

NOTICE OF MEETING

Finance & General Purposes Committee

7.45pm on Tuesday 19 October 2021

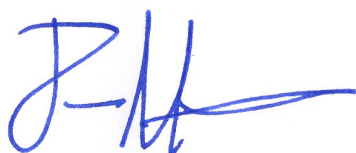
To Councillors

Mrs Barnard, Ms Dulieu, Finch, Mrs Gill, MacCracken and Strudley (Chair)

You are summoned to a meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee on Tuesday 19 October 2021 at 7.45pm.

The meeting will take place in the Blue Room of the Brownlow Memorial Hall.

Any apologies for absence should be communicated to the Clerk ahead of the meeting.



Jason Mawer

Clerk to the Council

The seven principles of public life

Selflessness | Integrity | Objectivity | Accountability | Openness | Honesty | Leadership

AGENDA

Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee

7.45pm on Tuesday 19 October 2021

Sound recording, photography, filming and use of social media at meetings that are held in public are permitted. Those wishing to record proceedings are however advised to contact the Parish Clerk for further information before the start of the meeting.

No.	Item	Page
001.	Apologies for absence	
002.	Declarations of interest Members are asked to declare any disclosable interest or affected interest in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.	
003.	Minutes of the previous meeting To approve the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee of 28 September 2021	03
004.	Matters arising from the previous meeting	04
005.	Finance Report to end September 2021 To receive an update on the finances to the end of September 2021	05
006.	Members Dispensation Procedure To review the members dispensation procedure	15
007.	Member Vacancy and Co-option Arrangements To consider the draft member vacancy and co-option arrangements (procedure)	21
008.	Parish Plan Quarterly review the parish plan elements that fall within the remit of the committee	30
009.	Responsible Financial Officers Report To receive a verbal update from the Clerk	
010.	Future agenda items and date of the next meeting The next meeting will be on Thursday 25 November 2021.	35
011.	Closure of the meeting	

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

held **virtually** on **Tuesday 29 September 2021** at **7.45pm**

Present: Councillors Ms Dulieu, Finch, McCracken and Strudley (Chair)

In attendance: The Parish Clerk

001. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Barnard and Mrs Gill

002. Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest

003. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 24 August 2021 were circulated to members in advance of the meeting. Approval of the minutes was proposed by Cllr Ms Dulieu and seconded by Cllr Strudley and the minutes were **APPROVED** by members present.

004. Matters arising from the previous meeting

The Chairman of the Council has advised the Clerk that he will not be drawing his allowance for the year. He has suggested that he would like the sum used instead to purchase the Pride and NHS flags for the council.

005. Financial Report

The Clerk circulated the financial report to the end of August 2021 to members.

The Clerk answered questions from members on items in the accounts.

Members noted that the Internal Auditor had confirmed that the processing of payments on account in the sales ledger was correct. The Clerk was asked to check the Financial Regulations covered this matter.

The Clerk advised members that the council's utilities were provided by the 'big six' providers and that the water provision was with Castle Water.

The Clerk was asked to check that the cottage rent was correctly accounted for.

Members noted and approved of the revised layout of debt reporting. The Clerk was asked if any further write-offs were required. The Clerk advised that he would bring a report to the January meeting.

The report was noted.

006. Insurance 2021-22

Members noted the report and recommendation of the Clerk that the council should enter into a three-year agreement with Hiscox Insurance.

Cllr Strudley proposed the council entered into a three-year agreement with Hiscox Insurance to provide the councils insurance and that the premium of £4,337.58 be paid, this was seconded by Cllr McCracken and **APPROVED** by members present.

007. Health, Safety and Welfare Policy

The Clerk circulated to members a draft of the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy to members ahead of the meeting. The Chairman had reviewed the policy during development and made suggestions to the Clerk which were incorporated.

There were no additional comments from members.

Cllr Strudley proposed that the committee recommend the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy to full council. This was seconded by Cllr McCracken and **APPROVED** by members present.

008. Responsible Financial Officers Report

The Clerk updated members on the recruitment of the Caretaker/Handyperson. It was agreed to extend the deadline by a fortnight, although a review application received would take place first.

The Clerk was asked to bring an update on the parish plan to the next meeting.

009. Future agenda items and date of the next meeting

Items for future agenda items were circulated to members. The date of the next meeting was agreed as Tuesday 19 October at 7.45pm.

010. Closure of the meeting

The meeting closed at 8.33pm.

MATTERS ARISING

Insurance

The council insurance was renewed on 1 October 2021.

Health, Safety and Welfare Policy

Consideration has been carried over to the November meeting of the council.

FINANCIAL UPDATE TO THE END OF SEPTEMBER 2021

1.0 Purpose

1.1 This report contains the financial report to the end of September 2021. It contains the usual financial data with the appropriate commentary. The report contains the financial report and balance sheet.

2.0 Key points summary

- Final instalment of precept received at end of the month
- Costs to date in line with budget forecasts
- Hire income increasing

3.0 Balance Sheet

3.1 The balance sheet shows the position to 30 September 2021. The precept instalment was paid at the end of the month, so there was no opportunity to transfer this out of Lloyds before the closure of the month. This will take place during October.

3.2 The debtor's position is reported in section 5 of this report.

3.3 The prepayment results from the renewal of the council insurance. The insurance period covers six months of the next financial year and is therefore treated in this manner. Following the renewal, the Clerk reviewed the allocation of insurance accounts across the council's amenities. This has resulted in minor changes to the budget which will be reflected in the October 2021 accounts.

3.3 The Finance Officer continues to work on updating the water account at Brownlow Hall to reflect the billing for 2021-22. This work will be completed for the October month end.

