

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICIES & RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
OF BARTON-LE-CLAY PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE PARISH OFFICE  
ON MONDAY 4<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2023 COMMENCING AT 7.56PM**

Present: Councillors J Paxton (Chairman), N Day (Vice-Chairman), J Selley and B Thomas

In attendance: C Callen (Clerk)

Minutes: C Callen

**23/343 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – These were received from Councillors S Laycock and A Fletcher.

**23/344 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – *(Cllrs may make declarations pertaining to the agenda at this point or at any point during the meeting)* – There were none.

**23/345 MATTERS ARISING**

On 9<sup>th</sup> November, Councillors Selley, Paxton and Fletcher met with the Clerk to discuss the way forward with the lease discussions with Barton Rovers FC. A meeting will be arranged with the Football Club once Councillor Fletcher is back from holiday.

On 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> December the Parish Council had a tree at St Nicholas Church for their annual Christmas Tree Festival – the title was ‘Unsung Heroes’ and was based around the Groundsmen and the work they do, mainly from a litter-picking theme. The Clerk reported that the tree came 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Business Category. Thanks were expressed to the Clerk and Assistant Clerk for their efforts.

It was reported that Little Rovers Pre-school is currently closed due to low children numbers and lack of staff. It was agreed that the Small Grant awarded to the organisation should be held in the Community Fund Ear Marked Reserve, pending a decision on the organisation’s future.

**23/346 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE POLICIES & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2023**

A copy of the minutes was provided to members ahead of the meeting. Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** the approval of the minutes of 30<sup>th</sup> October, **SECONDED** by Councillor Selley **with 3 in favour and 1 abstention**.

**23/347 UPDATE FOLLOWING THE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AT THE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH-ON EVENT**

As agreed, the Parish Council had a stall at the Christmas Lights Switch-on event on 26<sup>th</sup> November, mainly to consult with the Village regarding the future funding of the Christmas Lights. It was a very successful event with lots of engagement with the community, discussing lots of issues, not just the Lights.

A summary of the responses to the consultation was provided (as attached to the minutes), with 240 votes cast across all age ranges. 98% of residents agreed to a small increase in their Council Tax paid to the Parish Council to fund the Lights. In addition, more than 20 people provided their details to help with an event next year.

**23/348 TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE BIODIVERSITY POLICY FOR THE PARISH COUNCIL**

Under the 2021 Environment Act, public authorities, including Parish Councils, must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity. The Society of Local Council Clerks Guidance was provided to members, including a suggested Policy. Details of a Local Nature Action Plan, as referred to in the guidance, were also shared for consideration.

Members discussed what actions the Parish Council already do to support biodiversity, including tree and hedge planting, bird boxes, wild field areas, comments in planning applications, etc. The draft Neighbourhood Plan also incorporates a Green Infrastructure Plan and Local Green Space reports, to be considered by potential developers. Members agreed for the Clerk to draft a suitable policy for approval and adoption at the December Full Council meeting, with a further review of actions to be undertaken Q1 2024.

**23/349 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 Paxton **PROPOSED** the approval of the draft 2024/25 Pay & Personnel budget, with a £147,150 committee precept. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Selley and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

**23/350 REVIEW OF COMMITTEE EXPENDITURE FOR 2023/24 AND TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE DRAFT BUDGETS FOR 2024/25**

Details of the expenditure to date and draft budgets for 2024/25 were discussed by members. Income has increased due to the increase in interest rates for savings accounts. The Clerk has applied a 5% increase to expenditure lines, where appropriate, and also allowed for an increase in handyman sundry expenditure to reflect the in-house maintenance work the Groundsmen are undertaking. Funds have been budgeted for the storage and maintenance of the Christmas Lights.

After discussion, Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** the approval of the draft 2024/25 Policies & Resources budget, with a £43,670 committee precept. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Day and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

Members reviewed the overall Precept figures to be discussed at the December Full Council meeting.

**23/351 ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE OR FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA**

Both Councillors Paxton and Day have commitments on 11<sup>th</sup> December and so will be unable to attend the Full Council meeting. Councillor Selley agreed he would be prepared to chair the meeting, if elected by the members.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm