



Batheaston Parish Council
Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance Committee
held at 7:15pm on Monday 16th December 2024
at the Rhymes Pavilion, Coalpit Road, BA1 7NW
Present: Councillors Alexis Pavlou (Chair of the Committee),
Peter Bryant, Arif Butt, and Sue Peachey.

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1. There was **no public participation**.
2. There were **no apologies for absence**.
3. There were **no declarations of interest** from Councillors.
4. **The Committee approved** the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2nd May 2024.

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

5. Monthly transactions

6. **Monthly transactions**

- 6.1. The **Committee deferred** approval of the transactions undertaken up to November 2024.

- 6.1.1. The Clerk will bring to the next meeting.

Clerk

- 6.2. The **Committee noted** that bank reconciliations have been signed by the Chair of the Committee to November 2024.

7. **Finance performance to end November 2024** (Clerk, A)

- 7.1. The **Committee received** a report and commentary on the financial position at the end of the November 2024 from the Clerk.

- 7.2. He commented that the key items of note were:

- 7.2.1. Staff costs were overstated in the budget and are likely to come in £12k under budget.
- 7.2.2. Income is about £3,900 ahead of budget due to a higher than usual VAT reclaim for 23/24.
- 7.2.3. Software - website and finance system - are both overbudget, due to unbudgeted costs this year.

- 7.2.4. Repair of the stonemasonry in the Secret Garden; repair or decommissioning of streetlights, and replacement of Noticeboards are unbudgeted expenses which may fall in this financial year.
 - 7.2.5. Projections assume that known requests for community grants will be given in full.
 - 7.2.6. On that basis, the year-end position would be operational spend would be £2k under budget, and the "discretionary pot" (projects and grants) will be £45k below budget.
 - 7.2.7. the Council's reserves (ignoring the two ring-fenced for Playground and Sports Foundation, which total ca. £9.3k) would end the year at approximately £100k.
- 7.3.** The Committee discussed the report and commented that it was wise for the Council to build up reserves, to serve for developing its assets.
- 7.3.1. They noted that the Community and Communications Working Group had asked the Clerk to consider alternatives to the current website.
 - 7.3.2. They noted the challenges relating to the finance system and asked that he conduct a preliminary assessment of alternative systems, with a view to targeting implementation for the start of financial year 26/27.

8. Finance Operations Matters

- 8.1.** The **Committee approved** a £25 Christmas bonus to staff.

Clerk

- 8.2.** The **Committee approved** a recommendation to re-appoint the Internal Auditor for 2024/25.

Clerk

- 8.3.** The **Committee approved** the recommendation not to take out a PRS/PPL licence for the Rhymes Pavilion.

- 8.3.1. They instructed the Clerk to make sure that hirers would be responsible for licensing any music that they played in the building.

Clerk

- 8.4.** The **Committee considered** the item to approve the selection of the supplier for the refurbishment of the Council's noticeboards.

- 8.4.1. They **confirmed** that the process the Clerk had undertaken was acceptable and confirmed with necessary practice.

- 8.4.2. The Clerk commented that the total cost exceeded that approved by Council in November 2022, and that therefore the Committee would not be able to approve the letting of contracts. It would be recommending a decision to Council.

- 8.4.3. The Committee were concerned about the justification of the expenditure; that the Parish Council would have too many noticeboards and would be unlikely to be able to maintain the notices in them all.

8.4.4. The Committee **instructed the Clerk** to prepare options for the next Council meeting, to include the proposal as presented to the Committee, and a reduced number of noticeboards.

Clerk

BUDGET AND PRECEPT SETTING FOR 2025/26

9. Process and Timetable for setting the Budget.

9.1. The **Committee approved** a proposal setting out the timetable and process by which the budget and precept for 2025/26 will be set.

9.1.1. They noted that a further meeting of the Committee will need to take place in late January, to allow Council to approve the Precept at its meeting of 11th February.

The Meeting closed at 8:23pm

Forthcoming Meetings:

Council Meeting, 14th January 2025

Council and Committee meetings are open to the public, and members of the public are welcome to join and may speak by invitation.

Signed by Cllr Alexis Pavlou, Chair of the Committee:

Date:

DRAFT UNAPPROVED