4.0 Financial Report

4.1 The following notes relate to items of information on the financial report

Code	Description	explanation
130 4380	Chairman's allowance	The chairman has asked the allowance to be used to purchase flags. This will be moved to the appropriate budget.
130 4900	Other costs	These costs relate to IT licences (Zoom), and this will be moved to the correct code
130		
150 4300	Neighbourhood plan costs	The EMR will balance this account at year end

600 4015	Water & sewerage	Revised billing being issued.
600 4040	Contract cleaning	Costs are higher due to COVID test centre provision and the temporary loss of caretaker
710 4250	Responsive maintenance	Costs related to removal of old equipment

5.0 Debt update

5.1 The debt profile as of 31 August 2021 is:

Historic debt	Outstanding invoices
2018	£240
2019	£245
2020	£301
Total	£786
Current Debt	Outstanding invoices
More than 30 days	£0
Due by 31 October	£1,827
Total	£1,827
Less Accounts in credit	
Value of accounts in credit	£115
Invoice in advance	£0
Reported debt position	£2,498

6.0 Recommendation

Members are asked to note the financial report

Balance Sheet as at 30 September 2021

31st March 2021

31 March 2022

31st March 2021		31 March 2022	
Current Assets			
6,692	Debtors	2,498	
14,244	VAT Control Account	6,602	
2,463	Prepayments	2,144	
28,385	Lloyds Current Account	33,575	
80,707	Lloyds Instant Access Deposit	162,713	
403,752	Lloyds 32 Day Deposit	393,812	
250,502	CCLA Deposit	250,540	
50	Caretaker's Float	50	
100,067	Nationwide 35 Day Saver	215,251	
0	Creditors	394	
<u>886,862</u>		<u>1,067,578</u>	
886,862	Total Assets	1,067,578	
Current Liabilities			
11,469	Accruals	11,469	
<u>11,469</u>		<u>11,469</u>	
875,393	Total Assets Less Current Liabilities	1,056,109	
Represented By			
62,278	General Reserves	167,994	
759,431	Reserves - CIL	834,431	
2,500	Reserves - Elections	2,500	
4,350	Reserves - Neighbourhood Plan	4,350	
3,000	Reserves - Whitegrove CC	3,000	
20,000	Reserves - Brownlow Hall - lea	20,000	
23,834	Reserves - Frost Folly upkeep	23,834	
<u>875,393</u>		<u>1,056,109</u>	

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the authority as at 30 September 2021 and reflects its Income and Expenditure during the year.

Signed :
Chairman _____ Date : _____

Signed :
Responsible
Financial _____ Date : _____

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
<u>Council Administration</u>						
<u>100 Parish Council Income</u>						
1076 Precept	221,808	221,808	0			100.0%
1090 Interest received	289	400	111			72.2%
Parish Council Income :- Income	<u>222,097</u>	<u>222,208</u>	<u>111</u>			<u>99.9%</u>
Net Income	<u>222,097</u>	<u>222,208</u>	<u>111</u>			
<u>110 Office costs</u>						
4000 Rent	11,750	23,500	11,750		11,750	50.0%
4010 Energy costs	377	1,400	1,023		1,023	27.0%
4025 Telephone & broadband	473	830	357		357	57.0%
4030 Postage	0	20	20		20	0.0%
4035 Stationery	318	650	332		332	48.9%
4036 Office printing	275	800	525		525	34.4%
4040 Contract cleaning	192	768	576		576	25.0%
4042 Window cleaning	60	245	185		185	24.5%
4045 Cleaning materials	9	100	91		91	8.7%
4050 Waste collection	56	184	128		128	30.6%
4060 Insurance	2,141	2,480	339		339	86.3%
4135 Data Protection	0	300	300		300	0.0%
4250 Responsive maintenance	122	500	378		378	24.3%
4254 Inspections	0	250	250		250	0.0%
4900 Other costs	330	800	470		470	41.2%
4999 COVID-19 cost	228	0	(228)		(228)	0.0%
Office costs :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>16,331</u>	<u>32,827</u>	<u>16,496</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>16,496</u>	<u>49.7%</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(16,331)</u>	<u>(32,827)</u>	<u>(16,496)</u>			
<u>120 Administration</u>						
4080 Audit fees	2,240	2,500	260		260	89.6%
4090 Memberships	0	2,000	2,000		2,000	0.0%
4105 Website	275	750	475		475	36.7%
4110 IT hardware	288	0	(288)		(288)	0.0%
4115 IT software	111	250	139		139	44.4%
4120 Training	348	1,500	1,152		1,152	23.2%
4125 IT licences	836	1,800	964		964	46.5%
4130 RBS licences	0	1,449	1,449		1,449	0.0%
Administration :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>4,099</u>	<u>10,249</u>	<u>6,151</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>6,151</u>	<u>40.0%</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(4,099)</u>	<u>(10,249)</u>	<u>(6,151)</u>			

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
<u>130 Democratic Services</u>						
4380 Chairman's allowance	0	300	300		300	0.0%
4390 Flag & flagpole	138	0	(138)		(138)	0.0%
4900 Other costs	240	0	(240)		(240)	0.0%
Democratic Services :- Indirect Expenditure	378	300	(78)	0	(78)	125.9%
Net Expenditure	(378)	(300)	78			
<u>140 Wages & Salaries</u>						
4350 Salaries	35,919	72,620	36,701		36,701	49.5%
4355 Pension contributions	4,443	9,212	4,769		4,769	48.2%
4360 National Insurance cont.	2,727	5,082	2,355		2,355	53.7%
4365 Expenses	0	200	200		200	0.0%
4370 Payroll operating cost	75	150	75		75	50.0%
Wages & Salaries :- Indirect Expenditure	43,164	87,264	44,100	0	44,100	49.5%
Net Expenditure	(43,164)	(87,264)	(44,100)			
Council Administration :- Income	222,097	222,208	111			99.9%
Expenditure	63,971	130,640	66,669	0	66,669	49.0%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	158,125					
<u>Regular commitments</u>						
<u>150 Parish Commitments</u>						
4200 Jealotts Hill Comm Lshare	8,800	8,800	0		0	100.0%
4210 BFC Loan repayment	0	8,191	8,191		8,191	0.0%
4225 Youth provision	0	2,500	2,500		2,500	0.0%
4300 Neighbourhood plan costs	3,025	1,000	(2,025)		(2,025)	302.5%
Parish Commitments :- Indirect Expenditure	11,825	20,491	8,666	0	8,666	57.7%
Net Expenditure	(11,825)	(20,491)	(8,666)			
<u>160 BFC Partnership Expenditure</u>						
4320 RoW management contribution	0	2,290	2,290		2,290	0.0%
4325 Lily Hill Park contribution	0	5,550	5,550		5,550	0.0%
BFC Partnership Expenditure :- Indirect Expenditure	0	7,840	7,840	0	7,840	0.0%
Net Expenditure	0	(7,840)	(7,840)			

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
<u>180 Grants</u>						
4400 Section 137 grants awarded	14,543	14,543	0		0	100.0%
4405 Warfield Memorial Ground	8,000	8,000	0		0	100.0%
4415 Keep Mobile Comm. Transport	1,449	1,449	0		0	100.0%
4420 South Hill Park	500	500	0		0	100.0%
Grants :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>24,492</u>	<u>24,492</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>100.0%</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(24,492)</u>	<u>(24,492)</u>	<u>0</u>			
<hr/>						
Regular commitments :- Income	0	0	0			0.0%
Expenditure	36,317	52,823	16,506	0	16,506	68.8%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(36,317)</u>					
<hr/>						
<u>Planned expenditure</u>						
<u>170 Planned Expenditure</u>						
1120 Sales	(200)	500	700			(40.0%)
Planned Expenditure :- Income	<u>(200)</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>700</u>			<u>(40.0%)</u>
4095 The Wren - publication	267	1,450	1,183		1,183	18.4%
4096 The Wren - delivery	685	2,450	1,765		1,765	28.0%
4100 Other communications	122	700	578		578	17.5%
4215 Planning assistance costs	2,205	2,200	(5)		(5)	100.2%
4216 Speed awareness	0	200	200		200	0.0%
4220 Climate change provision	0	3,000	3,000		3,000	0.0%
Planned Expenditure :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>3,279</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>6,721</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>6,721</u>	<u>32.8%</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(3,479)</u>	<u>(9,500)</u>	<u>(6,021)</u>			
<hr/>						
Planned expenditure :- Income	(200)	500	700			(40.0%)
Expenditure	3,279	10,000	6,721	0	6,721	32.8%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(3,479)</u>					
<hr/>						
<u>Amenities & Environment</u>						
<u>600 Brownlow Hall</u>						
1400 Hire - Regular	5,491	18,000	12,509			30.5%
1410 Hire - Casual	0	4,000	4,000			0.0%
1430 The Cottage rent	5,789	11,000	5,212			52.6%
1440 Sub Station rent	0	500	500			0.0%
Brownlow Hall :- Income	<u>11,280</u>	<u>33,500</u>	<u>22,220</u>			<u>33.7%</u>

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
4000 Rent	11,625	16,500	4,875		4,875	70.5%
4010 Energy costs	2,358	7,000	4,642		4,642	33.7%
4015 Water & sewerage	(240)	1,200	1,440		1,440	(20.0%)
4025 Telephone & broadband	162	386	224		224	42.0%
4040 Contract cleaning	2,300	4,200	1,900		1,900	54.8%
4042 Window cleaning	180	744	564		564	24.2%
4045 Cleaning materials	120	500	380		380	24.0%
4050 Waste collection	698	1,200	502		502	58.1%
4060 Insurance	1,179	875	(304)		(304)	134.7%
4250 Responsive maintenance	838	3,500	2,662		2,662	23.9%
4252 Planned maintenance	359	1,500	1,141		1,141	23.9%
4254 Inspections	0	1,050	1,050		1,050	0.0%
4260 Equipment purchase	65	0	(65)		(65)	0.0%
4620 Music licences	474	800	326		326	59.2%
4650 Tree & hedge maintenance	0	1,122	1,122		1,122	0.0%
4655 Hanging baskets	342	330	(12)		(12)	103.6%
4670 Caretaker payroll	1,774	5,850	4,076		4,076	30.3%
4999 COVID-19 cost	2	0	(2)		(2)	0.0%
Brownlow Hall :- Indirect Expenditure	22,236	46,757	24,521	0	24,521	47.6%
Net Income over Expenditure	(10,956)	(13,257)	(2,301)			
610 Whitegrove Community Centre						
1400 Hire - Regular	10,363	21,000	10,638			49.3%
1410 Hire - Casual	250	0	(250)			0.0%
Whitegrove Community Centre :- Income	10,613	21,000	10,388			50.5%
4000 Rent	200	200	0		0	100.0%
4010 Energy costs	0	3,200	3,200		3,200	0.0%
4025 Telephone & broadband	266	500	234		234	53.1%
4040 Contract cleaning	2,675	4,600	1,925		1,925	58.2%
4042 Window cleaning	180	744	564		564	24.2%
4045 Cleaning materials	156	500	344		344	31.2%
4050 Waste collection	709	1,200	491		491	59.1%
4060 Insurance	643	1,224	581		581	52.5%
4250 Responsive maintenance	461	1,850	1,389		1,389	24.9%
4252 Planned maintenance	359	714	355		355	50.3%
4254 Inspections	0	750	750		750	0.0%
4260 Equipment purchase	11	0	(11)		(11)	0.0%
4600 Building improvements	0	0	0	13,500	(13,500)	0.0%
4620 Music licences	0	437	437		437	0.0%

