



# Laverstock & Ford Parish Council

Incorporating Milford, Bishopdown Farm, Old Sarum & Longhedge

## Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November at Greentrees Primary School (Junior Site).

**Councillors present:** Barker, Hayes, Lynn (from 7.10pm), Maskell (Chair), McDonald, Smith, Tucker, Waller

**In attendance:** Deane (Clerk), Prince (Responsible Financial Officer RFO)

Wiltshire Councillor Oliver and 2 Wiltshire Police PCSO's were also present. Two members of the public joined the meeting to speak regarding agenda item 22.150.

Wiltshire Councillor McLennan and one member of the public joined the meeting online.

### MINUTES

The meeting commenced at 7pm.

WCllr Oliver spoke about his support for a local cheerleading group who would soon be making a planning application for change of use on a unit at Old Sarum to facilitate their training, and hoped the Parish Council would support the application when consulted.

The PCSO's reported on increased bike theft in the Salisbury area, including 4 from local schools and a catapult attack on chickens at River Bourne Community Farm. Cllr Hayes requested an update regarding an incident involving a dog bite at the Community Farm. The PCSO's were unaware of a report but will contact the farm.

#### 22.146 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Baker, Jones, Rigiani, Schneider and Vanstone.

**Resolved:** to accept the apologies received.

#### 22.147 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Smith declared his interest in items on the Planning Log under item 22.151, as an owner of 1 Down View Road and a friend of the applicant at 29 Duck Lane. Cllr Smith agreed to leave the room for any discussion regarding 1 Down View Road.

#### 22.148 Approval of Minutes

**Resolved:** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

#### 22.149 Matters arising

In response to a question from Cllr Waller, the Clerk reported there were no further updates on ASDA application on London Road. No other questions were raised.

#### 22.150 Highways - LHFIG Schemes

Two members of the public spoke in support of the proposals for a 20MPH zone throughout Milford and additional HGV signage at the Petersfinger/A36 junction.

The Clerk had circulated Report 22.150 in advance of the meeting, giving updates on the Local Highways and Footpaths Improvement Group LHFIG schemes and setting out proposed contributions.

**Resolved:** to approve the contribution of £667.50 to LHFIG Issue 13-20-5 HGV signage Petersfinger

**Resolved:** to approve the contribution of £1853.81 to LHFIG Issue 13-21-21 Milford 20MPH zone

**Resolved:** to approve the contribution of £578.75 to LHFIG Issue 13-22-13 Sherbourne Drive parking

**Resolved:** to approve the contribution of £1,125 to LHFIG Issue 13-22-25 Riverside Road crossing

#### 22.151 Planning

##### Planning Log

Cllr Smith left the room for this item.

**Resolved:** to approve the following responses

PL/2022/07787 Single storey extension 11 Riverside Close, Laverstock NO COMMENT

PL/2022/07766 Discharge of obligation on s/87/1073 1 Down View Road, Laverstock NO COMMENT  
PL/2022/08046 Work to trees on verge Green Lane, Ford NO COMMENT  
PL/2022/07953 Variation of condition 2 on 21/00885/FUL Burroughs Hill, Duck Lane, Laverstock NO COMMENT  
PL/2022/08258 Install driveway 29 Duck Lane, Laverstock SUPPORT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS  
Cllr Smith rejoined the meeting.

### **5 Year Land Supply**

Cllr Oliver spoke regarding a letter that a group of Wiltshire Councillors had suggested the Parish Council send to our MP. The letter raises concern over the use of the 5 Year Land Supply figure by developers to gain approval for developments that are contrary to Neighbourhood Plans and the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Councillors expressed their support for the Chair to send the letter as suggested, removing reference to the 'polling station', but requested that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group NPSG be consulted for their comments first. The Clerk will contact the NPSG and forward their comments to the Chair.

