

BUXTED PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held in High Hurstwood Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. 25th November 2014

Present: Cllrs. McQuarrie(Chairman), Blandford, Dopson and Rose
Also present: C Feltham and R Macklen, Clerks to the Parish Council.

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
Received from Cllrs Milner and Skinner

2 **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS.**

None

3 **REVIEW OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd October 2014 were approved and signed at the Parish Council meeting on 12th November 2013 and there were no further matters arising.

4 **REMUNERATION OF CLERK AND CARETAKER 2014/2015**

Members reviewed details of the Clerk and Caretakers remuneration for 2014/2015 and agreed to continue to follow the recommended NALC scale and the inclusion of the Clerk to be accredited with CiLCA to progress beyond Scale Point 33. These figures have been built into the budget for 2015/16.

The Committee also recommends to the Parish Council that the existing remuneration arrangements for the caretaker continue unchanged.

This was proposed by Cllr Rose and seconded by Cllr Dopson.

5 **PRECEPT AND BUDGET 2015/2016**

- Members discussed in detail aspects of the proposed budget. The Clerks advised of the two amendments for allotments water rates to be increased to £200 (as this is the agreed figure which the parish council have previously agreed to contribute). Also we have received notification of the SALC and NALC contributions for 2015/2016 and the budget amended to reflect the correct figure.
- The vast expense of emptying dog bins was discussed along with the considered costing's for the proposed new dog bin which would be installed soon.
- The update and repair of the parish council website was discussed and agreed that this will be somewhere in the region of £4000 during the 2014/2015 financial year, and that it was hoped that the maintenance of the website would be of minimal cost to the parish council in 2015/2016.
- Both the upkeep of the Reading Room and ongoing costs of the allotments in Buxted were discussed and agreed that the budget should be increased marginally to take into account these costs.
- Following the Annual Assembly of 2013 it was decided between the residents of Buxted Parish and the Parish Council that there was no need to produce a new Parish Plan. Therefore these fund shall be allocated into other areas where there is greater need for the funds. The changes to be made in the Ear Marked Reserves (EMR) as follows:

- Move £1000 from Parish Plan EMR to Computer and Office Equipment EMR
- Move £1500 from Parish Plan EMR to Legal and Valuation Fees EMR
- Move £6500 from Parish Plan EMR to Repairs and Renewals EMR
- A new EMR needs to be created for the Offsite Play Area funds which were received from Taylor Wimpy following the Beechbrook Park development.
- A new EMR need to be created for the New Parish Hall funds which are due to be received from Wealden District Council following the Ashdown Park development.
- Members of the Finance Committee noted that the Parish Council had chosen not to increase the precept in 2013/2014, however, there was a need to request an increase in the precept for 2015/2016 to take into account rising costs. This has been calculated at an additional £1069 which is just below 1.3% and in line with the rate of inflation.

6 **ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL AUDIT**

The internal audit was conducted in accordance with the terms of reference agreed with Mulberry & Co. and the Clerk reported that the Annual Return for the year ending 31st March 2014 had received a clean bill of health from the internal and the external auditors.

7 **REVIEW OF BUXTED PARISH COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

The Financial regulations have been updated and these were formally adopted by the Parish Council at its meeting on 11th November 2014 .

8 **RISK ASSESSMENT**

It was noted that the Risk Assessment needs to be updated and this will be done prior to the Property Committee to be held in June 2015.

It was also noted that the two amounts of Section 106 money should have separate bank accounts with cheque books and a running spreadsheet to show details of any expenditure.

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS TO FULL COUNCIL**

- That the remuneration for the Clerks be set in accordance with current contracts which reflect NALC scales and adopt the proposed Clerks pay scale (as set out in the attached report)
- That the precept for 2015/16 be increased by 1.3% to reflect the rate of inflation thus showing a Receipts budget including the Precept of £85,522.69 and the Payments budget be £85,500.00 leaving a predicted £22.69 surplus at the end of the financial year.
- Movement of Ear Marked Reserves funds (as recommended above)

The meeting closed at 8.28 p.m.

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

DRAFT