

BEARSTED PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance and General Policy Committee meeting of Bearsted Parish Council held at Madginford Hall, Egremont Road, Bearsted on Wednesday 5th July, 2017 at 7:30pm

Present: Cllr Paul Young (Chair)
Cllr Geoff Bennett
Cllr Richard Camp
Cllr Jon Hughes
Cllr Pat Marshall MBE

Also in attendance was the clerk Mrs Sarah Lewis. There were no members of the public present.

REPORTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no reports.

1. Apologies and absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Richard Ash (family commitments) and Cllr Helena Goodwin (holiday).

2. Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying

There were no such declarations.

3. Minutes.

The minutes of the Finance and General Policy Committee meeting of Wednesday 7th June, 2017 were signed as true and correct record.

4. Matters arising from the last minutes.

The committee were updated on action points from the previous meeting.

5. Financial matters

Cheques and Finance approval from other committees. Payments requests to date were examined by the committee and approved by unanimous vote. Income and Expenditure. Reports to follow allowing for the newly appointed finance administrator to collate the necessary paperwork. Bank accounts: Recent statements were examined and unanimously approved.

6. Resolution – HR Update.

To resolve to go into closed session and to exclude the press and public during items 19 (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 in accordance with standing order 10 (xi)

7. Madginford Hall

The Committee were informed that there are currently ongoing discussions between Madginford Hall Trustees Committee and Madginford School regarding the use of the Madginford Hall car park. The land and hall were originally leased by KCC to Bearsted Parish Council as custodian trustees, and in turn leased to Madginford Hall Committee. Councillors were informed that the original lease from KCC states that the car park should be used for visitors and staff to the hall

and Parish Office, it could also be used for parents dropping off school children and shoppers visiting the local parade of shops. There is no mention of the car park being used for school staff for the duration of the school working day.

There are some spaces that are allocated to the school in front of the library however the committee were told that these spaces are exceeded by staff requirements. Legal advice is now being sought to try and remedy/ease the situation. The extension to the hall building which houses the Parish Office is owned by Bearsted Parish Council. A condition of its original planning application was to provide an extra 8 parking spaces.

Following a discussion, the committee voted to request from Madginford Hall Trustees that 2 parking spaces are made available solely for the use of the Parish Council, to be situated close to the entrance to the office. This was voted by four in favour and one abstention.

ACTION: PM

8. Ratification of payment to Golding Consultancy.

This matter was unanimously agreed.

9. Internet Banking

A discussion took place regarding the current banking provision and the opportunity for internet banking. The Clerk reported that the current provider, NatWest, does not offer the internal control provision that Financial Regulations require. The Clerk would need to be a signatory and there is no provision for two separate authorisations on individual payments. Councillor Richard Camp will investigate other options, however the Clerk will obtain an application pack from Unity Trust Bank and details.

ACTION: RC / CLERK

10. Bank signatories

In view of the previous item, this item was deferred.

11. The use of Google Drive for the Admin team

The committee were asked to revisit their previous resolution for the use of Google Drive at the Parish Office. The Committee agreed that it would be advantageous to investigate any similar updated systems and would like to revisit the benefits of Google Drive. Cllr Young will approach Cllr Conner in this respect.

ACTION: PY

12. IT support

To agree to online IT support for the admin team on an ad hoc basis. The committee discussed the need for IT support for the equipment in the office. The Clerk informed them of a company named Compute 4 U who will provide software backup on an annual basis. There would also be the opportunity to lease equipment from the company which could be considered a financially viable option. The Clerk will approach the company for prices to be discussed at full council.

ACTION: CLERK

13. DSE ratification.

Following the recent Health and Safety assessment for the Clerk, the report was unanimously agreed to be ratified. A tracker ball mouse will be ordered for the Clerk at the earliest opportunity.

ACTION: RC

14. Pension provision

To consider pension provision for Parish Council staff. Council were asked by the Clerk to consider the Local Government Pension Scheme in favour of the current NEST provision. The paperwork will be passed to Cllr Goodwin to be reviewed and further discussed at the next meeting.

ACTION: HG

15. Correspondence

There was no such correspondence to discuss.

16. Downs Mail.

To decide what issues, if any, the committee would like highlighted on the upcoming Down's Mail page for Bearsted Parish Council.

There were no suggestions from the committee for the Down's Mail page, however the committee would like to see a list of defibrillator locations in village to be printed on the BPC newsletter.

17. Future agenda items

Office opening hours
Event management
Farmers Market

18. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Finance and General Policy Committee will be held on Wednesday 2 August, 2017 at Madginford Hall at 7.30pm

19. HR Update

As previously resolved, the meeting went into closed session to discuss item 19.

There being no further business to transact, the meeting ended at 9:16pm

Signed..... Date.....