### **22.152 Hampton Park Pavilion and Old Sarum and Longhedge Community Centre**

The Clerk reported that a further meeting had been held with the owner of the Pavilion, who had requested a business plan from the Parish Council. The Clerk also reported some of the trustees of the Community Interest Company CIO operating Old Sarum and Longhedge Community Centre had indicated their intention to step down. If the CIO ceases to operate, the Parish Council should consider how to ensure the future operation of OSLCC. The Clerk reported that increased energy costs at both centres, and the need for recruitment of staff to run the centres, would require a subsidy from the Parish Council. The Clerk also highlighted that other community facilities in the Parish may need assistance due to high energy costs.

Councillors supported the inclusion of £30,000 in the proposed budget for 2023/24 for the support and running of community centres in the parish.

### **22.153 Appointment of Contractor – Bishopdown Play Areas**

The Clerk had circulated Report 22.153 in advance of the meeting, giving details of the tenders received and the scorings awarded following evaluation. The Clerk had reported on the option to upgrade to galvanised metal fencing if councillors supported the use of additional funds.

**Resolved:** to appoint Eibeplay Limited to renew the Play Areas at St Lukes Close and St Peters Road, Bishopdown Farm for a total cost of £99,798.79 excluding VAT.

**Resolved:** to approve the additional cost of £11,106 excluding VAT for galvanised bow top fencing.

### **22.154 Committee Membership**

The Clerk reported that due to work commitments, Cllr Rigiani had requested to step down from the Operations Committee. Cllr Smith expressed his interest in joining either the Operations Committee or the Communications and Community Engagement Committee.

**Resolved:** for Cllr Smith to replace Cllr Rigiani on the Operations Committee.

### **22.155 Appointment of Website Provider**

The Communications and Community Engagement Officer CCEO had circulated Report 22.155 in advance of the meeting, reporting on the discussions held at the Communications and Community Engagement Committee regarding the appointment of a website provider and recommending Parish Online. Councillors supported the appointment of Parish Online.

### **22.156 Budget 2023/24**

The Clerk asked councillors to consider whether they wished to include provision in the 2023/24 budget to commemorate the Kings Coronation in 2024, such as providing mementoes to school children. Councillors did not support this, mainly on environmental concerns about unwanted 'trinkets', and also concerns about other budget increases. The planting of a tree was suggested as a good way to mark the occasion.

The Clerk reported on the lack of youth provision in the parish, with no youth club operating in either Bishopdown Farm or Laverstock. Southern Wiltshire Area Board had agreed to prioritise youth provision in Laverstock and Ford. The Clerk and CCEO had met with Wiltshire Councils Community Engagement Officer and representatives from Community First to discuss possible initiatives working

towards establishing additional youth clubs. Councillors supported the provision of £5,000 in the 2023/24 budget towards youth provision.

## **22.157 Finance**

### **Appointment of Scribe Accounts**

The RFO reported on the discussions held at the previous Finance and General Purposes Committee agreeing the adoption of Scribe Accounts, replacing the previous Rialtas accounting system. The initial free trial was about to commence.

### **Financial Regulations**

The RFO had circulated proposed updates to Part 1 of Financial Regulations under Report 22.157, based on the NALC model template. The proposed changes support the councils move to direct online payments. The mandate continues to require three signatories, which previously had been three councillors. The proposed updates will permit the Clerk or RFO to create and authorise BACS payments following approval by Full Council. The other two authorisations must be made by councillors.

**Resolved:** to adopt Part 1 of new Financial Regulations dated 21 November 2022 as attached Annex One. Chapters 7 to 18 of the existing Financial Regulations remain unchanged.

### **2022/23 Pay Award**

The RFO reported that on 2<sup>nd</sup> November the National Joint Council NJC agreed the 2022 pay award of £1925 per annum. This has been implemented for Parish Council staff and the backdated pay included in Novembers payments.

Cllr Baker had circulated an email in advance of the meeting confirming that he had checked the monthly accounts and payments as presented and was content all were accurate. Review of

### **Adoption of Monthly Accounts for October 2022**

The Financial Statements had previously been circulated in Report 22.157. The total funds held at the end of October 2022 were £1,473,811.19 of which £1,304,561.28 were earmarked or restricted reserves.

**Resolved:** To adopt the monthly accounts as a true record of the Council's finances.

### **Authorisation of Payments**

The lists of payments had been circulated in Report 22.157. Total cheque and BACS payments in November 2022 amounted to £18,897.03. Debit card and direct debit payments in October 2022 amounted to £699.71.

