

Godstone Parish Council

(incorporating the Villages of Godstone, South Godstone and Blindley Heath)

Clerk to the Parish Council

S Endersby

Admin Assistant

L Case (Mat cover)

The Bounty
Godstone Green
Godstone, Surrey
RH9 8DY

Telephone/Fax: 01883 744209

MINUTES

of the Finance Committee for the meeting of the Finance Committee of Godstone Parish Council on **Monday 30 November 2020** at **10am** via Zoom.

1. Apologies for absence - None

2. Declaration of Interest

2.1 All members present are parishioners and dispensations was granted to each member of the committee on the grounds that the transaction of business will be impeded given the number of Councillor's who would otherwise be prohibited from participating in item 13.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2019

RESOLVED – The committee unanimously approved the minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2020.

4. Parish Council Procedures Audit –

4.1 **Insurance Cover** – The committee noted that the current insurance plan was the last year of 3-year price deal

4.2 **Risk Assessment** – The committee carried out the Annual Review of the Financial Risk Assessment

FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT – 2021-2022

Subject	Risk Identified	H/M/L	Control	Review
Petty Cash	Loss through theft / dishonesty	L	N/a – no longer have petty cash	N/a
Expenses	Loss through fraudulent claims	L	Covered in Financial Regulations. Each Expense claim reviewed by two councillors at each meeting and agreed by the full Parish council.	Annually
Income - Cheques Received	Loss through theft / dishonesty / misplacement	L	Cheques paid into bank at the very least weekly. See Office Procedures	Annually
Income - Cash	Loss through theft / dishonesty	L	All Cash is paid into the bank at the very least monthly. See office Procedure	Annually
Financial Records / Standing Orders	Yes - adequate	L	Financial Regulations in place	Review when necessary
Bank and banking	Errors by Bank	L	See Financial Regulations. Monthly Bank reconciliations undertaken; available at Council meetings	Annually
Reporting and Auditing	Compliance	L	Council should regularly audit internally to comply with Fidelity Guarantee	Bi-Annually
Salaries	Incorrect Payments	L	Monthly meeting; calculated in accordance with HMR7C regulations. Annual Returns submitted within timescale. Councillor's review; Internal Audit Review	Annually
Original Documentation	Loss by theft/fire	L	Stored in 30minute Fireproof Cabinet for storage of minutes, contracts and other original papers	Annually
Computer Files	Loss	L	Computer backed up by at least weekly. One (monthly) back up stored off site and one stored in 30minute Fireproof Cabinet.	Annually
Insurance Cover	As per policy	L	Reviewed by Full Parish Council.	Annually
Precept	Reduced payment of the expected amount	L	Monitored by Parish council if contributing factors arise.	Annually

4.2.1 Consideration of the Precept was added to the Risk Assessment

RESOLVED – The committee unanimously agreed that the reviewed Risk Assessment be recommended to the full council.

4.3 **Financial Regulations** - To review regulations and agree any changes

Attached to email and need to check how expenses are dealt with (Prepaid card)

RESOLVED – The committee unanimously agreed to postpone the review of the Financial Regulations to the next meeting to be held as soon as practicable to ensure it could be given the appropriate time to be considered due to other items on this meeting's agenda.

4.4 **For noting, items for consideration at the next Finance Committee, post lockdown:**

4.4.1 Asset Register - Review and agree any changes

4.4.2 Business Continuity Plan - Annual Review

4.4.3 Business Plan – Preparation

RESOLVED – The committee unanimously agreed to postpone the review of the items 4.4.1 – 4.4.3 and that they be dealt with as soon as practicable.

5. **AGAR - Financial Year 2019-2020 - External Auditor** – To note report and conclusion

RESOLVED – The committee unanimously agreed to postpone the review of the AGAR - Financial Year 2019-2020 - External Auditor to the next meeting to be held as soon as practicable to ensure it could be given the appropriate time to be considered due to other items on this meeting's agenda.

6. **Interim Internal Audit – Financial Year 2020-2021** – To note receipt of report and consider recommendations of Interim Internal Audit 2020-2021 and agree any changes in view of audit comments.

