



**BRAMSHOTT & LIPHOOK
PARISH COUNCIL**

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Councillors, you are hereby summoned to a meeting of the Liphook Millennium Centre Committee to be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 14th May 2024 at the Liphook Millenium Centre, Ontario Way, Liphook.

J Sawyer

Parish Clerk/RFO
8th May 2024

FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday 14th May 2024, 7.30pm, Liphook Millennium Centre
AGENDA

- 1. Chairman's Announcements**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Declarations of Interest:** *Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any pecuniary interest which they may have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached. Unless dispensation has been granted, members may not participate in any discussion of, or vote on, or discharge any function related to any matter in which they may have a pecuniary interest as defined by regulations made by the Secretary of State under the Localism Act 2011. They must withdraw from the room when the meeting discusses and votes on the matter.*
- 4. Approval of Minutes:** To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 7th March 2024
- 5. Public Participation Session:**
 - (a) To allow members of the public to address the Council with respect to items not on the agenda*
 - (b) To allow members of the public to address the Council about business on the agenda (at Chairman's discretion)*
- 6. Grant Applications 2024/25:** To consider two grant applications from The Heritage Centre and Liphook Tennis Club *(separate Appendices 1)*
- 7. Banking arrangements:** To consider making a recommendation to full Council to move the Council's current account *(Appendix 2)*
- 8. HR arrangements:** To note the appointment of an HR consultancy *(Appendix 3)*
- 9. D-Day 80 budget:** To agree a budget for the D-Day 80 commemoration event *(Appendix 4)*
- 10. Code of Conduct:** To review a draft Code of Conduct for recommendation to full Council *(separate Appendix 5)*
- 11. Financial Regulations:** To review updated draft Financial Regulations for recommendation to full Council *(separate Appendix 6)*
- 12. Date of next meeting:** Monday 10th June *(to be confirmed following Annual Meeting)*
- 13. Exclusion of members of the public and press:** *In accordance with the provisions of section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the press and public be excluded from the meeting by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.*
Agenda items for excluded session (confidential appendix)
- 14. Staff matters:** To hear an update regarding staffing matters and consider a recommendation contained in the confidential report relating to a staff member's contract *(separate confidential Appendix 7)*

Appendix 1: Grant applications (separate appendices)

Appendix 2: Banking arrangements

The Council currently holds all its funds with Lloyds Bank and the internal auditor has recommended for a number of years that this arrangement is changed.

Due to the size of the Council's annual budget, it currently does not benefit from the £85,000 protection limit offered by the FSCS.

We have various issues dealing with Lloyds Bank and I would like to recommend that we move our current account to Unity Bank and, later, review our investment strategy for other funds held, particularly CIL and earmarked reserves.

Unity Bank has been recommended by our internal auditor and I have also used them when working for a number of other local councils. They entirely cater for organisations such as ours making banking really simple.

1. No need for card readers for authorising payments. A combination of passwords and PINs are used instead. This means that councillors can log in from wherever they are.
2. There is a clear separation of roles. The Clerk/RFO can be set up as administrator and can only submit payments and can, with the council's permission, move funds between accounts. Councillors can only authorise payments and view accounts. Permissions can be changed easily with the correct authorisations from councillors.
3. Amendments to bank mandates can be made easily, i.e. adding/removing new signatories is very simple.
4. We now have no bank in the village but can use the banking hub in Haslemere or the Post Office in Liphook to bank cash.
5. Helpline is easy to access with a fast response.
6. Applying for additional services, such as debit cards, is very simple. We have not been able to do this at all with Lloyds currently as the process is overly complicated.

Our Finance Officer has compared banking costs between Lloyds Bank and Unity Bank and these comparisons can be found on the next page. Overall, the cost increase per annum with moving to Unity Bank is approximately £50 per annum. However, this can easily be offset with the amount of staff time currently used with sorting out issues with Lloyds Bank.

The Committee are asked to consider making a recommendation to amend the Council's banking arrangements in accordance with Financial Regulation 5.1.

Unity Charges		April 2023	May 2023	June 2023	July 2023	August 2023	Sept 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Total
Monthly	£6.00	£6.00	£6.00	£6.00	£6.00	£6.00	£6.00	£6.00	£6.00	£6.00	£6.00	£60.00
Transactions in/out	£0.15	£6.90	£9.75	£6.45	£6.90	£7.65	£11.55	£10.95	£10.95	£9.75	£8.10	£88.95
Cheques in	£0.30	£0.75		£1.20	£1.20	£0.90	£0.30	£6.60	£3.30	£2.10	£1.50	£17.85
Cash in	£0.60 per 100	£3.00		£1.80	£2.40	£1.20	£3.00		£1.80	£2.40	£2.40	£18.00
Total		£16.65	£15.75	£15.45	£16.50	£15.75	£20.85	£23.55	£22.05	£20.25	£18.00	£184.80
Lloyds	£ 7.00	£7.00	£7.00	£7.00	£7.00	£7.00	£7.00	£7.00	£7.00	£7.00	£7.00	£70.00
Transactions in/out	£ -	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Cheques in	£ 0.85	£4.25	£0.00	£3.40	£4.25	£2.55	£0.85	£5.10	£5.10	£5.10	£1.70	£32.30
Cash	£1 per 100	£4.29	£0.00	£2.36	£3.78	£1.49	£4.58	£4.87	£3.94	£3.94	£3.16	£32.41
Total		£15.54	£7.00	£12.76	£15.03	£11.04	£12.43	£16.97	£16.04	£16.04	£11.86	£134.71

Note: Lloyds monthly fee covers all electronic payments/receipts and DD's
Unity charges £0.15 for all above transactions

Appendix 3: HR Consultancy

Since joining the Council in April 2023, there have been a number of staffing issues to resolve which have taken considerable amounts of time. These include:

1. A review of staff contracts (agreed before I joined and carried out over last Summer)
2. Moving to a contracted cleaning service
3. Day to day management of staff absence
4. Staff policies, procedures and contracts
5. Keeping up to date with employment law and regulations

In particular, I have felt that there are several risks to the Council where we do not have sufficient HR support from our current arrangements with Hampshire ALC. They are not able to offer an 'on demand' HR service so we usually have to wait up to 48 hours for a response. The response however is always excellent.

Due to the urgent nature of some of these matters, I requested that the Chairman of the Council and Chairman of the Finance & Policy Committee, authorise the appointment of an HR consultant to assist us.

I held meetings with and obtained quotations from 3 HR providers.

Worknest were the preferred option as they work in partnership with the National Association of Local Councils and I felt were well placed to offer the sort of support we need.

The cost of the contract is £2,275 per annum for a 5-year contract (with a 3 year break clause). Included in that is an online staff training module free for the first 12 months. Their online system offers us an absence management facility to book holiday, log sickness etc which will save a lot of time and means we can report far more efficiently.

I ask that the Committee note and retrospectively approve this appointment.

Jane Sawyer
Parish Clerk/RFO
8th May 2024

Appendix 4: D-Day 80 budget

We are arranging a commemoration for D-Day 80 on the evening of 6th June 2024. This is a national event and will include lighting a beacon. Our County Councillor has funded the beacon but there will be additional costs as follows:

1. Gas bottle for the beacon
2. Memorial tree and plaque
3. Other sundry costs

As no budget has been set aside for this event, I would like to propose we use the remaining unspent budget for Picnic on the Green which amounts to approximately £500. This will easily cover the costs of the event.