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
4650 Tree & hedge maintenance	0	306	306		306	0.0%
4670 Caretaker payroll	1,774	5,850	4,076		4,076	30.3%
4999 COVID-19 cost	2	0	(2)		(2)	0.0%
Whitegrove Community Centre :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>7,435</u>	<u>22,075</u>	<u>14,640</u>	<u>13,500</u>	<u>1,140</u>	<u>94.8%</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>3,177</u>	<u>(1,075)</u>	<u>(4,252)</u>			
<u>700 Memorial Ground Play Area</u>						
4000 Rent	1	1	0		0	100.0%
4250 Responsive maintenance	60	500	440		440	12.0%
4254 Inspections	400	1,226	826		826	32.6%
Memorial Ground Play Area :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>461</u>	<u>1,727</u>	<u>1,266</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,266</u>	<u>26.7%</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(461)</u>	<u>(1,727)</u>	<u>(1,266)</u>			
<u>710 Brownlow Hall Play Area</u>						
4250 Responsive maintenance	600	0	(600)		(600)	0.0%
4254 Inspections	119	0	(119)		(119)	0.0%
Brownlow Hall Play Area :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>719</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(719)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(719)</u>	
Net Expenditure	<u>(719)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>719</u>			
<u>720 Quelm Allotments</u>						
1420 Allotment rent	2,569	2,461	(108)			104.4%
1425 Allotment locker charge	12	0	(12)			0.0%
Quelm Allotments :- Income	<u>2,581</u>	<u>2,461</u>	<u>(120)</u>			<u>104.9%</u>
4015 Water & sewerage	0	600	600		600	0.0%
4050 Waste collection	680	460	(220)		(220)	147.8%
4060 Insurance	643	437	(206)		(206)	147.2%
4250 Responsive maintenance	0	100	100		100	0.0%
4805 Allotment - delivery costs	3,797	1,500	(2,297)		(2,297)	253.1%
4810 Allotment - management costs	60	100	40		40	60.0%
Quelm Allotments :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>5,180</u>	<u>3,197</u>	<u>(1,983)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(1,983)</u>	<u>162.0%</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(2,599)</u>	<u>(736)</u>	<u>1,863</u>			
<u>730 Frost Folly</u>						
4250 Responsive maintenance	165	500	335		335	33.0%
4252 Planned maintenance	0	2,000	2,000		2,000	0.0%
4650 Tree & hedge maintenance	0	300	300		300	0.0%
Frost Folly :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>165</u>	<u>2,800</u>	<u>2,635</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,635</u>	<u>5.9%</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(165)</u>	<u>(2,800)</u>	<u>(2,635)</u>			

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
<u>790 Events</u>						
4591 Parish calendar income	0	500	500			0.0%
Events :- Income	<u>0</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>500</u>			<u>0.0%</u>
4570 Arts Week	889	3,250	2,361		2,361	27.4%
4580 Summer of Fun event	0	4,000	4,000		4,000	0.0%
4585 Christmas tree	0	1,200	1,200		1,200	0.0%
4590 Warfield 125 activity	0	1,200	1,200		1,200	0.0%
4592 Parish calendar costs	0	500	500		500	0.0%
Events :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>889</u>	<u>10,150</u>	<u>9,261</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>9,261</u>	<u>8.8%</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(889)</u>	<u>(9,650)</u>	<u>(8,761)</u>			
Amenities & Environment :- Income	24,473	57,461	32,988			42.6%
Expenditure	37,086	86,706	49,620	13,500	36,120	58.3%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(12,613)</u>					
Grand Totals:- Income	246,370	280,169	33,799			87.9%
Expenditure	140,653	280,169	139,516	13,500	126,016	55.0%
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>105,716</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(105,716)</u>			
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>105,716</u>					

MEMBERS DISPENSATION PROCEDURE

1.0 Purpose

1.1 This report contains the Members Dispensation Procedure. It sets out the process by which a member may be grant dispensation to participate in discussions or vote on matters where they may have a declared interest.

2.0 Procedural note

2.1 Procedures are operational documents which are the responsibility of the Parish Clerk. Under section 3.4 of the Policy Development Framework there is provision for the Clerk to seek oversight from an appropriate committee.

2.2 This procedure contains legal elements that cannot be altered; however, members may wish to provide feedback to the Clerk on the elements that may be varied by the council.

2.3 The Clerk will present the finalised version of this document to full council for noting.

3.0 Impact Assessment

Procedure: **Members Dispensation Procedure**

Name of Responsible committee: **Finance & General Purposes**

Name of Lead officer: **Jason Mawer, Parish Clerk**

Responsible committee chair: **Cllr Grant Strudley, Chair, Finance & General Purposes**

Previous policy version (if applicable) **N/A**

Impact Assessment		
	Requirement	Comment
Equalities	<i>A simple equalities impact assessment has been carried out</i>	There is no impact through this procedure.
Financial	<i>Cost and resource implications are fully understood, and budgets identified</i>	There is no impact through this procedure.
Parish Plan	<i>Does the policy relate to the Parish Plan</i>	Not applicable.

