



**Minutes of a Meeting of the
PARISH COUNCIL**
held on
Tuesday 14 November 2023 at 8:00pm

PRESENT: Cllrs: Steve Collett, Hilary Doyle (Chair), Dave Ellis, Katherine Giles, Ian Leake and Kiran Meka
Also Present: Ceri Rance, Clerk; Amanda Sculley, Deputy Clerk; Two members of the public

85 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Andy Fish, Mark Feazey and Amanda McLean with apologies for lateness received from Cllr Leake. Reasons were supplied to the Clerk.

86 CO-OPTION OF A COUNCILLOR

Councillors had had an opportunity to talk with the co-option candidate before the meeting to exchange information and ask questions. It was proposed by Cllr Collett, seconded by Cllr Ellis and **RESOLVED** that Paul Day be co-opted onto the council.

87 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Leake declared an interest in the grant to the All Saints and St Michael's church as he is on the church roll.

[20.04 – Meeting adjourned]

88 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

[20.14 – Meeting reconvened]

89 MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 10 OCTOBER 2023

It was proposed by Cllr Doyle, seconded by Cllr Giles and **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10 October 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record.

90 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 10 OCTOBER 2023

None.

91 COMMITTEE MINUTES

91.1 Staffing Committee – held on 31 October 2023

It was proposed by Cllr Ellis, seconded by Cllr Collett and **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Staffing Committee held on 31 October 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record.

91.2 Planning & Transportation Committee – held on 31 October 2023

It was proposed by Cllr Collett, seconded by Cllr Doyle and **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Planning and Transportation Committee held on 31 October 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record.

92 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEE MINUTES

92.1 Staffing Committee – held on 31 October 2023

The Staffing Committee had considered the probable future staffing needs at the new Binfield Health and Community Hub should Binfield Parish Council take on the management of the centre, and the recommendation read: "that the current staff cover the staffing requirements for the first three months in order to gather information of what the staffing requirements are likely to be with costs

being taken from CIL funds.” After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Ellis, seconded by Cllr Collett and **RESOLVED** that the recommendation be adopted.

93 Pig Little and Blue Mountain SANG Maintenance

The management of the Pig Little and Blue Mountain SANGs is being neglected as neither the developer nor Bracknell Forest Council is undertaking the work. The Biodiversity is degrading. The transfer of the land from the developer to the Borough Council has been delayed by longstanding issues. It was agreed that a meeting would be requested between the parish council and Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) to request the latest information about the position and to put pressure on them to get the matter resolved in order that the open spaces can be kept in good condition and biodiversity preserved. BFC should be asked what action they are taking and the timescales involved.

94 **ACCOUNTS 2023-24**

94.1 Payment Approvals

It was proposed by Cllr Doyle, seconded by Cllr Ellis and **RESOLVED** to accept the payment list totalling £85,995.64 and these be approved for payment. Cllr Collett will be authorising the payments.
Items to add to the asset register: None.

94.2 Projected Spend

The projected spend spreadsheet was **NOTED**.

94.3 CIL Update and Tracker

The tracker spreadsheet was **NOTED**. There had been no change since the last meeting.

94.4 Interim Internal Audit

Councillors considered the Internal Auditor’s report, his recommendations and the proposed response by the council. It was proposed by Cllr Doyle, seconded by Cllr Collett and **RESOLVED** to accept the report as stated:

- 94.4.1 Issue: The Council does not routinely retain goods received notes.
Recommendation: These should be held, to demonstrate that the Council has received goods for which it has paid. This is a requirement of financial regulations.
Response: Goods received notes will be scanned and retained.
- 94.4.2 Issue: The Clerk’s annual pay award letter should be signed by the Chairman or Chair of Staffing Committee.
Recommendation: It is currently signed by the Deputy Clerk but should be signed by a Councillor.
Response: In future this will be signed by the Chairman or Chair of Staffing.
- 94.4.3 Issue: A new Internal Controller has now been appointed.
Recommendation: It is recommended that evidenced checks on the bank reconciliation are put back into place as soon as possible, as there is no evidence that this check has been in place since June.
Response: Cllr McLean, the new Internal Controller has started the regular work to cover Internal Control tasks which will include monthly bank statement and reconciliation checks.

