



Laverstock & Ford Parish Council

Incorporating Milford, Bishopdown Farm, Old Sarum & Longhedge

Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Monday 3rd July 2023 at River Bourne Community Farm.

DRAFT MINUTES

Councillors present: Maskell (Chair), Schneider, Waller

In attendance: Deane (Clerk), Prince (Responsible Financial Officer RFO)

The meeting commenced at 7.01pm.

FGP.23.029 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Councillor Baker.

FGP.23.030 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

FGP.23.031 Approval of Minutes

Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd April

Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 5th June 2023

FGP.23.032 Reserves Policy

The RFO had circulated a draft Reserves Policy to FGP councillors in advance of the meeting. There was lengthy discussion over the preferred level of general reserves that should be stated. Councillors agreed that 4 months was a reasonable level to maintain and include in the policy, for review in the future.

FGP.23.033 Grants Reserve

The RFO reported his concerns that an underspend on grants of just over £5000 in 2021/22 was transferred to General Reserves at the end of the financial year. Councillors supported recommending that this amount be transferred back to the Grants Budget, and that future unspent grant funds should be rolled forward and not transferred to general reserves.

FGP.23.034 Officers Report and Correspondence

The Clerk asked councillors to consider whether preferred supplier lists should be adopted by the Parish Council, in particular for tree works, where some difficulties exist in obtaining comparable quotes, and emergency work is often required. The difficulties in specifying fixed price work was discussed and more consideration will be given.

It was agreed that no meeting in August was needed unless something urgent came up.

The RFO reported that he continued to work on establishing Scribe accounts and councillors would be set up with access to view.

FGP.23.035 Draft Agenda Full Council Meeting 17th July 2023

The Clerk reported that two grant applications had been received so far.

The response to the reserved matters planning application at Westside Close will be agreed. Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have been invited, to provide input on the Parish Councils comment on the Draft Wiltshire Design Guide and the Neighbourhood Plan review.

An application for a parish boundary amendment in Ford will be discussed.

The Clerk confirmed that the Tree Policy will be presented at the next meeting. The Reserves Policy and Grant Reserve will be added to the agenda. The Clerk will ask the Communications and Community Engagement Officer to update councillors on the Community Pantry.

FGP.23.036 Exempt Business

Resolved: that in view of the staff-in-confidence nature of the business about to be transacted the public and press be temporarily excluded from the meeting under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1972. Councillors had requested clarification on the costs involved in implementing the recommendations of the LCC Staffing Review. The Clerk confirmed that pension contributions and the National Joint Council pay award would be implemented automatically due to the prior resolution to join the Local Government Pension Scheme and the contractual terms of staff. The Clerk emphasised that agreement to implement the recommendations would mean that staff would have the right to progress through the scale subject to satisfactory performance. The Clerk estimated that the impact of implementation would be around £4500 on the current years budget. Councillors agreed that the FGP committee would recommend acceptance to Full Council.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm.

NEXT MEETING. The next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee to be confirmed.