Risk	<i>Any risks to the organisation are fully understood and agreed</i>	Members may be prosecuted for failing to declare interests correctly or to participate in discussions relating to their interest.
Service Delivery	<i>Implications for service delivery are fully understood and agreed.</i>	Following this procedure will ensure a smooth and quick process is followed.
Staffing	<i>Implications for staff are fully understood and agreed.</i>	There is no impact through this procedure.
Environment & Sustainability	<i>Impact on the environment (e.g. carbon emissions; travel) is understood and agreed.</i>	There is no impact through this procedure.
Consultation	<i>Where applicable, there has been consultation with those affected by the policy, including those with responsibility for implementation.</i>	The procedure was developed by the Parish Clerk and reviewed by the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

3.0 Procedure background

- 3.1 This procedure has been due for review and is brought to the committee to review ahead of presentation to full council.
- 3.2 The council is authorised to grant dispensations to members to enable them to take part in council business, The procedure sets out the arrangements whereby members can request a dispensation to participate in all, or part of a meeting, where they have an interest.
- 3.3 The procedure explains:
- (a) the purpose and effect of dispensations
 - (b) the procedure for requesting dispensations
 - (c) the criteria which are applied in determining dispensation requests
 - (d) the terms of dispensations
- 3.4 The council can delegate to the Clerk the authority to grant dispensations. This allows dispensations to be granted quickly, consistently and at any meeting of the council and its committees.
- 3.5 The procedure explains the process by which members may apply for a dispensation and the criteria to be applied when considering a request.

3.6 Dispensations may be granted for one meeting, a series of meetings (e.g. budget discussions) or for a councillor's term of office (e.g. where the member serves on another authority).

4.0 Recommendation

Members are asked to review and comment on the procedure.

Members Dispensation Procedure

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Parish Council is responsible for determining requests for a dispensation by a parish councillor under Section 33 of Localism Act 2011. This is because the council is a “relevant authority” under section 27(6) (d) of the Act.
- 1.2 This procedure explains:
 - (a) the purpose and effect of dispensations
 - (b) the procedure for requesting dispensations
 - (c) the criteria which are applied in determining dispensation requests
 - (d) the terms of dispensations
- 1.3 This procedure covers Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, non-disclosable pecuniary interests, and non-pecuniary interests.

2.0 Purpose and effect of Dispensations

- 2.1 In certain circumstances Councillors may be granted a dispensation which enables them to take part in Council business where this would otherwise be prohibited because they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest. Provided Councillors act within the terms of their dispensation there is deemed to be no breach of the Code of Conduct or the law.
- 2.2 Section 31(4) of the Localism Act states that dispensations may allow the Councillor:
 - (a) to participate, or participate further, in any discussion of the matter at the meeting(s); and/or
 - (b) to participate in any vote, or further vote, taken on the matter at the meeting(s).
- 2.3 If a dispensation is granted, the Councillor may remain in the room where the meeting considering the business is being held.

Please note: If a parish councillor participates in a meeting where he/she has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and he/she does not have a dispensation, they may be committing a criminal offence under s34 Localism Act 2011.

3.0 Process for making requests

- 3.1 Any Councillor who wishes to apply for a dispensation should apply in writing to the proper officer of the parish council (The Parish Clerk) as soon as possible before the meeting when the dispensation is required. Applications may also be made at a full council meeting. There will be a standing item on the agenda to deal with dispensation

requests where the nature of an interest has only become apparent to a councillor at the meeting itself.

- 3.2 The amended wording for the standing agenda item on declaration of interests and dispensations will be as follows:

Declarations of interest and dispensations

3.21 To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda

3.22 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any)

3.23 To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate

3.3 A request for dispensation must be made on an individual basis.

4.0 Consideration

4.1 The Parish Council can delegate to the Parish Clerk the authority to grant dispensations. If the parish council decides to delegate this role to the Parish Clerk, then it will need to make a formal resolution to this effect, on the lines of: "RESOLVE that the Council delegates the power to grant dispensations to the Clerk. The power rests with the relevant authority under section 33(1) of the Localism Act 2011 and the basis is set out under section 33(2). "

4.2 The Parish Clerk may grant a dispensation to a councillor who has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest to participate in any discussion of a matter at a meeting and/or to participate in any vote on the matter (as per para. 2 above) if they consider that:

(a) so many members of the decision-making body have disclosable pecuniary interests that it would impede the transaction of the business (i.e. the meeting would be inquorate); or

(b) the authority considers that the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area; or

(c) it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

4.3 The parish council have extended the provisions of the above paragraph to apply in the same way in the case of a "non-disclosable pecuniary interest" or a "non-pecuniary interest", as defined in the Code of Conduct.

4.4 The terms of any dispensation shall be in accordance with section 6.

4.5 The Parish Clerk should formally notify the Councillor of their decision and reasons in writing at the earliest opportunity and in any event within 5 working days of the decision.

5.0 Criteria for Determination of Requests

5.1 In reaching a decision on a request for a dispensation the Parish Clerk will consider:

(a) the nature of the Councillor's prejudicial interest

- (b) the need to maintain public confidence in the conduct of the Council's business
- (c) the possible outcome of the proposed vote
- (d) the need for efficient and effective conduct of the Council's business
- (e) any other relevant circumstances.

6.0 Terms of Dispensations

6.1 Dispensations may be granted:

- (a) for one meeting; or
- (b) for a period not exceeding 4 years (up to the end of the councillor's term of office).
This may include a series of meetings.

7.0 Disclosure of Decision

7.1 Any Councillor who has been granted a dispensation must declare the nature and existence of the dispensation before the commencement of any business to which it relates.

7.2 A copy of the dispensation will be kept with the Register of Councillors' Interests.

8.0 Review of Procedure

8.1 These arrangements will be reviewed at the beginning of each term of the council.

MEMBER VACANCY AND CO-OPTION PROCEDURE

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This paper accompanies the draft Member Vacancy and Co-option Arrangements.
- 1.2 This procedural document was drawn up at the request of this committee following co-option earlier in the year.

2.0 Procedural note

- 2.1 Procedures are operational documents which are the responsibility of the Parish Clerk. Under section 3.4 of the Policy Development Framework there is provision for the Clerk to seek oversight from an appropriate committee.
- 2.2 This procedure contains legal elements that cannot be altered; however, members may wish to provide feedback to the Clerk on the elements that may be varied by the council.
- 2.3 The Clerk will present the finalised version of this document to full council for noting.

3.0 Impact assessment

Procedure: **Member Vacancy and Co-option Arrangements**

Name of Responsible committee: **Finance & General Purposes**

Name of Lead officer: **Jason Mawer, Parish Clerk**

Responsible committee chair: **Cllr Grant Strudley, Chair, Finance & General Purposes**

Previous policy version (if applicable) **N/A**

Impact Assessment		
	Requirement	Comment
Equalities	<i>A simple equalities impact assessment has been carried out</i>	There is no impact through this procedure.
Financial	<i>Cost and resource implications are fully understood, and budgets identified</i>	There is no impact through this procedure.
Parish Plan	<i>Does the policy relate to the Parish Plan</i>	Not applicable.

Risk	<i>Any risks to the organisation are fully understood and agreed</i>	Failure to follow the legislative elements of the procedure may lead to decisions taken being declared unlawful.
Service Delivery	<i>Implications for service delivery are fully understood and agreed.</i>	Following this procedure will ensure a smooth and quick process is followed.
Staffing	<i>Implications for staff are fully understood and agreed.</i>	There is no impact through this procedure.
Environment & Sustainability	<i>Impact on the environment (e.g. carbon emissions; travel) is understood and agreed.</i>	There is no impact through this procedure.
Consultation	<i>Where applicable, there has been consultation with those affected by the policy, including those with responsibility for implementation.</i>	The procedure was developed by the Parish Clerk and Cllr Mrs Barnard and reviewed by the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

4.0 Procedure background

- 3.1 This procedure sets out the arrangements the council will follow to fill a vacancy occurring should a member leave the council. In addition, the document clarifies how a vacancy can occur and the different steps that are taken if vacancies exist following ordinary elections or the council is inquorate.
- 3.2 The initial stages of notifying and promoting a vacancy are prescribed in statute. The law says the council should fill any vacancy as speedily as possible once, taking account of the prescribed timescales. The vacancy can only be filled at a full council meeting, so timings would be worked around the meeting programme. Sufficient time would be allowed to promote the vacancy. The exact timings would be calculated for each vacancy.
- 3.3 All candidates coming forward must be confirmed as being eligible to stand and the Clerk will carry out appropriate checks where possible. A candidate who provides false information could be struck out by the courts.
- 3.4 Members appreciate the opportunity to meet with candidates and provision has been made for this ahead of the co-option meeting. This session would be informal, allowing members to discuss details with candidates.

- 3.5 The procedure also clarifies the steps to be followed at the co-option council meeting. Good practice is that co-option should take place in open session, although members can decide to hold discussion in private session, before any vote.
- 3.6 The procedure provides information on how the council would fill vacancies should the council be without a quorum or following an ordinary election. As the timings or legal framework is different, filling vacancies in these circumstances may not follow the process set out.

4.0 Recommendation

Members are asked to review and comment on the procedure.

Member Vacancy and Co-option arrangements

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The document covers the procedural arrangements the council will follow in the event of a vacancy occurring and the method of filling the vacancy.
- 1.2 The arrangements contain elements that are laid down in statute and these are identified and cannot be altered by the council.
- 1.3 This document also covers the arrangements for any vacancy that remains following an ordinary election.

2.0 Notification of a vacancy

- 2.1 A casual vacancy is deemed to have occurred¹:
 - a. when a local councillor fails to make their declaration of acceptance of office within the proper time; or
 - b. when their notice of resignation is received in accordance with the statutory requirements; or
 - c. on the day of their death; or
 - d. in the case of disqualification by conviction or an order under part VIII of the Local Government Act 1972 on the day when either the time for appeal or application for relief expires, or such appeal or application is dismissed or abandoned; or
 - e. in the case of an election being declared void, upon the date of the report or certificate of the election court; or
 - f. where a person ceases to be qualified or becomes disqualified for any reason other than conviction or order, or is persistently absent from meetings, upon the date when their office is declared vacant by the High Court or the local council, as the case may be.²
- 2.2 The date may be important; for example, the quorum may be different before and after it.
- 2.3 A vacancy that arises from failure to accept office, resignation, or death (a to c above) should be declared as soon as possible and must be publicly notified immediately after³. For clarity, depending on when this occurs the public notice will be issued by close of business on the next working day.

¹ Arnold-Baker on Local Council Administration 12th Edition 2020 s.6.11

² Local Government Act 1972 (LGA), s 87 (1)

³ LGA 1972, s 87 (2)(a)

- 2.4 In the case of non-acceptance of office, the vacancy occurs if the declaration has not been made at or before the first meeting after they are elected.⁴
- 2.5 A resignation must be made in writing to the chairman of the council. The resignation takes effect from delivery to the chairman.
- 2.6 Where a vacancy occurs due to reasons d to f, an interval of days must elapse. This is because the vacancy needs to be declared ‘...by an authority competent to make such a declaration’ However, it is likely the council may have to make the declaration itself, particularly if the vacancy occurs due to the member being persistently absent from meetings.
- 2.7 Persistent absence occurs if the member ‘fails throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of his last attendance to attend any meeting of the authority, he shall, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the authority before the expiry of that period.’⁵ There is a further description of the meetings that apply in the act.
- 2.8 The Clerk will provide advice to the council if any of the above occur. While the Clerk is responsible for maintaining records of attendance, it is not the role of the Clerk to advise members that the six-month period is operating or due to expire. Where the council approve an absence, the Clerk will inform the member and remind them when the expiry of this absence period is approaching.
- 2.9 The council is required to give public notice of every casual vacancy.⁶ Timings relating to filling the vacancy begin with the date of notification.
- 2.10 The notice of vacancy will be displayed for fourteen days during which ten electors of the parish can demand an election takes place. These demands are made to Bracknell Forest Council. If called the by-election is then organised by Bracknell Forest Council, who are then responsible for the process.
- 2.11 If an election is not called then the parish council will fill the seat by co-option.

