

# Bursledon Parish Council

## Minutes of the Council Meeting

Minutes of the of Bursledon Parish Council held on Wednesday 31 January 2024 at 7pm at the community library in Bursledon Parish Council.

Members of the Full Council in attendance: Councillors M Penn, M Garrett, G Gill, S Holes, J O’Sullivan, and K Whitlock.

Officers of the Council Present: Roland Potter (Parish Clerk) Sue Hannen (Deputy Clerk)

Members of the Public: Six

**FC/23/074 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and accepted for Cllrs, K House, J Rich, and V Figueira

**FC/23/075 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**FC/23/076 Minutes of the Full Council held on Wednesday 25 October 2023 and Wednesday 29 November 2023**

The minutes of the Full Council held on Wednesday 25 October 2023 and Wednesday 29 November 2023 were received and accepted as a correct record and were signed by the Chair of the Council.

**FC/23/077 Questions from the Public**

A question was raised regarding the removal of the post box in Lowford. District Councillors are investigating this issue.

A question was raised regarding Developer Contributions and the visibility of how much money is available and decisions on how it is spent.

It was explained that Developer Contributions can only be spent on capital projects and the comment about visibility of the process will be passed to Eastleigh Borough Council.

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A question was asked regarding when the decision to lease Long Lane tennis court to Eastleigh had been discussed.

It was confirmed the matter had been on the agenda, discussed and approved at three meetings throughout 2023.

**FC/23/078 Chair's Communications.**

The Chair reported that Bursledon Parish Councillors had met with the new Directors of Eastleigh Borough Council and had agreed to develop even greater communication between the Parish and the Borough.

**FC/23/079 Tennis Court Lease**

Following Legal advice, the 15-year lease to Eastleigh Borough Council of the Long Lane Tennis Courts was presented to Councillors.

**RESOLVED:**

- **That the leasing of the Long Lane Tennis Courts to Eastleigh Borough Council for 15 years under the terms of the lease presented be approved.**

**FC/23/080 Sculpture Project**

The Council were asked to approve the location for a proposed Sculpture Project for Bursledon. Following consideration of other potential sites within Bursledon, the site of a storm felled tree on Great Down Park was selected.

**RESOLVED:**

- **Permission be given for the site of the storm felled tree on Great Down Park be the location for an Eastleigh Borough Council sculpture project.**

**FC/23/081 Interim Internal Auditors Report**

The Council received and considered the report from the Internal Auditor for the period April - October 2023.

**RESOLVED:**

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- **That the report and recommended actions of the Internal Auditor be accepted.**

FC/23/082 **Council Accounts for the nine months ended 31 December 2023**

Council received the accounts for the nine-month period up to 31 December 2023.

Council also received a report on the Councils current financial position as of the 31 December 2023.

The report recommended that £85,000 be invested in the CCLA Charities Deposit fund at a current interest rate of 5.13%

The Council were asked to note that there are increasing tree works which we are required to undertake, currently the value of these works is £24K and there is additional works which will have to be completed due to a recent inspection.

Funding of capital projects is principally from developers' contributions at this time and will have minor impact on the Councils Revenue budget.

The report identified that any shortfall in the Councils operations will be funded from the Councils Machinery and Capital reserves, however the Council were reminded that the Councils actual manageable assets are valued at a cost £572K, prior to the transfer of any new assets over the next 18 months.

The report also directed the Councils attention to the fact that depleting these reserves makes it difficult for the Council to provide for the future renewal of equipment and the capital replacement of facilities.

**RESOLVED:**

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- **That the council noted the report and the financial issues raised.**
- **That the council agreed the investment of £85,000 in the CCLA Charities Deposit fund at a current interest rate of 5.13%**

**FC/23/083 Financial Risk Assessment Update**

The Council received a Financial Risk Assessment updated to 31 December 2023.

**RESOLVED:**

- **The Council noted the Risk Assessment on 31 December 2023.**
- **The Council noted the additional risks identified in the report and adopted the measures to address them.**

**FC/23/084 Asset Management Plan and Capital Plan**

The Council received the Asset Management Plan and Capital Plan.

**RESOLVED:**

- **The Council noted the Asset Management Plan and Capital Plan.**

**FC/23/085 Council Budget and Precept 2024/25**

The Council received a report setting out the draft budget for 2024/25 and a suggested precept level to deliver a break- even budget.

The report identified the following:

- The Council's net operating budget for 2024/25 before the inclusion of the precept is **£279,159**.
- The precept has been calculated based on the Consumer Price (Household) Index in December 23 of 4.2%.

