

Godstone Parish Council

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

Clerk to the Parish Council

S Endersby

Admin Assistant

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MINUTES

of the meeting of the Finance Committee of Godstone Parish Council
on **Friday 16 December 2022** at **10.00am** at the **Bounty, Godstone Green.**

1. Apologies for absence

1.1 Apologies had been received from Cllr D Stone due to personal commitments.

RESOLVED – The committee noted the apologies, and the meeting was deemed quorate.

2. Declaration of Interest

2.1 All members present are parishioners and dispensations were 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 6.

3. Minutes of previous meetings held on 25 November 2022

The committee considered the minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2022

RESOLVED – The minutes of the meetings held on 25 November 2022 were approved as an accurate records of the meetings and it was agreed that they be signed by the committee chairman.

4. Consider Accounts for Payment – The committee considered the following invoices for payment as permitted under the committees Terms of Reference:

GPC Ref.	Business	Invoice	Invoice Date	Payment For	Net amount	VAT	Invoice Total
Invoices for Payment							
G1325	Groundworks UJK	As per email	07/12/2022	Return of Neighbourhood plan grant	833.20		833.20
G1328	Safeplay	22518	09/12/2022	Installation and works as per agreed contract on Playground	52,167.00	10,433.40	62,600.40
G1329	Gardenwise	50509	Dec-22	Maintenance - Playground and Burial Ground	137.50		137.50
TOTAL					£53,137.70	£10,433.40	£63,571.10

RESOLVED - The committee approved the payments list totaling £63,571.10 and two councillors countersigned each invoice.

ACTION – FC12/22 – 1 – Clerk to arrange payment of the invoices.

5. Budget for the year 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024

4.1 Review and consider the updated draft of the budget for the financial year 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024

4.1.1 Noting **ACTION FC11/22 – 5** – of the previous meeting, the Clerk and Councillor S Farr had carried out a further review of the budget and information had been provided to the committee.

4.1.2 It was raised at the meeting that the budget drafted to demonstrate what it is intended that the precept will cover does not set out a budget plan of agreed spend for all areas, some spend of which would/should be covered by reserves.

4.1.3 It was debated that a clear allocation of spend on areas was key due to potential changes to the Parish council following elections in May 2023 with reservations raised as to whether it was clear enough about that the 'Working budget' for council to refer to when making decisions.

4.1.4 There were varying opinions in relation to setting the final budget details. The budget plan discussed and considered during the committee meeting is shown in Appendix A.

4.1.5 There were further discussions by the committee of items that were not detailed in the budget produced to assist in establishing what Precept was required. The committee discussed the reserves held that could/would be used to cover a number of items. Notes were included on the final summary sheet and noted in meeting papers summarised in Appendix B.

4.1.6 The auditor's report in relation to the reserves was noted and the matter discussed and considered carefully as part of the exercise to consider what precept should be recommended.

4.1.7 Noting alterations made to the draft budget during the meeting the following virement was approved:

RESOLVED – The committee unanimously agreed that £5,500 from general reserves be allocated to the Neighbourhood Plan designated fund.

4.1.8 The committee discussed the necessity to review the reserves held.

ACTION – FC12/22 – 2 – Clerk to arrange a meeting on Friday 6 January 2023 at 10am for the committee to review reserves currently held and the allocation of the reserves (including the long term allocation of funds for the Burial Ground).

6. Agree Precept for the year 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024 - Review and confirm the recommendation to be presented to the Parish Council at the full Parish Council meeting on 9 January 2022 for approval.

6.1 The committee noting a variation of opinion on the budget setting approach, were still in general agreement in the amount being proposed for the Precept.

MOTION PROPOSED – That a precept of £73,217.38 be recommended to the full council.

(Proposed by: Cllr S Farr and Seconded: Cllr C White)

RESOLVED - The committee unanimously agreed that a precept of £73,217.38 be recommended to the full council.

12 Date of next meeting - Confirm the date of the next meeting

Part 2 – None

----- Meeting ended -----

Signed
Committee Chairman

Dated

APPENDIX A
Proposed Budget for Precept request 2023 / 2024 for agreement by Full Council January 2023

Administration		Comments and context for certain items	Matters to confirm cttee aware of
Salaries	£31,537.80		
Expenses (Postage etc)	£100.00		
Insurance (PL/EL Insurance and Building)	£1,181.08		
Rent or Repayment - greater	£4,900.00	Info on PWLB as of 12 December 2022 Period 25yrs not over 25½, 4.46% £2,476.74 1/2 yrly payment (£4953.48 per year). Or Rent as per rent review letter of £4400 per year.	Legal fees purchase of Bounty currently allocated in designated funds, so not included in budget. Assumption that back dated rent owing during discussions would be paid out of reserves as budgeted historically (estimate 20 months back dated amount is a total of £2375.)
Heating/Lighting/Telephone	£1,024.76		
Training Councillors and Staff			Potentially new cllrs in May 2023, no training costs allocated.
Accounts software	£4,025.00	Recommendation on Accounts system provided to cttee.	
Maintenance/Office Equipment (Pear and IT incl. Website and Stationery)	£2,209.30		No amount is allocated for decoration or repairs to the Bounty.
Sundries /Subscriptions (ICO, ICCM, CPRE, Surrey Playing Fields)	£176.00		
Internal Audit	£381.00		
External Audit	£400.00		
Election expenses	£3,000.00	Amount recommended by TDC if the Parish council election goes to an election.	
SALC	£1,599.08		
NALC	£348.68		
Donations hall hire	£260.00		
Total Admin costs	£51,142.70		
Maintenance			
Burial Grounds long term fund			Cttee agreed 5% from surplus Burial Ground income each year into restricted fund for long term care when the burial ground income deminishes. CTTEE to approve amount from FY22-23.