3.0 The Co-option process

- 3.1 After the notice of vacancy expires, the Clerk will contact Bracknell Forest Council to establish if a poll will be held, or that the council can fill the seat by co-option.
- 3.2 The council should fill the vacancy by co-option as soon as practicable. If this occurs within six months of ordinary elections to the council taking place, council can decide not to proceed with the co-option process and leave the seat vacant.⁷
- 3.3 During the notice of vacancy period, the Clerk will develop an actual timetable for co-option based upon the co-option process set out in this procedure and this will be

⁴ Council may resolve at that meeting that the declaration may be made at or before a later meeting. LGA 1972, s 83 (4)

⁵ LGA 1972, s85 (1)

⁶ LGA 1972, s87 (2)

⁷ Local Elections (Parishes and Communities)(England and Wales) Rules 2006, SI 2006/3305, r5(5)

circulated to all members for noting. The process will begin as soon as practicable after it is established that no poll is taking place. An example timetable is shown in appendix 1

3.4 Elements for the process

The following steps will be followed regardless of the number of vacancies.

3.4.1 Notice of Co-option

A Notice of Co-option will be published by the Clerk. This will tell electors that the council will proceed to fill the vacancy by co-option, information on the process and the closing date for applications and the decision date.

3.4.2 Application

Any elector in the parish interested in applying to be a candidate will be asked to apply in writing and confirm their eligibility. The Clerk will confirm their eligibility and then invite them to participate in the remaining stages of the process. Any qualifying candidate must be considered by the council. The eligibility criteria are shown in appendix 2.

3.4.3 Personal statement

If eligible, the candidate will be asked to submit a written statement, stating why they are applying to be a councillor and the skills and experiences they feel they will bring to the role.

3.4.4 Meeting members

After the closing date, the Clerk will invite all the eligible candidate to an informal meeting with members to introduce themselves and talk about their application. This is not a meeting of the council and is not open to the public. No agenda or minutes will be published, or decisions taken.

3.4.5 Appointment meeting

The appointment will take place at a full council meeting. Candidates are invited to attend and will be permitted two minutes to speak to the council. The council will then proceed to co-opt a new member(s).

3.5 Procedure for appointment

3.5.1 Any person qualified must be considered for co-option unless they withdraw prior to the vote.

3.5.2 If there is more than one applicant the council will employ a process. The Clerk will report the names of the candidates to the council. The council will consider the candidates for co-option to fill the vacancy at a full parish council meeting. The process will be carried out in the public session and there will be no private discussions between members prior to a vote being taken. However, where the council is discussing the merits of candidates and inevitably their personal

attributes, this could be prejudicial, and the council should resolve to exclude the members of the press and public.

- 3.5.3 All candidates are considered for co-option by a show of hands unless the council's adopted standing orders allow for a secret ballot to be called.
- 3.5.4 If there are more candidates than vacancies, the candidate with the least number of votes should be taken off the list of candidates, and if there are still more candidates than vacancies, the vote is taken again. This procedure should be repeated until the number of candidates equals the number of vacancies, and each candidate has a majority vote.
- 3.5.5 A successful candidate must receive an absolute majority of those councillors present and voting. As per standing orders, this may include the use of the chair's casting vote in the event of a tied result (see 3.5.7). Even if there are only two candidates for four positions there is no "co-opted uncontested" provision within the law, therefore a vote must take place.
- 3.5.6 Even if there are fewer candidates than vacancies, each candidate must receive an absolute majority, no majority, no co-option. There is no "co-opted uncontested" provision within the law.
- 3.5.7 The successful candidate must receive an absolute majority vote of those members present at the Parish council meeting. If a member is not at the meeting the legislation does not provide for a proxy or postal vote.
- 3.5.8 Each councillor present must vote; no councillor may abstain.
- 3.5.9 The Chairman may only use his casting vote if two successive voting rounds result in a stalemate.

3.6 Following the vote

- 3.6.1 Successfully co-opted applicants will become councillors with immediate effect once they have signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and be able to participate in the meeting. Their term of office runs until the next ordinary elections for the parish council. Those co-opted must sign a declaration of acceptance of office before they join any meeting of the council as a member. Failure to sign ahead of the next full meeting will result a new vacancy being declared as per 2.1a.
- 3.6.2 The Clerk will notify Electoral Services at Bracknell Forest Council of the new member appointment and request the new member completes a Registration of Interests form within 28 days of being co-opted.

4.0 Vacancies following an ordinary election

- 4.1 If, following an ordinary election there are insufficient persons nominated to fill all the available seats, provided there is a quorum (i.e. one third of the whole numbers of

members) the parish has 35 days from the date of the election to co-opt persons to fill those vacancies without the necessity of advertising for a potential by-election⁸. If, following the election, there insufficient councillors elected to form a quorum, the parish must advise the Bracknell Forest Council who can either appoint persons to be parish councillors or order another election⁹.

5.0 Filling vacancies if the council is without a quorum

5.1 If the number of casual vacancies leaves the parish council without a quorum, Bracknell Forest Council will order an election to be held and, in the meantime, may by order appoint people to fill all or any of the vacancies until other councillors are elected and take up office.

6.0 Support on this procedure

6.1 Any questions about the procedure for co-option, eligibility to serve or the roles and responsibilities of a parish councillor should be directed to the Parish Clerk.

