

MINUTES of Chalfont St Peter Parish Council
FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE held on
Thursday 14th July at 7.30pm in the Council Offices, Gravel Hill,
Chalfont St Peter, Bucks, SL9 9QX



MINUTES

THE CHAIRMAN ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING EMERGENCY EXITS IN THE EVENT OF FIRE

Present: Cllr Darby (Chair), Cllr Dickson, Cllr Rush & Cllr Vladar

In attendance: Mrs Debbie Evans (DE), RFO & Mrs Vikki Murdock (VM), Assistant Clerk

24. Apologies: Cllr Dale, Cllr Jha, Cllr North, Cllr Sandover & Cllr Shinner

25. Declaration of Interests: Cllr Darby & Cllr Rush – Buckinghamshire Council

26. The minutes from the following Finance & General Purpose Committee meeting from 9th June 2022 were reviewed and approved as a correct record. Proposed Cllr Dickson & seconded by Cllr Rush

27. Review Action Points:

19. To receive an update on the Village Guide. **C'fwd**

78. DE explained that there were various schemes available for electric car charging points and requested more time to investigate what may be appropriate. **C'fwd**

89. Communication Strategy – see item 29 below

89. Parish Council project list had been circulated and it was agreed to recommend it to Main Council. Proposed Cllr Dickson, seconded Cllr Vladar. All agreed. It was suggested that this be updated quarterly by the clerk and in future be an item for Main Council.

Recommend to Main Council: The Parish Council Project List

90. The review of the Committee's Terms of Reference to be carried forward until all those Councillors tasked with redrafting are able to meet. **ACTION Cllr Darby, Cllr Dale, Cllr Rush, Cllr Shinner & Cllr Vladar** – see item 31 Below

22. A quote for dedicated councillor e-mail address had been received at £9 per councillor per month plus a setup fee. The cost was not justified for all councillors, but it was noted that the Chairman did receive a lot of e-mails and that this may be a useful tool for him. It was agreed that if the Chairman deemed it necessary this could be set up just for that role. Proposed Cllr Vladar and seconded Cllr Rush. All agreed.

Recommend to Main Council: Set up a dedicated parish council e-mail address for the Chairman if required.

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28. Correspondence:

- i) The Joint Panel on Accountability & Governance (JPAG) Practitioners Guide – March 2022 ed. - noted

29. The draft Communication Strategy produced by Cllr Rush was discussed and the following amendments were agreed:

- **‘Mechanisms’** – prioritise the order so that those used more often and were more relevant were listed near the top.
- In respect to responding to communications the following wording was agreed and added to the first paragraph **‘Communication Strategy’**:

‘Parish Councillors and staff will receive communications from individuals. There is an expectation these will be acknowledged promptly and if the recipient is unable to deal with the matter, it should be forwarded, with residents permission under GDPR, to the appropriate person.’

- Under **‘Key Messages’** the item ‘welcomes new parish councillors’, should be removed, as this is part of Council process and so is not required here.
- BBB – word in full to say ‘Big Biodiversity Battle.’
- Under **‘Measuring Success’**, the number of e-mail subscribers should be added.

The Assistant Clerk will make the amendments and circulate. **ACTION VM** Once amended, it was agreed to recommend to Main Council, proposed Cllr Rush and seconded Cllr Vladar. All agreed.

Recommend to Main Council: The Parish Council Communication Strategy and Action Plan

It was also agreed that:

- a) The Communication Strategy should be reviewed in six months time to evaluate progress.
- b) That it would be helpful to monitor the number of users on social media each month as an aid to monitor success. **ACTION Cllr Vladar**
- c) That going forward, standard items would appear on the Committee agenda, namely ‘Social Media stats’ and ‘no. of e-mail subscribers. **ACTION VM**

DE also updated the Committee regarding the setup of the e-mail database for residents to subscribe to. Our website is able to provide this service and DE is currently testing this to see how it will work and will feed this back to Councillors. **ACTION DE**. It was agreed that initially a newsletter would be sent out to advertise the service and that going forward it would be responsive to issues/ events as they arose. It was suggested that the roll out be timed for the beginning for the school term and that the schools be asked whether information could be sent out in their newsletters, as well as via the usual channels of social media and the Parish Council website.

30. No items had been received from the other Committees as it was felt that a lot of issues that arose needed to be actioned quickly, rather than wait for the Finance and GP Committee to meet. It was therefore agreed that the wording for this item should be changed to say ‘to discuss and agree non-time sensitive communications’. **ACTION VM**

31. Those tasked with reviewing the Committee Terms of Reference had not had the opportunity to meet. **C’fwd.**

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32. The Financial Regulations were reviewed. No changes had been made since the last review. They were agreed. Proposed Cllr Rush and seconded Cllr Dickson. All agreed

Recommend to Main Council: The Financial Regulations be agreed

33. The Financial Risk Assessments 2022 were reviewed and agreed. Proposed by Cllr Vldar and seconded by Cllr Rush. All agreed.

Recommend to Main Council: The Financial Risk Assessments 2022 be agreed

34. It was agreed to re-appoint the Internal Auditor, Auditing Solutions for 2022-23. Proposed Cllr Dickson and seconded by Cllr Rush. All agreed.

Recommend to Main Council: To appoint Auditing Solutions for 2022-23

35. Our current Gas provider had contacted the Council suggesting we renew our contract early due to price increases. Analysis of current costs and those proposed show the level of price increases. It was felt that, as there were still some months before we needed to renew, that the situation should be monitored and reviewed again at the September meeting. **ACTION VM**

36. It was agreed to renew the annual subscription to The Allotment Society up to a cost of £65. Proposed Cllr Dickson and proposed Cllr Rush. All agreed

Recommend to Main Council: To renew the subscription to The Allotment Society up to a cost of £65.

37. The Finance Reports for month 2 (May 2022) were reviewed and noted

38. The Bank Statement and Reconciliation Report as at 31st May2022 were reviewed noted and signed by those present as being correct.

39. Information Items:

VM informed the Committee that in line with previous agreement, a new investment account would be set up and Cllr Darby and Cllr Shinner would be the signatories. **ACTION VM**

40. To resolve that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it is advisable in the public interest, that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw (Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960s1). **None**

Date of next meeting: Thursday 22nd September 2022 at 7.30pm

Meeting ended at 8.58pm

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In accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations Act 2014, all non-confidential supporting documentation is available to view from the Parish Council Offices