Burial Grounds - Maintenance, Grass cutting & General Care	£7,171.00
General Maintenance Contract	£700.00
Godstone Green	£6,339.00
South Godstone	£540.00
Blindley Heath Common - Not SSSI (incl. Car Park)	£4,170.00
Blindley Heath - SSSI - SWT	£2,315.00
Blindley Heath – SSSI GPC Management obligations	£20.00
Car Park Repairs	
Blindley Heath - Donated Land	
Hilly Fields	
Tilburstow Hill Common	
Allotments	
Tree Care / Survey - Whole Parish	£10,000.00
Notice boards and bus shelters - Whole Parish	
Christmas Lights - Whole Parish	£700.00
Ponds	
Remembrance costs/Memorials	£195.00
Defence of Green Spaces	
Benches and Memorial Benches	£2,000.00

	Committee to be aware of discussion with grass contractor for a one of non-consolidated payment towards equipment of £500 currently being discussed. This is not budgeted so would currently come out of reserves.
Calculation is estimate of 2 hours a month.	
	Car park repairs - nothing been allocated.
	Replacement fence not included in budget and no allocated funds.
	Budgeted for some unplanned works and for work to carry out any tree survey recommendations. Estimate that tree survey will be paid for in FY22-23 from current reserves. Last Tree survey and associated works £7,250. Estimate of average tree care issue is £500.
	Current charge this year £750, would likely rely on some donations or reserves. Any upgrade to provision not budgeted for.
Allocation for wreaths for remembrance.	Concern about memorial - Note Church are also looking into it no funds allocated to contribute to or be responsible for maintenance.
The amount allocated does not included the Godstone Green bench works. This would be to carry out work on benches at BH and Burial ground.	It has been assumed that the current approved bench work for GG would be covered by fete grant and may require use of restricted funds or reserves due to cost of materials.

Children's Playground	£80.00			
Total C21 to C41		£34,230.00		
Neighbourhood Plan				
Council			Current Consultancy costs approved of £2,500. (£2k designated) top up of £500 required due to grant amount of £800 being returned to enable new grant application and then NP cttee recommend that the council allocate around £5k for 10 days potential additional consultancy days that could be required or other potential costs.	Committee agreed virement to allocate £5,500 from General reserves during FY2022-23 (current year at time of meeting).
Grants			Information provided to cttee about new grant being applied for £8,110 for consultancy and publication of plan.	Committee noted that it was expected that the Grant application for £8110.00 during the current year FY2022-23, would also be used during FY2022-23.
Total D19+D42+D44 and D45 or projected costs		£85,372.70		
Other income				
CIL	£755.32			
Burial Grounds	£10,000.00			
Greens and Commons				
Rents, wayleaves and fair	£3,400.00			
Bank Interest				
Memorial Benches				
Neighbourhood Plan grant				
Godstone Green Defence - Donations				
Donation for Tree Works				
Christmas Lights				
Total C48 to C58 income	£14,155.32			
Precept requirement on current draft budget		£71,217.38		
Projects				
Path on the green	£2,000.00	£2,000.00		Funds currently allocated in restricted funds of £3k. Quotes we have suggests nearer £6.5k could be required. Committee agreed at December 2022 meeting to increase the budget allocation for this project to £2k.
Precept requirement including project		£73,217.38		

APPENDIX B

Rent or Repayment - greater	Assumption that back dated rent owing during discussions would be paid out of reserves as budgeted historically (estimate 20 months back dated amount is a total of £2375.)
Training Councillors and Staff	Potentially new cllrs in May 2023.No training costs allocated.
Maintenance/Office Equipment (Pear and IT incl. Website and Stationery)	No amount is allocated for decoration or repairs to the Bounty.
Burial Grounds long term fund	Cttee agreed 5% from surplus Burial Ground income each year into restricted fund for long term care when the burial ground income diminishes. CTTEE to approve amount from FY22-23.
Burial Grounds - Maintenance, Grass cutting & General Care	Committee to be aware of discussion with grass contractor and that currently only draft agreement budgeted, any changes would be met out of reserves.
Car Park Repairs	No budget and no allocated funds.
Hilly Fields	Replacement fence not included in budget and no allocated funds.
Tilburstow Hill Common	No budget and no allocated funds.
Allotments	No budget and no allocated funds.
Tree Care / Survey - Whole Parish	Estimate that tree survey will be paid for in FY22-23 from current reserves.
Notice boards and bus shelters - Whole Parish	No budget and no allocated funds.
Christmas Lights - Whole Parish	Any upgrade to provision not budgeted for.
Ponds	No budget, some allocated funds.
Remembrance costs/Memorials	Concern about memorial - Note Church are also looking into it no funds allocated to contribute to or be responsible for maintenance.
Defence of Green Spaces	No budget, some allocated funds.
Benches and Memorial Benches	It has been assumed that the current approved bench work for GG would be covered by fete grant and may require use of restricted funds or reserves due to cost of materials.
Children's Playground	No budget, remaining allocated funds total to be confirmed on completion of project.