

# Upper Beeding Parish Council

## Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held at the Beeding and Bramber Village Hall on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 7pm

**Present: Councillors:** B. Harber (Chair) and S Birnstingl, F Bull, T Kardos and C Warren.

**Also present:** Clerk: Stephen Keogh

**Members of the public:** None

**F: 0424:01      Apologies for absence**  
There were no apologies.

**F: 0424:02      Declaration of Councillors personal or prejudicial interest**  
The Chairman reminded councillors that previous declarations still stand (as defined under the Localism Act 2011).  
There were no additional Declarations of Interest.

**F: 0424:04      Public Adjournment** – to receive questions & comments from members of the public.  
There were no public present.

**F: 0424 :05      Annual Governance and Accountability Report ([AGAR](#))** – to review and discuss

        i.      [Annual Return](#)  
The Annual Return was **NOTED**.  
The Clerk reported that Cllrs F Bull had highlighted a possible error in the final numbers.  
The Transfer from one code to the Earmarked Reserves appears to have skewed the figures.  
It was **AGREED** to defer any decision on the figures until the error was corrected.  
The Auditor was to attend on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April, and this may be when the figures can be corrected.  
The Clerk was in contact with Rialtas, the software company and they will be able to correct the figures.

        ii.     [Reserves](#)  
The reserves were discussed.  
The current expectation is that the end of year should provide enough reserves to ensure that the Council can deal with most emergency issues.

NALC recommend that reserves should be 30% - 50% of the precept; this figure has been reached.

Future surpluses will be channelled into the earmarked reserves for the play area which require some improvement.  
The Riverside Walk will use up some of the unallocated Reserves.  
Cllr F Bull asked if there was a clearer way for the reports to show various costs and the way the reserves were broken Down.

**F: 0424 :06**      **Finance Report** – To consider the Clerk’s [Report](#)  
The Clerks report circulated with the agenda was **NOTED**.

**F: 0424: 07**      **2023-24 Final Accounts**  
The year to date summary and [detailed](#) reports of expenditure against budget, [Earmarked](#) Reserves, and, [Balance Sheet](#) circulated with the agenda were **NOTED**. Members asked if there was a possibility that the cemetery accounts could be kept separate from the main accounts.  
The Clerk explained that this was the case during the year, but at year end the aggregated figures have to be reported.

There are also some issues with the way the contractors for cemetery works are paid as the Steyning and Bramber Reserve accounts are both set as creditors, which means they can only be added to, and nothing taken out.

Cllr Harber commented that the Allotment income needs to include the officer time in some way. The inspections, plot allocation and invoicing needs to be factored in to stop any criticism of the way the funds are managed.  
The Clerk reported that the details were discussed at the allotment holders meeting and minuted so that they were aware of this issue.

The auditor and the Software company will be spoken to once the year end period has ended.

**F: 0424:08**      **Matters raised by Councillors** - to receive matters for information or for discussion in future agendas.

**Cllr Warren**

The recent decision to defer the progress on the Henfield Road lighting has caused some concern.

The residents at the location have not been vocal in their insistence on the light being installed, there have been some new lights installed along the road which appear to be providing some light.

Cllr Kardos did not feel that this was adequate and there is still a desire to have the new light fitted.

To be discussed further at Facilities Committee meeting.

**Cllr Harber**

The PPG video screen will be fitted very soon.

**Cllr F Bull**

Has been keen to discuss the Council’s strategy for the future and would like to be able to draft some form of plan for the Council to be following or to be judged by. Members felt that this was a good idea, but in some ways the current projects were in a fairly straightforward state that a plan may be something which needs to be looked at in the future.

The staff are already involved in the two major summer projects and therefore may not be in a position to be involved at the current time.

The Clerk would add this to the Community Committee agenda.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.05pm

Signed:

Dated: