



**Birchington Parish Council
Extraordinary Meeting of the Full Council
Friday, 31st January 2025 at 14.30 hrs
at the Baptist Church Meeting Hall,
Crescent Road, Birchington**

Present: Cllr Marcel Pooke (Chairman)
Cllr Max Houghton (Vice Chairman)
Cllr. Nick Blankley
Cllr. Colin Brown
Cllr Phil Fellows
Cllr. Neville Hudson
Cllr. Jim Moore
Cllr. Bob Prebble
Cllr. Linda Wright
Cllr John Tiley

Jane Bevan - Parish Clerk
Bill Anderson – Deputy Clerk

FC/2024/146 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

FC/2024/147 Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Hudson and Prebble declared an interest in the Birchington Memorial Recreation Ground as they were both trustees of the charity.

FC/2024/148 Minutes

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 14th January 2025 were presented for approval and were **Agreed** as a true record.

FC/2024/149 2025-26 Budget

Cllr Fellows raised a point of order. He referred to Cllr Brown's email to members dated 24 January 2025 seeking discussions on funding from the forthcoming budget for health and wellbeing initiatives. He said that Cllr Houghton's response dated 27 January 2025 that he would not support this request was pre-determination as there had been no opportunity to formally discuss the request. He said that Cllr Houghton should excuse himself from discussion on that particular budget item. Cllr Houghton said he would not comment on the item. The Chairman said it was a valid point raised by Cllr Fellows and that issues should be discussed openly and that predetermination was not helpful to the situation. Cllr Fellows added that all members should particularly be wary of what they comment upon in emails and refrain from berating each other.

Action

The Clerk provided a background to the budget, how it was formulated with members and gave a summary of the proposed budget (appendix A). The Clerk said that in formulating the proposed precept for 2025/26, a Councillors' planning workshop was held to discuss expenditure in the forthcoming financial year including office costs, maintenance costs and proposed projects. This was followed with discussions with individual Committee Chairmen. The Chairman asked if the reserves should be rising incrementally. The Clerk responded that the precept would have to be increased in order to increase the reserves. Cllr Prebble proposed that a policy for Parish Council should be tabled for further discussion - agreed. Cllr Fellows said that previously the maintenance operative's pay was incorporated into the budgets for the various annual projects e.g. shelters. This way it could be seen how much was actually spent in each budget including staffing costs. Following discussion it was agreed that the operative costs would not be shown separately but would be incorporated into the Environment Committee project budgets. Cllr Brown requested £1000 be placed in the budget for health and wellbeing initiatives and for expenditure to be re-evaluated in 6 months' time. Cllr Tiley suggested that the Chairman's £1000 discretionary budget which was unspent could be used for this. Cllr Blankley said that the Parish Council should be careful not to spend funds on projects/initiatives that were not their responsibility. Cllr Moore agreed and said there was £1000 in the budget for Community and Engagement and suggested this was used for Health and Wellbeing as well – agreed. Cllr Fellows said he had updated the plans for resilience and asked what the status of resilience was. The Clerk responded that at a recent TDC/Town Parish Forum meeting representatives were informed that TDC were the first responders to any emergency. All TDC would require were the relevant contact numbers for stakeholders in Birchington. Cllr Fellows said he now had all the relevant contact numbers. Cllr Fellows also asked about Speedwatch which only had £1000 instead of £2000 in the budget. Cllr Prebble said an advertisement would be going in to the next edition of the Parish Magazine asking for volunteers so it was still at a very early stage. The Clerk added that KCC had said there might be funding available for the purchase of Speedwatch equipment in their 2025/26 budget. Cllr Fellows asked if there would be a cost for the provision of new planters in Station Road. Cllr Tiley said there was budget for planters in the current financial year and two thirds had not yet been spent. He said the planters were currently being made. Cllr Fellows asked where the budget was for upgrading the Parish Council's website. The Clerk responded that this came under the Community and Engagement budget. Following the discussion, the 2025/26 budget figures were voted upon and unanimously agreed.	Cllr Prebble Clerk
FC/2024/150 Precept Request The Clerk said that the precept for the 2025/26 financial year was £190,154.00 and that this would be presented to TDC. The Committee noted.	Clerk
FC/2024/151 KALC Community Awards Scheme The Clerk reported that 6 nominations had been received following an article in the Parish Magazine for nominations for the Kent Association of Local Councillors (KALC), Following discussion , one nomination was unanimously agreed upon and would be forwarded to KALC.	Clerk
FC/2024/152 Date of next meeting The next meeting of the Full Council would be on Tuesday 25th February 2025 at Birchington Library at 6.30pm. The meeting closed at 15.35 hrs	

Signed by Parish Clerk
Jane Bevan
Dated: 4th February 2025

DRAFT