RESOLVED – The committee unanimously agreed to postpone the review of the Interim Internal Audit – Financial Year 2020-2021 to the next meeting to be held as soon as practicable to ensure it could be given the appropriate time to be considered due to other items on this meeting's agenda.

7. **Financial Position – General Review (year to date 2020-2021)**

7.1 To review the latest receipts and payments report; agree any virement – Councillors noted that the most up to date Receipts and Payments report had been circulated.

7.2 To review Designated Funds and Restricted Funds and to note current balances

7.2.1 Councillors noted that the most up to date Reserves sheet had been circulated setting out the current Designated and Restricted Funds.

7.2.2 Councillors noted the negative amount shown in the reserves which must be addressed.

7.3 Virements agreed:

RESOLVED – The committee unanimously agreed that 6.36 be allocated from general reserves to Telephone Kiosk.

RESOLVED – The committee unanimously agreed that £1k be allocated from general reserves to the Blindley Heath (Donated Land) to ensure the FY2020-21 budget amount was designated for the project.

RESOLVED – The committee unanimously agreed that £1.5k be allocated from general reserves to the Godstone Pond (Long term care plan) to ensure the FY2020-21 budget amount was designated for the future project work.

7.4 Estimated carry forward for general funds at 31 March 2021

7.4.1 Councillors noted the current estimated general reserves carry forward figure of £50-55k and an estimated figure for the Designated and Restricted Funds to be carried forward £98k.

7.4.2 It was strongly stated that these figures are estimates and it was further specifically noted that the general reserve figure stated includes funds for items that were part of the FY2020-21 budget and costs that may still be incurred, the estimate was prepared using as much current information as available at the time of preparation.

RESOLVED – The committee agreed that the £10k business grant received during Covid-19 should be in general reserves.

8. **Grants**

8.1 Continuous Grants and other Grants – Information noted.

Financial Year - 2020-2021				
St Catherines	Other	March 2020 meeting	£500	<i>Clerk discussed with Cttee</i>
Air Ambulance	Other	March 2020 meeting	£250	<i>Clerk discussed with Cttee</i>
Hygiene Bank	Other	August meeting	£300	
Hygiene Bank	EAG	Sept/Oct and email	£250	G893
St Stephens School	EAG	Sept/Oct and email	£300	G894
St Stephens School	EAG	Sept/Oct and email	£200	G916

Godstone Primary and Nursery School	EAG	Nov	£250.00	G939
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8.1.1 The Clerk reported that the Grants agreed for St Catherines and Air Ambulance in March 2020 had not been paid due to the impact of Covid-19. Reconfirmation that they be paid was requested by the Clerk.

RESOLVED – The committee agreed that this discussion be referred to the full parish council meeting.

Action FC11/20 – 1 – Payment of Grants to St Catherines and Air Ambulance to be discussed with the full parish council.

8.2 Terms and Conditions –

RESOLVED – The committee unanimously agreed to postpone the review of the Terms and Conditions to the next committee meeting to be held as soon as practicable.

9. Review of fees and charges for 2021/22

9.1 Burial Grounds, Allotments, Wayleaves/Easements and Garden Plot Licenses

9.1.1 Burial Grounds

RESOLVED – The committee unanimously postponed a review on the Burial ground charges and requested some research information.

Action FC11/20 – 2 – Clerk to research charges of other local burial grounds

	Current Parishioner	New Rate 2021-2022	7-year Parishioner	New Rate 2021-2022	Non-Parishioner	New Rate 2021-2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Graves						
Purchase of grave space	348.39		696.78		2940.37	
Interment in a purchased grave	232.63		464.15		1837.87	
Addition of ashes to a burial	174.2		348.39		735.37	
Right to erect or place a headstone with inscription	232.63		464.15		918.38	
Additional Inscription	88.2		179.71		379.26	
Memorial Garden	Clerk to confirm with Rev P O'Connell number of ashes spaces remaining in church ashes memorial area.					
Purchase of an Ashes Plot						
Internment into an ashes plot						
Additional internment into an ashes plot						
MEMORIALS						
The right to erect or place a headstone with inscription on a purchased grave	232.63		464.15		918.38	
Additional inscription	88.2		179.71		379.26	
ADMINISTRATION AND SEARCH FEE	58.43		58.43		61.74	

9.1.2 Allotments

RESOLVED – The committee unanimously agreed that the allotment rent for 2021-22 will be £8.10 per 25 sqm with a £20 minimum charge

9.1.3 Wayleaves

RESOLVED – The committee unanimously agreed that the FY2021-2022 Wayleave annual rents increased by 5% on previous years rent.

