

FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee
Held on Wednesday 29th January 2025 commencing at 6.00pm
This meeting was held at Benians Pavilion, Four Marks**

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Cllr Briggs (Chairperson), Cllrs Smith, McAllister, Gebbett, R Pullen and M Pullen
IN ATTENDANCE:	Victoria Ursulean (Clerk's Assistant), Heidi Simmonds (RFO)
APOLOGIES:	No members of public None

25.01 FGP APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies were received.

25.02 FGP OPEN SESSION/PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no open session there being no members of the public present.

25.03 FGP DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Clerk's Assistant noted that herself and the RFO had an interest in item 6.4.1 and would not be present when discussed.

25.04 FGP MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

On the proposal of Cllr R Pullen, which was seconded by Cllr Smith, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday 13th November 2024 as a true reflection of the meeting and were duly signed by the Chairman.

25.05 FGP FOR DISCUSSION

25.05.1 To discuss current football club arrangements and fees

Cllrs had been advised by a sports consultant that it is normal to charge per match. They mentioned that various improvements are being made to the pitch area including verti-draining, LEDs being replaced in the floodlights and a new contractor for line marking and pitch maintenance. Cllr M Pullen suggested staggering the rate, and also creating a sports working party which would report to Full Council.

Councillors said that they would like to maximise the youth provision, and exploring the provision of a 9v9 pitch on the cricket field would be beneficial.

On the proposal of Cllr R Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Smith, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to charge a flat fee to the mens teams of £400 each, and £300 per youth team.

25.05.2 To discuss Allotment Association License to Occupy terms

A meeting with the Allotment Association is being sought so that a way forward can be discussed. They currently have 80 plots at £25 per annum. As it stands, the association pay the Parish Council income from the plots minus any expenditure. The Treasurer has now set up a business bank account, but Cllrs are concerned that they have no control over any expenses. It had been agreed that a license to occupy would be the most appropriate, and that this should be structured to suit all parties. Cllr R Pullen said that he was happy to proceed with this item in conjunction with Cllr Medhurst who is the Area Representative for the Allotment Association.

25.06 FGP FOR CONSIDERATION

25.06.1 To review terms of License to Occupy for Benians Committee

Within the License to Occupy, Cllr R Pullen stated that there is no mention of who or what the PC is, and questioned whether there is something contentious if a Cllr would have authority. It was also mentioned that the license asks for changes in constitution to be shown which hadn't been carried out.

25.06.2 To review cemetery regulations

Councillors asked for the cemetery regulations to be updated and presented at Full Council.

25.06.3 To review contractor fees and charges for 2025/2026.

Fees and charges carried out for maintenance and gardening were noted as not changing for the next financial year.

25.06.4 To note internal audit report and review recommendations

Councillors approved the report and the recommendations.

25.06.4.1 RFO arrangements and recommendations to Staffing Committee

On the proposal of Cllr R Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Briggs, it was agreed to move item 25.06.4.1 into a closed session at the end of the meeting.

Cllrs discussed the findings of the Internal Auditor in relation to the RFO position.

25.06.5 To review earmarked reserves and consider any movement.

Cllrs went through the reserves one by one. It was agreed to make the tennis reserves up to £4000, add a further £35 000 to community facilities, £5000 should be moved into youth clubs. Old committees could not be erased without a legal document which would be sought so that reserves for those committees could be utilised. It was thought that playground maintenance should be increased to £20 000 and legal fees to £10 000.

Cllr M Pullen requested creating a reserve for football which would encapsulate items such as goals. He also asked about a reserve for cricket as the cricket square could take up to a year to be re-established, and it is difficult to secure grants for cricket.

Cllr Gebbett asked about the speed cameras, and it was noted that as two of them were seven years old, they were nearing end of life.

25.07. FGP FOR APPROVAL

25.07.1 To note and ratify expenditure for alarm sensors

On the proposal of Cllr R Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Gebbett, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to ratify the expenditure on alarm sensors.

25.08. FGP PROCEDURE AND POLICY REVIEW

25.08.1 To allocate areas for asset register

Cllrs agreed to add on one laptop and one computer to the asset register, and deleting the old ones.

25.08.2 To review effectiveness of internal control

The document supplied was reviewed.

On the proposal of Cllr M Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Briggs, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the effectiveness of internal control.

25.08.3 To discuss policy strategy for future projects

This item was deferred due to insufficient information.

25.09. FGP TO NOTE

25.09.1 To receive year to date budget report and bank balances

These were duly noted by the committee.

The Assistant Clerk and RFO left the meeting at 7.38pm to allow Cllrs to proceed with item 6.4.1.

24.08 FGP Next meeting 9TH April 2025.

24.09 FGP Meeting closed at 7.53pm