



Minutes of the Finance Working Group meeting of Bearsted Parish Council

Parish Office, Madginford Hall, Egremont Road, Bearsted on Thursday 9th July 2026 at 11am

Present:

Cllr Richard Ash MBE (Chair)

Also, in attendance was the Clerk Joanne Upton and members of the Leases Working Group, Cllr's David Hall, Christopher Waters and Val Springett.

1. To Elect a Chairperson

It was agreed that Cllr Ash would Chair this meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest, Dispensation or Lobbying

There were no declarations.

3. Apologies and absences

Apologies were received and duly noted for Cllr's Huseyin, Jagger and Smith.

4. Signing of the minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 11th June 2026 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

5. KCC Rent Review & Lease

Background: In July 2025 KCC wrote to BPC advising they had now completed a rent review, that should have taken place in August 2024. The new rent proposal was £2750 per annum up from £100 per annum. BPC then employed a Chartered Surveyor to undertake a valuation on the land at Madginford Hall to provide a value to purchase the land, which would allow BPC to safeguard the land as a community asset for the future. The Surveyor also provided a rental valuation at £1650 per annum. This valuation report was provided to KCC with an offer to purchase the land for £56,500. BPC have not received formal refusal to purchase the land. KCC, after undertaking an independent valuation, have now proposed the rent at £1915 per annum back dated to August 2024.

It was agreed to recommend to Full Council to agree the rent at £1915 per annum, without prejudice to ongoing discussions to purchase the land, but back dated to 7th July 2025. KCC undertook the rent review late and allowed no time for the Parish Council to budget for the increase in cost. BPC cannot ask Madginford Hall Committee to retrospectively pay for any increase to the rent.

It was agreed that BPC writes to the KCC Cabinet Member for property to ask for a review of our proposal to purchase the land or a formal decision and reason for declining the offer.

6. Finance (Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011/817)

- a. Resolution to approve/ratify quotations or payments:
 - i. KCC £2795 survey for pedestrian crossing at Roundwell. It was agreed to recommend approval to Full Council.
 - ii. Warings £270 to clear an unmanaged allotment plot at the Street. It was agreed to recommend approval to Full Council. It was agreed the Environment Committee should reconsider the deposit amount for plots.
- b. Grants and Donations: Bearsted & Thurnham Fayre: £732 for toilet hire. It was agreed to recommend approval to Full Council.
- c. Review July Payments: It was agreed to recommend approval to Full Council.
- d. Review Finance Reports: It was agreed to recommend approval to Full Council.
- e. Review Balance of Accounts: It was agreed to recommend approval to Full Council.

7. Pay Rates for Finance Officer

It was agreed to recommend approval to Full Council to increase pay by 2.5% to £21.00 per hour, in line with RPI and as per the contract terms.

8. Bank Accounts

The Unity Fixed rate account is now closed, a balance of £93,500 has been transferred to the current account. It was agreed to transfer £65,000 to the Unity Instant Saver Account until the Hampshire Fixed rate account ends in September before setting up another fixed rate savings account.

9. Date of next meeting, 10th September 2026

There being no further business to transact, the meeting ended at 11:41 hrs.

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