



**Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee  
On Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024 @ 5.00pm  
Parish Office, Great Missenden**

**Present:** Cllr M Johnstone (Chair)  
Cllrs A Hewett, J Gladwin

**Also present:** Jane Hennessy, clerk

**Not present:** Cllrs Pither, Rhodes, Martin

**F24/01 Apologies:** None

**F24/02 Declarations of Interest** – Cllr Hewett – Great Missenden Xmas lights/Event grants.

**F24/03 Minutes** of meeting **Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023** were approved at the December 2023 full council meeting and will be signed.

**F24/04 Budget Preparation 2025/26**

The finance committee reviewed the initial draft budget prepared by Cllr Johnstone and the clerk. The following items were discussed, agreed and adjusted:-

- IT licences – to include Outlook 365 for all councillors
- Salaries/Tax & NI/Pension – increased for parish warden's increase in hours to 15, eligibility for a pension. The budget also increased the cost of the employers NI contributions.
- A budget line was created for weekly cleaning of the parish office.
- Elections - £2,00 in budget and earmarked reserve of £12,000 created in case of contested seats in the election in May 2025.
- Grants – Great Missenden Library grant budget was removed – the library have not requested a grant in the last 7 years. The grant for Prestwood Village Association of £1,000 was reduced to £500 and a grant for £500 created for Prestwood Community Association.
- The two budget lines for new litter bins and replacement bins were merged
- Open Spaces – The grounds contract is up for renewal as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025. The current contract prices were increased by RPI of 3%. The annual vertidrainage of Buryfield was added as a budget line.

Reserves were reviewed and adjusted and includes the following:-

- GMMC refurbishment was increased to £4,500, and separate earmarked reserves added for replacement of the boarding under the kitchen window and repairs to the flat roof.
- Playground Reserve reduced to £75,000 following the installation of the two multiplay towers this year.
- Prestwood Community Centre refurbishment reserve was reduced to £12,000.
- Community board funding contribution reduced to £10,000.

- The neighbourhood plan earmarked reserve was removed.
  - Buryfield path reserve removed as it has been installed this year.
  - The contingency reserve of £15,000 was re-instated, subject to a further review of reserves
  - The Frith Hill footpath reserve was reduced to £15,000 and renamed to South Heath & Ballinger Community Initiatives.
  - A reserve of £10,000 was created for the guide hut.
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- Community Infrastructure Levy – this was all spent in this financial year towards paths and multiplay equipment on Prestwood Rec and Buryfield.

The committee reviewed the initial total of £387,367 which with use of £46,000 of reserves gives a total precept request of £341,367 . It was agreed that the percentage increase of 11.33% was too high, although many costs are still rising and the increase in the parish warden hours, the election next year and the guide hut are expenses that the parish council are committed to.

It was proposed that Cllr Johnstone make further adjustments, perhaps using more of the councils reserves to offset increases in the precept total. A summary of the recommendations for each budget category will be presented at the full council meeting in November. A further Finance Committee meeting can then be called in November to discuss the feedback from the full council meeting, which will then be presented at the December council meeting for approval. The deadline for submitting the precept request to Bucks Council is 31<sup>st</sup> January.

**F24/05 Any other business** – The Bucks Building Society account has been set up and £80,000 has been transferred to that account. Unfortunately Redwood Bank no longer offered the bond account that was considered. The clerk reported on a 1 year Hampshire Trust account and Cllr Gladwin suggested looking at the Nationwide.

**Date of Next Meeting** – to be confirmed after November council meeting.

Meeting closed at 7.00pm