9.1.4 Garden Plots

RESOLVED – The committee unanimously agreed that the FY2021-2022 Garden plots annual rents increased by 5% on previous years rent.

9.2 Use of Godstone Green and Blindley Heath

RESOLVED – The committee unanimously agreed that the charge for use of Godstone Green of Blindley Heath not be increased and for FY2021-22 and remain as £210 for an operational day and £105 for a non-operational day.

10. Annual review of staff salaries, hourly paid wages and hours and Allowances (Confidential)

10.1 Salaries and Pensions –

RESOLVED – The committee passed a resolution that pursuant to Section 1 part 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any business on the grounds that it is likely if the public were to remain, there would be a disclosure of exempt information.

The Clerk left the meeting.

PART TWO discussions to confirm the Salary and Pension payments for employees.

The Clerk returned to the meeting.

10.2 Chairman's Allowance - Review and set allowance for 2021/2022

RESOLVED – The committee unanimously agreed that the Chairman's Allowance be set at £300.

11. Review of Areas of responsibility within the Parish (for Budget Planning)

Although not an exhaustive list, the following points were noted as ongoing considerations whilst preparing the budget.

11.1 **Burial Ground** - Long term care for the burial ground.

11.2 **Tree Care** - Last survey completed in April 2019 and at December 2019 Full Parish Council meeting: the Finance Committee Recommendation was that the next tree survey be scheduled for 2021-2022, which was unanimously accepted that the next tree survey be scheduled and budgeted for in the financial year 2021-2022.

11.3 **Car Park** – Consideration to be given for the current extremely low contingency for the car park and that landscaping currently not included in budget figures but was a condition of planning.

11.4 **Playground** - Short/Medium/Long term planning for the playground

11.5 **Godstone Green** - Impact of grass cutting contracts proposed changes

12. Budget for the year 1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021

12.1 Clerks Report of finance information provided to support budget planning, matters noted:

12.1.1 The use of BACS or CHAPS should be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

12.1.2 Reserves should be 50% of precept.

12.1.3 All designated funds and restricted funds will be carried forward unless there is a decision by full council to change plans for planned projects.

RESOLVED – The committee agreed that item 12.1.1 be referred to the full parish council meeting.