**Resolved:** To approve the cheque, BACS, direct debit and debit card payments.

### **Review of Reserves and Treasury deposit report**

The RFO highlighted the increase on return on investments due to increasing interest rates. Reserves and Treasury Deposit Reports Summaries of Financial Reserves and Deposits had been presented in Report 22.157. Earmarked and Restricted Reserves at the end of October 2022 were £1,304,561.28. The balance on the 32 Day Notice Account at the end of October 2022 was £367,749.29 including interest of £5,865.88. The balance on the CCLAPSDF was £984,426.15 including dividends awarded of £3,482.15. There was a total of £1,352,175.44 on deposit at the end of October 2022.

**Resolved:** To note the reserve and treasury deposit reports.

## **22.158 Clerk's Report and Correspondence**

The Clerk reported that the application for development in Church Road appears to have the provision of a car park for the school removed. The application remains undetermined.

The Parish Council will be charged for electricity used in the Parish Office in future.

The Clerk reported that Wiltshire Council had stated election costs would be passed on to Parish Councils from 2025.

## **22.159 Exempt Business – Exclusion of the Press and Public**

There was no exempt business.

The meeting closed at 9.03pm.

**NEXT MEETING.** The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at River Bourne Community Farm

SIGNED:

DATE:

**Laverstock and Ford  
Parish Council**

**FINANCIAL  
REGULATIONS  
2022**

**Part 1  
Chapters 1 - 6**

These Financial Regulations (Part 1) were adopted by the Council at its Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022.

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## **1. General**

- 1.1. These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. Financial regulations are one of the council's three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in

conjunction with the council's standing orders and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.

- 1.2. The council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective, and that the council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3. The council's accounting control systems must include measures:
  - for the timely production of accounts.
  - that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money.
  - to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
  - identifying the duties of officers.
- 1.4. These financial regulations demonstrate how the council meets these responsibilities and requirements.
- 1.5. At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.6. Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.7. Members of council are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.8. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office to be appointed by the council.
- 1.9. The RFO
  - Acts under the policy direction of the council.
  - Administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices.
  - Determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and accounting control systems.
  - ensures the accounting control systems are observed.
  - maintains the accounting records of the council up to date in accordance with proper practices.
  - assists the council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
  - produces financial management information as required by the council.
- 1.10. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and

explain the council's transactions and to enable the RFO to ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipts and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or management information prepared for the council from time to time comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

1.11. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall in particular contain:

- entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate,
- a record of the assets and liabilities of the council; and
- wherever relevant, a record of the council's income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.

1.12. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:

- procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the council are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible,
- procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records,
- identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions,
- procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the council for approval to be written off except with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records; and
- measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.

1.13. The council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain specified decisions. In particular any decision regarding:

- setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement).
- approving accounting statements,
- approving an annual governance statement,
- borrowing,
- writing off bad debts,
- declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and
- addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors, shall be a matter for the full council only.

1.14. In addition, the council must:

- determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts,
- approve any grant or a single commitment in excess of £2,000; and

- in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the Personnel Committee in accordance with its terms of reference.

1.15. In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or 'the regulations' shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.

In these financial regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - a Practitioners' Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

## **2. Accounting and audit (internal and external)**

2.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate guidance and proper practices.

2.2. On a regular basis, at least once every six months, and at each financial year end, a member other than a member of the Finance and General Purposes Committee shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the council.

2.3. The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to the council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

2.4. The council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the council to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary for that purpose.

2.5. The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the council in accordance with proper practices.

2.6. The internal auditor shall:

- be competent and independent of the financial operations of the council,



- report to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year,
- demonstrate competence, objectivity, and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
- have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the council.

2.7. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:

- perform any operational duties for the council,
- initiate or approve accounting transactions; or
- direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.

2.8. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.

2.9. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

2.10. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

### **3. Annual estimates (budget) and forward planning**

3.1. Each committee shall review its three-year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments. Having regard to the forecast, it shall thereafter formulate and submit proposals for the following financial year to the council not later than the end of November each year including any proposals for revising the forecast.

