



Little Braxted Parish Council

You are hereby summoned to attend the Meeting of Little Braxted Parish Council to be held in The Braxted Bakery, Witham Lane, Little Braxted on Thursday 29th August 2019 at 7.00 p.m.

Gordon Mussett
Parish Clerk
19th August 2019

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for absence**
To receive apologies for absence
- 2. Declarations of Interest**
For Members to declare any interests in matters on the agenda
- 3. To Consider any requests from Members for Dispensations**
To consider any requests from Members with pecuniary interests for dispensations to enable them to participate on the item in which they have a pecuniary interest
- 4. To Agree and Approve the Minutes of the Meeting held 11th June 2019**
To agree and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11th June 2019 as a true record
- 5. To Invite Members of the Public to speak on Matters Regarding and Affecting the Parish**
- 6. To Consider Whether The Council Publish Recordings of Its Meetings - attached**
To consider whether the Council publish recordings of its meetings
- 7. To Consider Re-Consulting on Housing Needs – attached**
To consider re-consulting on Housing Needs
- 8. To Agree to Appoint a Traffic Management Company to Undertake the Road Closures on Remembrance Day and to Review the Future Organisation of the Remembrance Day Service– attached**
To agree to appoint a Traffic Management Company to undertake the road closures on Remembrance Day and to review the future organisation of the Remembrance Day service

9. To Note the Impending Closure of Essex Infonet and Agree an Alternative Website Host – attached

To note the impending closure of Essex Infonet and agree an alternative website host

10. To Consider Whether to Host a Regular Highways meeting at which County Councillor Durham may be present – attached

To consider whether to host a regular Highways meeting at which County Councillor Durham may be present

11. To Adopt the Model Financial Regulations, as Adapted for This Council, Issued by NALC in July 2019 – attached

To adopt the Model Financial Regulations, as adapted for this Council, issued by NALC in July 2019

12. To receive a financial statement as of 31st July 2019 - attached

To receive a financial statement as of 31st July 2019

13. To Approve the following payments:-

To approve the following payments made between meetings:-

Document Reference	Payable To	In Respect of	£
567	H Bendall	Litterpicking July	£52.00
568	G N Mussett	Clerk's Salary July	£125.15

To approve the following payments:-

Document Reference	Payable To	In Respect of	£
569	H Bendall	Litterpicking August	£41.60
570	G N Mussett	Clerk's Salary August	£125.15

14. Clerks Report – for Information

- a) *Highway Issues – bridge repairs*
- b) *Additional Weight/Width Restriction Signage, Witham Road*

15. Closure

ITEM 6

To Consider Whether The Council Publish Recordings of Its Meetings

A resident asked whether all meetings of the Council could be recorded. The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 enable any member of the public to film or record Parish Council meetings for the purposes of recording. There have been no instances of members querying the accuracy of the Council's minutes of its meetings, which are intended to be purely a record of decisions made, not a verbatim record of proceedings.

The open recording of meetings may well deter residents, in particular, from participating; this was raised by another member of the public who belatedly realised that the Annual Parish meeting, at which she spoke, had been recorded by at least two of those present.

Given that there is nothing to prevent residents themselves from recording meetings, members may consider that there is no further need for the Council to do so.

Members are to consider the matter.

ITEM 7

To Consider Re-Consulting on Housing Needs

At the Annual Parish Meeting residents expressed a demand for the Housing Needs Survey to be re-issued, with clarification and potentially further questions, to confirm the need identified in the survey conducted in 2017.

Since that meeting the sole landowner willing to offer land without charge for a rural exception site development in the Parish, having been subject to personal attacks on his character and reasons for the offer, has withdrawn that offer. However, the withdrawal of the offer to grant a site gratis does not in itself exempt Maldon District Council using its powers of compulsory purchase to acquire land for a rural exception site should the need be proven, even though they have not yet exercised that power.

In addition, since the last meeting a petition has been presented to the Council from residents "not in favour of any housing association development or development of any houses on agricultural/greenfield land in this village". Clearly the last part of that statement is beyond the control of the Parish Council (and indeed Maldon District Council if it cannot persuade an independent Planning Inspector that it can demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply); however it begs the question as to whether the Housing Needs Survey should be re-run.

The Council has obligations, but not a duty, to listen both to those who have, quietly away from public meetings, expressed and re-affirmed their housing needs, and those

who have campaigned vigorously against a rural exception scheme. Given the experience in other Parishes that the nearer a scheme came to fruition, the greater the number of residents identifying a need, it may be considered better to re-run the Housing Needs Survey, with oversight of the revised questionnaire by a small panel independent of the Parish Council but still guided by RCCE in order to ensure the survey results are accepted by Maldon District Council. But how does that fit with the recent petition ?

The cost could be mainly met from the balance of the Parish Plan monies but would require a small increase in Council Tax in 2020/21 to recover monies to balances.

Members are to determine future progress

ITEM 8

To Agree to Appoint a Traffic Management Company to Undertake the Road Closures on Remembrance Day and Review the Future Organisation of the Remembrance Day Service

Following the resignation of Councillor Chapman, responsibility for the Remembrance Day service at the War Memorial has fallen entirely upon the Parish Council. I have therefore undertaken a comprehensive risk assessment of this event in order to ensure that any risks to those attending, and the Council are minimised.

