

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICIES & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
OF BARTON-LE-CLAY PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL
ON MONDAY 5th DECEMBER 2022 COMMENCING AT 8.00PM**

Present: Councillors Mrs B Thomas (Chairman), Mr J Selley, Mr S Laycock and Mrs G Gardner

In attendance: Mrs C Callen (Clerk)

Minutes: Mrs C Callen

22/337 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Councillors Miss G Widdowfield and Mr J Paxton.

22/338 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – There were none.

22/339 MATTERS ARISING

The Clerk and several members of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee had a stall at the Christmas Lights Switch-on event on 27th November, mainly to consult with the Village regarding the Green Infrastructure Plan. The Greensand Trust were in attendance and asking residents their views on places they like to walk and green spaces they enjoy. It was a very successful event with lots of engagement with the community, discussing lots of issues, not just the Neighbourhood Plan.

On 3-4th December the Parish Council had a tree at St Nicholas Church for their annual Christmas Tree Festival – the title was 'Working for You' and included pictures of lots of things the Parish Council had done over the past year. The Clerk reported that the tree came 1st in the Business Category. Thanks were expressed to the Clerk and Assistant Clerk for their efforts.

The Clerk has sent all Councillors an email on behalf of Central Beds Council Governance Services, advising them of a change to the way their Register of Interests is recorded. All Councillors should have received a personal link to access and review their details.

The Parish Office has been damaged, caused by a leak from the Flat above. This has resulted in mould and damage to the shelves, stationery store and carpet in the Kitchen area. The Landlords struggled to find the source of the leak, but now advise that it has been repaired. The Clerk is awaiting a response from the Landlords regarding cleaning and redecorating the Parish Office and replacing the damaged items.

The SAAA have confirmed the appointment of the External Auditor for the next 5 years to 2026-27. For Bedfordshire area, Mazars LLP have been appointed again, so there will be no change for the Parish Council. The Clerk has also contacted the Internal Auditor to confirm they are happy to continue to act for us. This item will be considered at the next Full Council meeting.

On 17th November Councillors Rudd and Widdowfield attended an online briefing regarding Emergency Response and developing a Community Emergency Plan. They will provide feedback at the next Full Council Meeting.

22/340 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE POLICIES & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 31st OCTOBER 2022

A copy of the minutes was provided to members ahead of the meeting. Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** the approval of the minutes of 31st October, **SECONDED** by Councillor Gardner **with 3 in favour and 1 abstention**.

22/341 UPDATE REGARDING A POTENTIAL VILLAGE 'WARM SPACE' FOR THE WINTER

At the last meeting, members considered potentially offering a 'warm space' over the Winter for villagers who might be struggling to heat their own homes due to the current cost of living and energy crisis. Central Beds Council have since provided guidance and confirmation that all their Leisure Centres and Libraries will be available, including Barton Library. They have also shared their Cost of Living Support guidance with the Parish Council, so that details can be provided to residents, if required. Councillor Gardner has discussed options with the WI who have said they would consider assisting on a rota basis but could not run anything themselves. It is understood that both the Methodist Church and St Nicholas Church are also looking at options.

As the Parish Council do not own any suitable facilities to offer as a warm space, it was agreed that they should only offer financial support to any organisation that decides to host something in the Village.

22/342 TO APPROVE THE DRAFT BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PAY & PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE

The Clerk provided a summary of the rationale used to arrive at the draft Budget that has been recommended by the Pay & Personal Sub-Committee. Councillor Selley **PROPOSED** the approval of the draft 2023/24 Pay & Personnel budget, with a £136,490 committee precept. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Laycock and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

22/343 REVIEW OF COMMITTEE EXPENDITURE FOR 2022/23 AND TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE DRAFT BUDGETS FOR 2023/24

Details of the expenditure to date and draft budgets for 2023/24 were discussed by members. Income has increased due to the increase in interest rates for savings accounts. The Clerk has applied a 10% increase to expenditure lines where appropriate. IT costs were increased earlier in the year to reflect the four devices now supported. The additional support contract for the new defibrillator at the Pavilion has been included. Funds have been budgeted for the potential celebrations to mark the King's Coronation.

After discussion, Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** the approval of the draft 2023/24 Policies & Resources budget, with a £41,160 committee precept. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Selley and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

22/344 ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE OR FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA

There was none.

The meeting closed at 8.43pm