The report identified that there will be continuing pressures on the budget for 2024/25 which the Council cannot avoid:

- The Council has extremely limited opportunities to increase income, other than through increasing charges.
- The impact of climate change on the recreation areas is starting to limit the available times for hire.
- The Councils budget has been calculated using the Consumer Price (Household) Index in December 23 of 4.2%.
- The Councils officers have budgeted currently for a 3% increase in national wage settlement in local government.
- The Council Tax base has been reduced by 37 Band D households to allow for the provision of bad debt. This has created an additional shortfall of £3,000 on the precept.
- During the budget year 2024/25 the council will receive into its control two additional play areas and an item of sculpture which will require additional time and costs. Further transfers of play areas will continue into 2025/26. This will require the council to recruit an additional member of staff.
- The Council are requested to consider the impact on the available reserves for the council. The Council has assets exceeding £540K which will need renovating or replacing over the next 12 to 15 years.
- In addition, the Council now requires to buy additional machinery which has been earmarked in the capital budget to be financed over a three-year period.
- In addition, the Council are required to note that there is potentially a shortfall of funding of £60K in developers' contributions for the rebuilding of the pavilion and a £25K shortfall for the refurbishment of the playground at King George V open space. Although a request has been made for additional funding to the Local Area Committee, we are unable to guarantee and extra funding for these shortfalls.
- If the Council precept is not increased the council will have to subsidise the budget by £43,476 from Reserves.

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Following a lengthy discussion, the Council agreed by a majority to increase the Council precept by 7.5%, the equivalent of £0.51p per month for a Band D Tax household.

**RESOLVED:**

- **The budget report and its recommendations are noted.**
- **The Net Operational budget for 2024/25 is set at £279,159.**
- **That the total Parish precept for 2024/25 is set at £253.475.**
- **That the Parish Budget is subsidised by up to £25,684 from Council Reserves.**
- **The precept rise be set at £6.11 per annum for each band D Household the equivalent of £0.51p per month.**
- **The Councils draft five-year Medium Term Financial Plan was received and noted.**

**FC/23/086 Fees and Charges 2024/25**

The Council received a report setting out the proposed new fees and charges for 2024/25.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the new fees and charges be accepted from 1 April 2024.**

**FC/23/087 Review of Developers Contributions**

The Council received a review of Developer Contribution proposed projects.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the review of Developer Contribution proposed projects be noted.**

**FC/23/088 Parish Clerks Management Report**

The Clerk reported that a significant amount of tree works were planned across the Parish and that there would be further work required on the Lionheart Way Ecology Park.

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FC/23/089 **Financial Reports**

To receive and note the schedule of bank payments for 20 December 2023.

**RESOLVED:**

- **That the payment schedules were correct and approved for 20 December 2023.**

FC/23/090 **Working Group Notes**

Council to receive the notes of the Planning and Highways Working Group and to note the comments recommended to the officers of the Council for submission to the planning authority for the following meetings:

13 December 2023.

10 January 2024.

**RESOLVED:**

- **To note the comments**

FC/23/091 **To exclude the press and public and to consider exempt business**

Under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings Act 1960) "that as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the Confidential nature of the business about to be transacted at Agenda Items 19 regarding the contractual sensitivity and personal nature it is advisable in the public interest that the Public and Press be temporarily excluded from this meeting, and they are herewith instructed to withdraw."

**RESOLVED:**

- **To exclude members of the press and public.**

FC/23/092 **Staffing**

The Council received a report confirming that the current Parish Clerk was retiring and that a new staffing structure was proposed to support any new Parish Clerk.

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- The Parish Clerk would be recruited as the Responsible Officer of the Council.
- The Finance Officer would take over the responsibilities of the Responsible Financial Officer and depending on the recruitment process additional duties as Deputy Clerk.
- That one of the ground staff would be appointed as Ground Co-ordinator to liaise with the Council Offices.
- The report identified the need to recruit an additional unqualified member of the ground staff in 2024/25 due to the transfer of play areas from Eastleigh Borough Council.

**RESOLVED:**

- **The Council received and accepted the proposed new staffing structure.**
- **The Council agreed to appoint a recruitment panel to employ a replacement Parish Clerk, consisting of a selection from Cllr M Penn, M Garrett, S Holes, and J O’Sullivan, for final approval by Full Council.**

FC/23/093 **Close of Meeting**

The meeting closed at 09:10 pm.

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