3.2. The RFO must each year, by no later than December, prepare detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year in the form of a budget to be considered by the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Council.

3.3. The council shall consider annual budget proposals in relation to the council's three year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments including recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding and update the forecast accordingly.

3.4. The council shall fix the precept (council tax requirement), and relevant basic amount of council tax to be levied for the ensuing financial year not later than by the end of the third week of January each year. The RFO or Clerk shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved annual budget.

3.5. The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

#### **4. Budgetary control and authority to spend**

4.1. Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:

- the council for all items over £2,000.
- the Clerk for any items below £2000.

The authority of the council is to be evidenced by a minute.

Contracts may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by these regulations.

4.2. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure other than by resolution of the council, or duly delegated committee. During the budget year and with the approval of council, having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate.

4.3. Unspent provisions in the revenue or capital budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year except with the approval of the full Council.

4.4. The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually in December for the following financial year and such review shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chair of Council or relevant committee. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.

4.5. In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, the clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £5000. The Clerk shall report such action to the chair as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.

4.6. No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available.

4.7. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.

4.8. The RFO shall regularly provide the council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose, "material" shall be in excess of £1,000 or 20% of the budget.

4.9. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by council as part of the budgetary control process.

## **5. Banking arrangements and authorisation of payments**

5.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency.

5.2. The RFO shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring approval, forming part of the Agenda for the Meeting and, together with the relevant invoices, present the schedule to council. The council shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself shall approve payment by a resolution of the council. The approved schedule shall be signed by a member of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. A detailed list of all payments shall be published as a Report to the Council alongside the Agenda and Minutes of the meeting at which payments were approved. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) will be redacted to remove public access to any personal information.

5.3. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the RFO to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the council.

5.4. The RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order, at the next available council meeting.

5.5. The Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to approve the payment of items only in the following circumstances:

- a) If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled Meeting of council, where the Clerk and RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council. A schedule of such payments shall be signed by a member of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- b) If a payment of salary and/or expenses, PAYE and NI or of an invoice for goods or services received by the council, shall be unduly delayed due to the cancellation or rescheduling of a council meeting, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next meeting of the council. A schedule of such

payments shall be signed by a member of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

- c) fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £1,000,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or finance committee.

5.6. All grants shall be authorised by the council in accordance with the Council's current policy.

5.7. Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.

5.8. The council will aim to rotate the duties of members in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.

## **6. Instructions for the making of payments**

6.1. The council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.

6.2. Following approval under Financial Regulation 5 above, the council, a duly delegated committee or, if so delegated, the Clerk or RFO shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.

6.3. All payments shall be affected by either a direct online payment (BACS or CHAPS) to the recipient's bank account or by cheque or by other instructions to the council's bankers, or otherwise, in accordance with a resolution of council.

6.4. Online payments by BACS or CHAPS shall be created and authorised by the Clerk or RFO and further authorised by two members who are bank signatories. Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule as presented to council shall be signed by three members of council. The Clerk or RFO shall create and certify a schedule of payments, accompanied by invoices or other documentation prior to approval by the Council. All payments shall be in accordance with a resolution instructing those payments.

6.5. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.

6.6. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water), office services, pension payments and any National Non-Domestic Rates may be made by variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed by three members and

any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a variable direct debit shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

6.7. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

6.8. Where a computer requires use of a personal identification number (PIN) or other password(s), for access to the council's records on that computer, a note shall be made of the PIN and Passwords and shall be handed to and retained by the Chair of Council in a sealed dated envelope. This envelope may not be opened other than in the presence of two other councillors. After the envelope has been opened, in any circumstances, the PIN and / or passwords shall be changed as soon as practicable. The fact that the sealed envelope has been opened, in whatever circumstances, shall be reported to all members immediately and formally to the next available meeting of the council. This will not be required for a member's personal computer used only for remote authorisation of bank payments.

6.9. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.

6.10. Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely away from the computer in question, and preferably off site.

6.11. The council, and any members using computers for the council's financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.