Appendix 1

Example timetable

	The vacancy is notified the process begins on the next working day.
Day 0	Public notice issued by the Clerk, displayed locally, and advised to Bracknell Forest Council (BFC).
Days 1-14	Period during which an election may be requested. The Clerk will prepare a draft timetable for co-option if required.
Day 15	Confirmation from BFC that co-option can proceed, or that an election will be held (an election ends this process) The Clerk issues Notice of Co-option. The period will be no less than three weeks and will be subject to the meeting when co-option takes place.
Day 16 – 36 (min)	Period during which candidates come forward. Clerk will establish eligibility of candidates. Candidates will be asked to prepare personal statements.
7 days before co-option meeting	Informal meeting of candidates and councillors
	Council meeting to decide co-option

⁸ Representation of the People Act (RPA)1983, s36

⁹ RPA 1983, s39(4)

Appendix 2

1.0 Eligibility

1.1 A person co-opted to fill a casual vacancy on a Parish council must fulfil the same criteria as a person being formally nominated for a candidate at an election¹⁰. Namely:

- He/she is an elector for the parish; or
- has resided in the parish for the past twelve months or rented/tenanted land in the parish; or
- had his/her principal place of work in the parish; or
- has lived within three miles (straight line) of the parish.

1.2 There are certain disqualifications for election¹¹, of which the main are:

- holding a paid office of the borough or parish council.
- bankruptcy.
- having been sentenced to a term of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) of not less than three months, without the option of a fine during the five years preceding the election; and
- being disqualified under any enactment relating to corrupt or illegal practices.

¹⁰ LGA 1972, s79

¹¹ LGA 1972, s80

PARISH PLAN

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This report contains the quarterly update of the parish plan as it relates to this committee.

2.0 Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Parish Amenities

	Specific goal	Timescale	Responsible committee	Progress	Notes	Likely completion
1	Building work started on the new Community Hub at Priory Field	April 2023	Amenities		Borough officers are investigating potential issues affecting the transfer of the site that need to be resolved ahead of further work. This has been delayed as staff are redeployed to COVID-19 activity.	New date TBA
3	Jealotts Hill Community Landshare (a) To make significant progress towards establishing a new managing structure (b) Is financially stable	December 2019 March 2021	Finance & General Purposes		Silva Homes have now taken the lead on the project and the long-term management of the project. The council continue a working partnership with Silva Homes to get long term management plan in place. Silva have been asked for an update on the plan.	TBA

Other intentions remain active but are affected by COVID-19.

Community, Wellbeing and Safety

	Specific goal	Timescale	Responsible committee	Progress	Notes	Likely completion
1	Update and reissue local walking and cycle routes and guides	April 2020	Amenities		<p>Four walks are completed and printed and are being uploaded to website. The design has been revised to make more user friendly and to reduce the number of versions required for physical or virtual use.</p> <p>A further three walks are awaiting review by members ahead of production.</p> <p>Cycle maps are produced by the borough and not available online yet. Would be a duplication for the parish to produce its own. Members agreed to review and produce own cycle maps if required.</p>	December 2021
2	Produce a local guide to welcome new residents to the parish	May 2020	Finance & General Purposes		Version will be circulated to F&GP for initial review in coming weeks.	Nov 2021
3	Finance outdoor gym equipment to Westmorland Park	March 2023 Mar 2022	Initially Finance & General Purposes	n/a	<p>There is no budget allocated at this stage.</p> <p>Initial approach has been made to BFC about possible siting and if they would want WPC funded equipment. There are practical considerations such as responsibility for upkeep, insurance etc. that need to be resolved.</p>	March 2023 Mar 2022

Some events are restarting in 2021 and this will continue into 2022.

Grant payments continue and awards for 2021 were made.

Speedwatch activity has been suspended during lockdown including training and recruitment.

Accountability & Accessibility

	Specific goal	Timescale	Responsible committee	Progress	Notes	Likely completion
1	Improve communications with residents about the parish council	April 2020	Finance & General Purposes		<p>CWG established a digital first approach. Digital Wren launched in May 2021.</p> <p>Annual parish meeting held virtually in April. CWG continues to progress other projects.</p>	Completed
2	Raise the profile and accessibility of the parish council and councillors.	August 2020	Finance & General Purposes		<p>Rebranded equipment purchase put on hold as not required during lockdown will be ordered.</p> <p>Councillor surgeries on hold due to social distancing, opportunity for outdoor streetwalking once social distancing measures relaxed.</p> <p>Budget in place and secure for purchase of equipment.</p> <p>Branding of play area at Memorial Ground recommended.</p>	November 2021
3	Provide meaningful opportunities for public participation at parish council and committee meetings	August 2020	Finance & General Purposes		<p>Public participation is a standard agenda item for Council, Planning and Amenities committees.</p> <p>Public participation would be difficult to introduce at F&GP committee due to the wide remit and would be more effectively directed at full council.</p>	Completed

4	Establish a team of volunteers to support local events	July 2020	Finance & General Purposes		<p>Work ongoing to scope how this will work and likely recruitment routes. Opportunities to develop this with other bodies a possibility resulting from lessons of COVID-19 activity</p> <p>We may need to look at some form remuneration.</p> <p>Need to check if any PPE may be required.</p> <p>The Clerk will be attending a volunteer recruitment training session in November 2021</p>	March 2022
---	--	-----------	----------------------------	--	--	------------

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

1.0 Future agenda items

In addition to the standard agenda items the following items will be on the coming meeting agendas

Medium Term Financial Plan	November 2021
Office accommodation update	November 2021
Grant application consideration	November 2021
Draft Budget and Precept	December 2021
IT policies	December 2021
Parish Plan	January 2022
Debt update and write-off	January 2022

2.0 Next meeting

The date of the next meeting will be on Thursday 25 November 2021 at 7.45pm.