

**Minutes of the Fremington Parish Council Finance and Personnel Committee meeting held on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 10am in The Beechfield Centre, Beechfield Road, Fremington**

Present: Cllrs, F Biederman (Chairman), J Bridgeman, S Kingdom and H Walker

Mrs V Woodhouse, Executive Officer

2311/40 **Apologies**

Cllrs S Haywood and M Thomas.

2311/41 **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Bridgeman declared a Personal Interest in item 2311/46 as his wife is Treasurer of Fremington Friendship Club.

Cllr Kingdom declared a Personal Interest in item 2311/46 as Treasurer of the Fremington Parish Hall.

Cllr Walker declared a Personal Interest in item 2311/46 as a member of the Tomlin Hall Committee.

2311/42 **Public Participation**

None.

2311/43 **Minutes**

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary and one abstention, that the minutes of the Finance & Personnel Committee held on the 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023 be approved.

2311/44 **Staff Salaries**

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to approve the staff salaries, expenses, PAYE/NI and pension payments for the month of November.

2311/45 **Accounts Due for Payment and Receipts for the period from the 14<sup>th</sup> October to 24<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to approve the payments totalling £72,766.07 and receipts totalling £12,974.40 copies of which are attached as Appendix One.

2311/46 **Grant Applications**

Members considered the Grant Applications received for the financial year 2024-2025 and it was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to award the following grant funding:

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<b>Name of Group</b>	<b>Grant Agreed</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Fremington Brownies	£100
1 <sup>st</sup> Fremington District Rangers	£100
1 <sup>st</sup> Fremington Guides	£100
1 <sup>st</sup> Fremington Rainbows	£100
1 <sup>st</sup> Fremington Scouts (Beaver Colony, Cub Pack)	£200
2 <sup>nd</sup> Fremington Brownies	£100
Babbages Allotment Association	£100
Bickington Brownies	£100
Citizens Advice, Torridge, North, West and Mid Devon	£100
Elmfield Boat Planting Project	£100
Fremington Parish Hall Management Committee	£100
Fremington Friendship Club	£100
Lady Linscott Club	£100
Roundswell Residents' Association	£100
Tomlin Hall	£100
Instow, Westleigh, West Yelland Parish News	£100
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,700</b>

After discussion it was also agreed to review the grants process.

2311/47

#### **Budgets and Precept**

The draft budgets were circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that running costs had increased significantly especially insurance costs, members were informed that the insurance cost was likely to be more than the figure shown in the draft budgets as the van insurance had increased by almost £1,000 this year. It was noted that items such as software ad utilities had increased and there was likely to be an increase in contracts for services such as dog bin emptying, Legionella, it was also noted that the lease for the Muddlebridge allotments is due for renewal at the end of March and although an increase in rent was likely the amount was unknown. The budgets also provided for an increase in the Parish Council's services.

Members were informed that the Tews Lane Committee had decided not to proceed with the community building but would require an EMR for project costs to secure the S106 funding and had asked for £15,000 to be placed in an EMR if available from savings at the end of the financial year.

Members reviewed the Parish Council's reserves, it was noted that the Parish Council's net expenditure is approximately £30,000 a month, the JPAG (Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance) Practitioners' Guide 2023 states that generally the appropriate level of reserves should be between 3 and 12 months expenditure. Members noted that there was currently £50,000 in a minimum reserve and £25,000 in general

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reserves and this would be reviewed along with Ear Marked Reserves at the end of the year.

Based on the draft budgets the recommended precept was £304,888 which based on a Band D Property and last year's tax base is an annual increase of £5.

It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to accept the budgets and to recommend to Full Council that the precept for 2024/2025 is set at £304,888.

2311/48 It was **resolved** that under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item as it involves the likely disclosure of confidential information.

2311/49 **Staffing Matters**  
Members were informed that the national pay award for 2023/2024 had been agreed and the backdated pay included in the November salaries. It was **resolved**, with no votes to the contrary, to note the information.

The meeting closed at 12.30am

Signed Ben ..... Dated 23/1/24 .....