevan Hall on Tuesday 17th October 2023 at 7pm

Present: Councillors: B. Harber (Chair), S. Birnstingl, T Kardos and C. Warren.

Also present: Clerk: Stephen Keogh

Members of the public: None

- F: 1023:01 Election of a Chair –**
It was **RESOLVED** to re-elect Cllr B. Harber as Chair for the Finance Committee for the municipal year ending May 2024.
Proposed: Cllr C Warren; Seconded: Cllr S Birnstingl
- F: 1023:02 Apologies for absence**
There were no apologies for absence.
- F: 1023:03 Declaration of Councillors personal or prejudicial interest**
The Chairman reminded councillors that previous declarations still stand (as defined under the Localism Act 2011). No further declarations received on this occasion.
- F: 1023:04 Minutes of the last meeting**
The minutes of the Facilities Committee meeting held on [21st February 2023](#) were approved as a true record. Proposed: Cllr C Warren seconded: Cllr T Kardos & **AGREED.**
- F: 1023:05 Public Adjournment**
There were no public present.
- F: 1023:06 Audit Procedure – To Consider the Audit**
i. To confirm Mulberry & Co as Auditors.
The Clerk explained the process of selecting an auditor and the advice from WSALC. It was **AGREED to RECOMMEND to Full Council** to select Mulberry & Co as Auditors for the next year.

ii. Audit – 2023/24 – To Consider the [Final Report](#).
It was **AGREED to RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Audit Report be **NOTED** and **APPROVED.**
- F:0423:07 Policy Review – To Review the [Procurement Policy](#)**
The [Procurement Policy](#) circulated with the agenda was reviewed and discussed. It was **AGREED to RECOMMEND** to Full Council that, subject to some minor alterations, that the policy could be adopted.
- F: 0423:08 Grants and Donations**

It was **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Parish Council should award a grant of £300 to the Christmas Lunch for Dementia project and this should be taken from the Community Evets budget.

F: 0423:09

Grass Cutting Contract –

The [document](#) circulated with the agenda was reviewed and discussed.

Members felt that as this was a new contract and that there were some works which should be removed from the contract.

The St Peters' Cemetery is not in Parish Council Ownership so this should be removed from the contract.

It was **AGREED** that the document could be used for the grass cutting works in the village.

As it has been some years since the tender process has been carried out, so the Clerk was encouraged to carry out the process.

Members were happy to request a three-year agreement.

F: 0423:09

Budget 2024/25 – Start to plan for the 2024/25 Budget

i. Projects for 2024/25

The Maintenance Manager was seeking quotes for the decoration of both the changing rooms and the Office.

The play areas need some attention so need to be a priority, this may be done by saving some of the reserves and also creating an earmarked reserve for both.

A defibrillator for the Sports Hall and recreation Ground was also something to be investigated following a recent incident.

The Saltings Field project may become quite expensive if the drainage and the ditches become a financial burden.

If this is the case, the land may have to be returned to the Owner.

The Chair gave a history of the reason the land was taken on a lease by the Parish Council.

The clerk has tried to get HDC to take this on as landlords, but so far, they have only commented that the Parish Council is responsible for all maintenance.

Members felt that there may be some value in asking Cllr Croker to investigate whether the HDC would be interested in taking he land back as part of the biodiversity Net Gain project which the District Council is involved with.

The lease expires in 2027.

Members would be asked to come forward with projects for the coming year at Full Council on 31st October 2023.

[Charges for 2023/24](#) and beyond

Sports Hall fees

The sports hall charges were reviewed, it was **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council an increase of all the charges by £1 per hour.

Allotment fees

The current charge is 0.19778 per square meter. Fees were increased in 2022 by 10%. A year's notice must be given to increase allotment fees above inflation. It was **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council an inflationary increase for 2024 and to recommend a further 10% increase with effect from 1st January 2025.

Proposed Cllr Warren, seconded Cllr Birnstingl and **AGREED**

iii. Budget [2024/25](#). For agreement on 21/11/2023

The Clerk was asked to provide a further budget for agreement on 21st November 2023, this would include an inflationary increase and a 4% increase across all the main codes.

The Budget should, include two new earmarked reserves for the play areas.

F: 0423:10 Finance Report –

The [Clerks Report](#) circulated with the agenda was discussed and **NOTED**.

F: 0423:11 Year End Expenditure –

The year to date expenditure against budget ([summary](#) and [detailed](#) reports, [balance sheet](#)). was discussed and **NOTED**.

F: 0423:12 Matters raised by Councillors - to receive matters for information or for discussion in future agendas.

There were no matters raised.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.30pm

Signed:

Dated: