

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BROCKENHURST PARISH COUNCIL  
PERSONNEL AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD  
ON TUESDAY 4<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2025 AT BROCKENHURST VILLAGE HALL**

**Present:**

Cllr R Wolstenholme	Chairman
Cllr J Korbey	Cllr M Harris
Cllr R Horne	Cllr R Bowles
Cllr P Hollins	
Mrs M Beckett	Temporary RFO

**25/01 Apologies for Absence:** None

**25/02 Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensation**

Cllr Horne abstained from voting in respect of the 2025/26 Chairman's Allowance (25/08).

**25/03 Minutes of Meeting held 17<sup>th</sup> December 2024**

The minutes were proposed, seconded and signed as a correct record.

**25/04 Election of Vice- Chairman**

Cllr Harris was proposed, seconded and unanimously elected as Vice Chairman of the Committee.

**25/05 Review of Allotment Fees**

It was agreed to recommend that allotment fees are increased by 3.6% from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 in line with the current policy of increasing fees annually in line with RPI.

**25/06 Financial Management:**

The following items were discussed and noted:

- Financial Comparison
- Bank Balances
- Bank Transfers
- Capital Expenditure
- Regular Payments
- Changes to Bank Interest Rates

The Committee noted that, whilst there have not been any to date, budget virements may sometimes be necessary to make use of a surplus in an approved budget heading in order to cover shortfalls in another, allowing flexibility and transparency in financial management whilst ensuring the Council's overall budget remains balanced. Virements require Council approval and must align with Council priorities and legal responsibilities, taking into account whether the reallocation is justified, any effect on other planned expenditure for the year and any longer-term implications.

It was agreed that to facilitate flexible, robust and transparent financial management, creation of a medium term financial plan covering up to three financial years with particular focus on proposed Village Centre Strategy activities would be recommended.

It was further agreed to recommend the creation of a £1,000 earmarked reserve for the Commemorative 'Blue Plaque' Scheme as agreed at the Parish Council meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024 (24/53).

Finally, it was agreed to recommend adoption of the proposed Asset Management approach to support the annual accounts and audit process to take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 with ongoing annual review and update thereafter. The Committee wished to record their thanks to the outgoing temporary RFO for preparing the approach document.

### **25/07 Grant Applications**

The following grant applications were agreed to be recommended:

- a. Citizens Advice Bureau New Forest: the full sum requested of £150.
- b. Brockenhurst Brownies: the full sum requested of £300.

### **25/08 Chairman's Allowance**

It was agreed to recommend continuation of the scheme with a budget of £500 for 2025/26.

**Pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it was resolved that the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the following business discussed:**

### **25/09 Salary Reviews**

It was agreed to recommend an increase of £1.00 to both Groundsmen's hourly pay rate with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025.

### **25/10 RFO Recruitment Update**

It was noted that the RFO role is currently being advertised with a closing date of 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025. In the meantime the Parish Clerk is investigating locum RFO options as contingency in case a suitable candidate is not found or is unable to commence employment prior to the departure of the current temporary RFO.

### **25/11 Short & Medium Term Staffing Arrangements**

Annual leave carry-forward arrangements and advance requests for the 2025/26 and 2026/27 financial years were discussed and agreed for recommendation to Full Council for approval.

### **25/12 Any Other Items**

The following items were discussed and noted:

- Revised NALC Good Councillor's Guide to Finance
- Changes to LGPS Contribution Bands
- New Public Sector Procurement Rules

It was agreed that the RFO would establish a Forward Plan for the Committee with items to be discussed at future meetings including:

- Forthcoming PC Office lease expiry (August 2025)
- Review of Cemetery Fees & Regulations (November 2025)
- Review of regular payments (March 2026)
- Review of Allotment Fees (March 2026)
- Staffing structures, job design and succession planning including possible use of apprenticeships
- Review of employment contracts including annual leave arrangements
- Asset Register checks

The Committee noted that the Council's current internal auditors, Fair Account, would be unlikely to be able to complete the required year end review. It was therefore agreed to recommend that the Parish Clerk explores alternative internal audit arrangements to cover the remainder of the 2024/25 financial year including the associated AGAR process.

It was agreed to recommend that alternative options for the location of the PC Office be explored, current arrangements expiring in August 2025.

Finally, it was noted that Cllr Michael Croker had requested to join the Committee.

### **25/13 Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025 at 7pm unless required sooner.

The meeting closed at 8.27pm.

DRAFT