Thanks were given to the Responsible Financial Officer for her detailed work throughout the year.

94.5 Internal Controller

Cllr McLean has met with the Responsible Financial Officer to discuss the task list. The first set of bank statements and reconciliations for October have been checked and are correct. There are plans in place to consider all the tasks by the end of the council year.

[20.43 – Cllr Leake joined the meeting]

94.6 2024-25 Budget

Councillors had met on 7 November to focus on the budget. The outcome of the meeting was presented for consideration. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Doyle, seconded by Cllr Collett and **RESOLVED** that the precept be provisionally set at £291,215.50 which is an increase of 2.29% based on a household number of 4736 households. The final precept will be decided at a future Council meeting, prior to the submission deadline at the end of January, after the household numbers are provided by Bracknell Forest Council in early December.

95 **REPORTS FOR DECISION**

95.1 Grant Applications

Councillors considered three further grant applications that had been received, from:

St Marks Church	£2,000.00
Shopmobility	£1,000.00
Youthline	£2,000.00

After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Giles, seconded by Cllr Doyle and **RESOLVED** that the three grants be paid with the funds from the grants budget. It was accepted that this would exceed the budget by £1,608.00 but this would be offset by the underspend expected by year end.

95.2 Replacement of Play Area Surface on Wicks Green

Councillors considered the report detailing the quotations received from three contractors. It was proposed by Cllr Doyle, seconded by Cllr Collett and **RESOLVED** that Contractor C be engaged to undertake the work at a cost of not more than £53,818.00 with funds coming from CIL funds, subject to the following information required:

What are the guarantees for the work?

What is the breakdown of the provisional costs? The removal of the mulch and bark should not cost more than £6,000.

How long will the job take and when can it start?

96 **REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**

96.1 Clerk's Report

The report was **NOTED** and the following comments made.

96.1.1 Biodiversity Responsibilities of Binfield Parish Council

The Parish Council has a duty to include biodiversity conservation and improvement in all its decision making under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006), which was reinforced in the Environment Act (2001). Government guidance was published on 17th May 2023 asking for councils to:

1. complete their first consideration of what action to take for biodiversity by 1st January 2024 and
2. agree policies and objectives as soon as possible afterwards.

This means, in effect, that the Council must have a statement of intent on conserving and improving biodiversity, and also have identified the actions (tasks) needed for implementing it.

It was proposed by Cllr Doyle, seconded by Cllr Meka and **RESOLVED** that:

The Policy Working Group meet to:

- finalise a statement on biodiversity.
- provide a list of actions/tasks achievable by the Council during the Council term (including a review of Council policies)
- discuss the creation of a new policy on biodiversity.

The Council agrees that biodiversity should form a key part of its strategy.

96.1.2 Amendment to Play Equipment Replacement Budget

Following the Council's decision to replace the see-saw and bridge on Foxley Fields, the Amenity Officer has received a revised cost for the project. The company replacing the bridge, HAGS, needed to remove one of the stones in the safety zone. Due to this removal being necessary, Councillors are asked to approve an additional £300.69 from CIL to complete the work.

It was proposed by Cllr Doyle, seconded by Cllr Collett and **RESOLVED** that additional funds of £300.69 be agreed from CIL to increase the budget for this job to £10,300.69.

96.1.3 Pizza Trailer

The council had been approached to allow a chrome airstream style food trailer with a wood fired oven to park in the parish office car park on a couple of evenings per week. It was agreed that the car park is regularly too busy in the evenings and that the enquirer should be directed to those who control the Oakmede car park as alternative.

96.1.4 Update on Drainage Works to Wicks Green and Silver Jubilee Field

The update was noted - Councillors were pleased that the open spaces were being restored after completion of the works.

96.1.5 Remembrance Day Parade

Residents and a number of those who had paraded have thanked the Parish Council, and particularly the office staff, for making the parade such a successful event. Particular thanks were given for the information given as the parade formed so that participants knew clearly what was expected of them. Thanks are recorded for the work done by Alisa and Ceri towards the smooth running of the event.

97 **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None

Meeting Closed 10:00pm

Ally Doyle