

Burnham Parish Council
Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 13th February 2024 at 6:30pm in Burnham Park Hall.

Committee members present:

Cllr Alexa Collins (Vice Chair)
Cllr David Pepler

Cllr Marie Hammon
Cllr Jackie Slater

Cllr Carol Linton (Chair)

In attendance:

Officers of the Council:

Steve Milton – Locum Parish Clerk
Rupinder Gaidhu - Finance Manager

Members of the Public 0

PR24/01. Apologies

Apologies were submitted from Cllr Judith Foster, Cllr Ekta Kaur Ross, Trevor Steward and the reasons given were accepted.

PR24/02. Declarations of interest

Cllr Alexa Collins declared a non-registrable interest in the matter set out under minute PR24/11 below as one of the named contractors provided services for her employer. Cllr Collins remained in the meeting and spoke on the item.

PR24/03. Public Forum

There were no public questions or statements made at the meeting.

PR24/04. Minutes

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 20th November 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

PR24/05. Finances

The Committee noted that the management accounts had been submitted to the full Council for approval. The only serious area of concern related to the projected overspend on Burnham Park Hall and members noted that the Locum Clerk was working with the hall manager to address the issue. The Committee also noted the Locum Clerk's update on changes to future financial reporting. From 1st April these reports would be run direct from the Council's Sage accounting system to avoid unnecessary duplication with Excel spreadsheets. Members supported the changes.

PR24/06. Expenditure

The Finance Manager reported that there were no new items for approval. The Locum Clerk reported that the Christmas lights expenditure had been authorised by the full Council in the sum of £36,600. This was shown as expenditure from general reserves, when the Council had requested this to be drawn from the CIL reserves.

RESOLVED: Following approval of this expenditure by full council, the sum of £36,600 be vired from the CIL reserve to the general reserves to fund the new Christmas light installation.

PR24/07. Project updates

The Committee noted that progress with the Neighbourhood Plan had stalled following the departure of the Clerk and that this needed to be brought back on track.

RESOLVED: That the Council's Neighbourhood Plan consultant, O'Neill Homer, be asked to provide an update to the next meeting together with an outline of the next steps in the process.

PR24/08. Eco-Audit/Green Strategy

The Committee noted the Locum Clerk's update report. Members discussed a number of related issues including reducing paper use, the use of digital resources and hyperlinks in agenda documents (particularly links to planning documents) and office lighting.

PR24/09. Staffing

The Committee noted that the advertisement period for the vacant Clerk's position was due to close on 23rd February. Two requests for application forms had been received at the date of this meeting.

PR24/010. Exclusion of Press & Public

RESOLVED: that, in accordance with the provisions of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the matters set out under minutes PR24/11 - PR24/14 below due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

PR24/011. Quotations and Tenders: Provision of IT Services

The Committee considered quotations received for the provision of IT support services for the Council. Members noted that it was not possible to make a direct comparison between the tenders as the companies had quoted for different solutions. It was considered that all companies should be requested to quote on the basis of providing Microsoft 365 for staff and councillors, system security and monitoring, off site cloud back up and weekday support services during normal office hours.

RESOLVED: that consideration of the tenders be deferred to enable comparable quotations to be submitted.

PR24/012. Quotations and Tenders: New internal Doors at Cherry Orchard Cottage

The Committee considered quotations for the replacement of the internal fire doors at Cherry Orchard Cottage. Members noted that the existing doors were over 30 years old, in poor repair and failed to meet modern building regulation standards.

RESOLVED: that consideration of this matter be deferred to enable a more thorough inspection of the doors to be undertaken.

PR24/013. Lent Green Lane

The Committee noted the terms agreed for the lease.

PR24/014. Staffing

The Committee noted the poor response to the advertised Clerk's vacancy. It was noted that applications closed on 23rd February.

RESOLVED: that in the absence of suitable applications after 23rd February, the Locum Clerk be asked to review the existing terms and conditions of employment with a view of enhancing the possibility of attracting suitably qualified applicants for the position of Clerk.

The meeting closed at 7.25pm
Date of next meeting: Tuesday 23rd April

Signature: _____

Date: _____

23/4/24