

Burwell Parish Council

Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Meeting held on 29th November 2022 at
Gardiner Memorial Hall

Present: Hazel Williams (Chair), Liz Swift, Michael Swift, Paul Webb, Brenda Wilson, Ian Woodroofe, and Yvonne Rix.

F&GP/29112022/01 Apologies for absences and declarations of interests

Gus Jones and Joan Lonsdale

F&GP/29112022/02 Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 27th September 2022

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 27th September 2022 were approved.

F&GP/29112022/03 Consideration of the Action Sheet

The following updates were noted.

| PROJECT | INFORMATION AND UPDATES |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Local Council Risk System | Work in progress |
| CCLA Investment | Funds at 31.10.22 £101,899.89 |

F&GP/29112022/04 Precept and Budget for 2023/2024

Yvonne Rix talked through a possible draft budget for 2023/2024. The total for the initial draft budget is well above the amount likely to be raised through the precept and income from the other Council sources such as the cemetery and hall hire. High energy rates, increases in insurance costs, salaries, and general inflation currently at a rate of around 10% will put pressure on the budget and careful consideration will need to be given when it comes to looking at hall hire rates and other costs such as flood lighting charges. Having looked at the draft budget the working group makes the following recommendation to Full Council.

The Finance and General Purposes Working Group recommends that there should be a 10% increase in the 2022/2023 band D rate of £75.60 increasing the band D rate for 2023/2024 to £83.16. This will see an increase of £7.56 pa or 14.5p per week for a band D household and will equate to a precept of £205,529.94 for Burwell Parish Council. The precept figure of £205,529.94 should be submitted to ECDC.

Yvonne Rix to work on the budget in reflection of the proposed recommendation for the precept.

F&GP/29112022/05 Insurance – 5-year contract with Zurich ends 31.5.2023

The Council currently has a five-year term Insurance Policy with Zurich Municipal which comes to an end on May 31st 2023. The Clerk was asked to start obtaining some quotes from insurers in readiness for renewing the Council's insurance provision

F&GP/29112022/06 Allotment Land – Burwell Museum

An email has been received from the Burwell Museum Trustees about the allotment allocated to Paul Hawes. They have asked if the Museum can take over the allotment from him. They also asked about the option of the Museum gaining the area as part of the Museum land.

The Group agreed that it would be acceptable for the Museum Trustees to be allocated the land as an allotment, but it would need to be used and maintained in accordance with the allotment regulations. Transferring the land to the ownership of the Museum is more difficult as permission would need to be acquired from the Secretary of State as the area would no longer be classed as an allotment. It was agreed that going down this route would not be appropriate.

F&GP/29112022/07 Burwell Carnival – Use of the Recreation Ground (Fair rides)

The Carnival Committee has asked if it is possible to use the Recreation for the Carnival next year and if possible, for them to position some of the heavier fair rides nearer to the far end of the field. There is some concern with this due to the possibility of damage to the pitches and trim track, although a condition could be put in place that the Carnival would be responsible for the repair of any damage caused. It was agreed that in the first instance Liz Swift should attend a meeting with the Carnival Committee on site to look at the exact positions that they are looking at and to discuss ways to prevent damage.

F&GP/29112022/08 Review of the Financial Regulations

The Financial Regulations were reviewed with the following recommendation being made to Full Council.

The Finance and General Purposes Working Group recommends to Full Council that the following two changes are made:

5.4 – That the wording (normally the 2nd Tuesday of each Month) is removed to reflect that Council payments are considered at all meetings of Full Council, not just the first.

6.19 – that the sum of £250 limit on the credit card issued to employees is changed to £500

F&GP/29112022/09 Review of the following:

Review of the Risk Management Policy

Having reviewed the Risk Management Policy the Finance and General Purposes Working Group recommends to Full Council that the Policy continues to meet the needs of the Council without any changes being made.

Review of the Direct Debits

The following direct debits were reviewed with the following recommendation being made to Full Council.

The Finance and General Working Group having reviewed all direct debits recommends to Full Council that they remain in place for a further year.

Direct Debits:

Anglian Water/Wave – Various properties

British Gas – Various properties

British Telecom – Telephone and Internet (JRR, MH, GMH)

Corona Energy Retail – Various properties

East Cambs District Council – Various properties

HMRC (VAT)

Information Commissioners Office

JPMC Re Paypal (Tennis Courts)

Lloyds Bank – Payment cards

NEST Pension

Siemens – Photocopier

Vodafone Limited – Network link between Recreation Ground and Jubilee Reading Room

Review of the Safeguarding of Funds and Internal Controls

The group reviewed the Safeguarding of Funds and Internal Controls and recommends to Full Council that all internal controls satisfy the needs of the Council and safeguarding of funds is in place and no changes are required to the document or further action being taken.

Review of all Council Policies

The Group agreed to delay the review of the Council's policies until after the election has taken place in May 2023 and new working groups are in place.

Review of Standing Orders –

The Standing Orders had been reviewed 31.5.2022. and therefore, do not require to be reviewed until next year.

F&GP/29112022/10 Any other matters and matters for discussion at the next Meeting

LGPS

Details of the draft employer pension contribution rate for Burwell Parish Council for the 3-year period of April 1st 2023 to 31st March 2026 has been received. The rate will be 20.5%, 1% lower than currently. It was agreed that the new rate should be accepted.

Key Holders – Mobile Phones

Both keyholders currently have basic phones which will not allow for the app connected with the security system at the Gardiner Memorial Hall to be used. This means that the first point of contact should there be an issue is Paul Webb who currently has the app on his mobile phone. It was agreed that Paul Webb should look for possible options for a smart phone for each of the keyholders. The option of refurbished phones should also be considered.

Energy Contract

The Council's energy contract with Corona Retail is due to expire at the end of March 2023. Great Annual Savings has looked at possible energy contracts to start after 1st April and have advised that the contract should be set up now to avoid any further hypes in energy prices. The best price that Great Annual Savings is able to secure at this point is with Engie at an overall annual cost of about £28,000. This is around four times the existing cost. The Council has been fortunate in that the prices secured with the previous contract, both the unit price and the standing rate were both very good value. Power had been given by the Parish Council for the Finance and General Purposes Group to accept the quotation if they felt appropriate and to start the contract process.

The Finance and General Purposes Group recommends to Full Council that the quotation from Engie is accepted to avoid incurring any higher rates.

F&GP/29112022/10 Date of the next meeting – 31st January 2023

Signed

Dated