

Wickham Bishops Parish Council

Parish Councillors

I D Wardrop (Chairman)
 M Mickelsen (Vice Chair)
 H M Bass
 P J Bates
 P D Layley
 S Morgan
 C Nappo
 J Williams



Winner Best Kept Village 2009, 2015
 3rd Place Essex Village of the Year 2015

www.wickhambishopparishcouncil.org

Parish Clerk

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Minutes of Finance Committee Meeting held on Thursday 28th November 2024 at 2.00pm in the Village Hall Boardroom

Item	Subject
24F/001	Those Present and Apologies for Absence In the Chair: Cllr Mickelsen Present: Cllrs Wardrop, Williams and the Clerk. There were no members of the public present.
24F/002	Declaration of Interests and Compliance with the Ethical Framework There were none.
24F/003	Approval of Minutes of Finance Committee Meeting held on 27th October 2023 The Minutes were approved unanimously.
24F/004	Public Forum There were no members of the public in attendance.
24F/005	Process and Controls Review <u>To review the internal controls and 2023-24 audit report</u> Cllr Nappo would be asked to complete a scrutiny of the accounts before year end. The 2023-24 report from the internal auditor was noted as were the recommendations made, which included adding GDPR to our Risk Assessment and ensuring that an annual review of Internal Controls was carried out. <u>To recommend Heelis & Lodge as internal auditor for approval by Full Council</u> Resolved: The Committee recommended that Heelis & Lodge be used for the 2025 audit at a cost of £220. <u>To review the new Finance Regulations and agree recommendation for approval by Full Council</u> Resolved: The Committee recommended the new Financial Regulations be adopted by Full Council.
24F/006	Asset Register and Risk Management Policy Review <u>To review the Asset Register to financial year ending 31 March 2025</u> Resolved: The revised Asset Register document to be presented for approval at the December Parish Council Meeting. <u>To review the Risk Assessment & Management Policy for approval by Full Council</u> The document had been amended in line with the Internal Auditor's recommendations. Resolved: The Committee recommended the Policy for approval at the December PC Meeting.
24F/007	Current Year Budget Performance and Project Review <u>To review planned and actual spending in 2024-25 and projected end of year balance</u> Actuals and Estimated Year End figures to 31 st March 2025 prepared by the Clerk were noted. Estimated total expenditure was likely to be £31,317 which would mean a year-end carry forward figure in the region of £11,000.

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The following additional items for current year spending were noted:

Housing Needs Survey	£750.00
Grange Road Litter Bin	£430.91
Replacement Noticeboard o/s Olios	£1,000.00
Six Walks Footpath Booklet printing	£520.00

Budget item 17 Venue Hire: BHSA had increased the charge from £13.50 per hour to £22.50 per hour and a recent invoice received for £945 for the year 2024/25 was noted. (WBPC had budgeted £692). They advised that the hourly rate for 2025/26 would be increasing to £25 per hour. **Action:** The Chairman agreed to write to BHSA asking if they would consider holding the £22.50 for one more year.

Budget item 21 War Memorial: A request just received from Little Braxted PC asked for a contribution of £457.97 towards the cost of maintenance to the war memorial. (WBPC had budgeted £355, in line with the previous year's costs). **Action:** The Clerk to write to Little Braxted PC asking that we be consulted on the cost of future works to enable us to budget appropriately.

Budget item 22 Remembrance Event: A request just received from Little Braxted PC for a contribution of £727.32 was noted. The Clerk had queried this as earlier in the year it had been indicated that using a different contractor, a 3-way split of £120 was envisaged. It appeared there had been a misunderstanding as to whether the quote included the cost of the road closure and Little Braxted PC had been forced to revert to using the same contractor as the previous year.

Budget item 48 Air Raid Shelter: The air raid shelter door and lock required attention. **Action:** The Clerk to arrange repairs and/or replacement door and lock (if necessary) in the current financial year.

24F/008

Budget and Precept 2025-2026

Consider setting aside sums for future projects

Speed Indicator Devices, Rotation and/or Purchase: The quote of £750 to move two SIDs to alternative locations was thought to be excessive. The streetlighting contractor had been approached and had inspected the equipment, but did not wish to quote. The cost of purchasing a new SID would be in the region of £2250 - £3,090 + VAT. Highways had yet to respond to our request for information on the existing SIDs to enable the council to consider adoption, but it was felt that due to the age of the equipment, this might not be prudent. **Resolved:** After consideration, the Committee recommended leaving the existing SIDs in their current location. Speedwatch volunteers would be asked to operate in Kelvedon Road.

H-bar markings, Great Totham Road: H-bar markings were available through the South Essex Parking Partnership (SEPP) at a cost of £100 + VAT each. The Committee considered whether providing H-bar markings across Great Totham Road driveways would improve the parking situation or merely push it further up the road. **Resolved:** The Committee did not wish to incur this expenditure, although it was noted that affected residents in Great Totham Road were free to arrange and pay for this themselves.

Footpath number discs: A quote of £180 + VAT for 50 discs was considered. **Resolved:** The Committee recommended purchase of the discs in the current financial year, although a check would need to be made of exactly how many were required for each footpath i.e. FP1, FP2, BR19.

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To develop the budget and precept proposals for approval by the Full Council

Resolved: The updated Precept and Budget Proposal document (attached) to be presented to the Full Parish Council on Tuesday 3rd December, with a recommendation that the **2025/26 Precept be set at £24,530**. MDC advised that the 2025/26 tax base for the parish was 1,022.1 (to be confirmed by them on 12th December) equating to a Band D property precept of £24.00.

The following amounts would be set aside using the Parish Council's reserves:

General Reserves		£9000
Earmarked Reserves	Election Expenses	£1000
	Planning Appeal representation	£1,000
	TOTAL	£11,000

24F/009

Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 3rd December 2024 Full Parish Council Meeting, 7.00pm, (*earlier time*)
Tuesday 7th January 2025 Full Parish Council Meeting, 7.30pm, Village Hall Boardroom

24F/010

Close of Meeting There being no further business, the meeting closed at 3.20pm.