12.2 Prepare and agree budget for 2021-2022 Financial year

12.2.1 The committee discussed the budget and the following draft budget was prepared:

	DRAFT BUDGET & 3-YEAR PLAN		
Receipts	2021/22 Budget	2022/23 Budget	2023/24 Budget
Precept			
CIL (Unallocated from FY19-20 and FY20-21)	423.54	0.00	0.00
Burial Grounds	14,000.00		
Greens and Commons	1,000.00		
Rents	4,000.00		
Bank Interest, Donations & Grants			
Hilly Fields Car Park			
Children's Playground Refurb.			
Blindley Heath – Management Grant			
Memorial Benches			
Christmas Lights	500.00		
Hilly Fields			
Pond (GG)			
War Memorials			
VAT Refunds			
Neighbourhood Plan			
Monies held for Local organisations			
Godstone Green Defence - Donations			
Donation for Tree Works			
Donation - Telephone Kiosk			
TOTAL	19,923.54	0.00	0.00
Payments	2021/22 Budget	2022/23 Budget	2023/24 Budget
Administration			
Salaries and Clerks Expenses	25,781.02	26,296.64	26,822.57
Rent/Rates/Insurance	3,606.00	3,678.12	3,751.68
Heating/Lighting/Telephone/Postage etc	866.96	884.30	901.99
Training Councillors and Staff	1,100.00	1,122.00	1,144.44
Maintenance/Office Equipment	2,231.47	2,276.10	2,321.62
Audit/Allowances/Sundries/Subscriptions	2,736.62	2,791.36	2,847.18
Total Administration	36,322.08	37,048.52	37,789.49
Burial Grounds	7,560.03	7,711.23	7,865.46
Greens and Commons			
Maintenance Contract	2,000.00	2,040.00	2,080.80
Godstone Green	8,829.03	9,005.61	9,185.72
South Godstone	625.00	637.50	650.25
Blindley Heath Common - Not SSSI	8,066.59	4,922.92	5,021.38
Hilly Fields (not allotment site)	500.00	500.00	510.00
Tilburstow Hill Common	475.00	484.50	494.19
Total Greens and Commons	20,495.62	17,590.53	17,942.34
Allotments	500.00	510.00	520.20
Tree Survey and Tree Care (Across the Parish)	5,199.50	500.00	5,303.49
Notice boards and bus shelters	540.00	550.80	561.82
Grants and Donations	5,000.00	5,100.00	5,202.00
CIL	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hilly Fields Car Park	0.00	500.00	510.00
Hilly Fields Car Park - CIL Funds allocated	0.00	0.00	0.00
Children's Playground	3,606.30	1,000.00	1,020.00
Blindley Heath - SSSI - SWT	2,250.12	2,295.12	2,341.02
Blindley Heath – GPC Management obligations	20.00	20.40	20.81
Blindley Heath - Donated Land	0.00	0.00	0.00
Christmas Lights	886.00	903.72	921.79
Memorial Benches	0.00	0.00	0.00
Neighbourhood Plan	100.00	102.00	104.04
Hilly Fields	0.00	0.00	0.00
Ponds	1,500.00	1,530.00	1,560.60
War Memorials	229.00	233.58	238.25
Donation for Tree Works (Enterdent)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Donation - Telephone Kiosk	0.00	0.00	0.00
Monies held for Local organisations	0.00	0.00	0.00
Defence of Godstone Green (incl. Blindley Heath Defence)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Projects - Path on the green	3,000.00	3,060.00	3,121.20
Projects - Path at the burial ground	2,000.00	2,040.00	2,080.80
Projects - Horse pond Long term care			
Fees for Professional Services (Local Plan Consultation - Inspection)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Wayleaves Project	0.00	0.00	0.00
VAT for Reclaim	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL PAYMENTS	89,208.65	80,695.90	87,103.31
Surplus/Deficit	-69,285.11	-80,695.90	-87,103.31

- 12.2.2 The following Virements were agreed and would be reported to the full Parish Council:
- i. £3.5k of CIL funds be allocated to the Hilly Fields Car Park Project
 - ii. £3.5k of designated funds currently allocated to the Hilly Fields Car Park Project be returned to general reserves
 - iii. £1.5k (FY2020-21 budgeted amount) in relation to potential donated land be designated within FY2020-21
 - iv. £1k (FY2020-21 budgeted amount) in relation to long term care of the Godstone Horse pond be designated within FY2020-21
 - v. CIL funds be allocated to the funding improvements to the Blindley Heath Car Park, amount to be confirmed.

12.2.3 During the preparation of the budget the committee discussed that there were a number of items that required discussion by full council before the finance committee could consider the budget further.

RESOLVED – The committee agreed that the following areas in relation to future plans and budget setting be referred to the full parish council meeting on 7 December 2020:

- i. Grass cutting Contract Addendum
- ii. Playground Management Plan
- iii. Hilly Fields (land behind Greenview cottages) replacement/repair of Fence
- iv. Tilburstow Hill Management Plan
- v. Car Park
- vi. Wayleaves

12.3 Consider the preparation of a 3-year budget Plan – Noted during discussions and initial preparation was included. More detailed analysis would be required following the budget for FY2021-22 being completed.

13. Agree Precept for the year 1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022 - to recommend to the Parish Council at the Parish Council meeting on 7 December 2020 for approval.

13.1 It was noted that the initial draft budget would mean the precept would need to be set at £69k.

RESOLVED – The committee unanimously postponed agreeing any precept amount for recommendation to the full parish council until the discussion on areas detailed in 12.2.3 were complete.

14 Date of next meeting

14.1 Date to be agreed as soon as practicable following the parish council meeting being held on 7 December 2020.

----- The meeting ended at 1pm -----

Committee Chairman

Date