The event requires the installation of road closures at three locations. The statutory guidance on erecting warning signs and barriers is contained in the Safety at Street Works and Road Works Code of Practice 2013. This requires, amongst other things:-

- Briefing to be undertaken with all marshals working on the highway prior to commencement to ensure they know what is required (keep a copy of the briefing)
- Signs to be erected at suitable locations on the verge (not on bends) to ensure clear sight lines, to ensure drivers have sufficient time to safely read the information and react.
- Any vehicles use on highway to assist or protect marshals must be taxed and insured for this use during the event.
- All staff & operatives to wear Hi Vis at all times, (sturdy shoes and gloves are also a good idea)
- Signs to be set up before deliveries and public access commence
- Flashing beacon or warning lights to be used on any vehicles used to set up traffic management systems or place signs
- Marshals to face oncoming traffic (never turn your back to traffic)
- Stay on verge or footpath where possible when setting up signage
- Work back towards the event entrances placing more signs as necessary
- Use the same procedure along each access route
- When removing signs or traffic management measures reverse the above procedure.
- Traffic management measures are to be checked at regular intervals and adjusted as necessary.

- Road closure signs and cones/barriers are to be placed only when there is a break in traffic and it is safe to do so.
- Once signs and cones have been placed do not stand in the highway unless absolutely necessary.
- Signs to be weighted down to prevent them from being blown over.
-

In addition the minimum condition requirement for anyone placing or removing signs is:

- Person aged 18 years or over
- Physically fit to carry and place/remove sign
- Wearing appropriate high visibility clothing.
- Wearing appropriate Personal Protective Equipment such as sturdy shoes and gloves
- Briefed on the exact requirements of the sign schedule
- Be aware of the road and dangers involved

Clearly previous closures may not have been fully compliant, and whilst there have been no recorded accidents or incidents, the Parish Council is required to be compliant with the statutory guidance.

A quotation has been received to provide the professional road closure at a cost of £450. However this still leaves the Parish Council short of volunteers to staff the barriers and provide first aid cover. A call for volunteers has only attracted three responses. We may have to consider paying for Marshalls.

Whilst Wickham Bishops and Great Braxted Parish Councils have agreed to contribute towards the cost of funding the event the sums set aside by them are insufficient to meet the costs they are now likely to incur.

Members are to consider:-

- a) Whether to continue organising the event
- b) Whether to co-fund the professional road closure (the Parish Council has already funded the Road Closure Notice application)
- c) Whether to try to employ additional staff on the day

ITEM 9

To Note the Impending Closure of Essexinfo.net and Agree an Alternative Website Host

For many years the Council's website has been hosted by Essexinfo.net, free of charge. However notice has been received that this hosting will cease as from 1st April 2020.

Whilst it is not a statutory duty to have a website, the Audit and Account Regulations provide an exemption from External Audit for small Parish Councils (under £25,000 turnover) who provide certain information on a website. This exemption is worth in the

region of £200 per annum. In addition the ability to direct Freedom of Information requests to the website is a considerable timesaving.

The benefits of a website, however basic, are worthy of an investment of c£200 each year for webhosting, and members are recommended to authorise the Clerk to seek quotations for a new website host, with the proviso that the Clerk can easily update the site without further fees, and that the storage capacity is sufficient for future needs.

Given that the old www.essexinfo.net/littlebraxted web address will cease, it might be the time to adopt a .gov.uk web address; this would be littlebraxtedpc.gov.uk

And, for the website to be loaded and live by 31st March 2020 the funding for the advance first year payment to be taken from reserves and the 2020/21 Council Tax increased to both replace the reserves and fund future yearly payments.

Members are recommended:-

- a) to authorise the Clerk to seek quotations for a new website host, with the proviso that the Clerk can easily update the site without further fees, and that the storage capacity is sufficient for future needs.
- b) apply for a .gov.uk website address
- c) agree to fund the first year's advance payment from reserves
- d) increase Council Tax in 2020/21 to replace the reserves and allow for future annual payments

ITEM 10

To Consider Whether to Host a Regular Highways meeting at which County Councillor Durham may be present

Members will be aware that County Councillor Durham has been unable to attend recent Parish Council meetings. He has now suggested that the Parish Council host a series of regular daytime meetings, open to the public, so that matters of highways concern may be raised with him.

Given the relatively few highways issues outstanding, Members may wish to consider a meeting every three months would be sufficient. These could, with the approval of the owners, be held at the Braxted Bakery.

Members are to consider County Councillor Durham's suggestion.

ITEM 11

To Adopt the Model Financial Regulations, as Adapted for This Council, Issued by NALC in July 2019

The National Association of Local Council have issued an updated set of Model Financial Regulations to take account of recent legislation and current good practice. A copy of the Regulations is shown below, with suggested amendments to reflect this Council's requirements. **Denotes** delete

LITTLE BRAXTED PARISH COUNCIL

MODEL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS 2019 FOR ENGLAND

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These Financial Regulations were adopted by the council at its meeting held on 29th August 2019.

1. General

1.1. These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. Financial regulations are one of the council's three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the council's standing orders and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.

1.2. The council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that the council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.

1.3. The council's accounting control systems must include measures:

- for the timely production of accounts;
- that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money;
- to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
- identifying the duties of officers.

1.4. These financial regulations demonstrate how the council meets these responsibilities and requirements.

1.5. At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.

1.6. Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.

1.7. Members of council are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.

1.8. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office to be appointed by the council. The Clerk has been appointed as RFO for this council and these regulations will apply accordingly.

1.9. The RFO;

- acts under the policy direction of the council;
- administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;

- determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and accounting control systems;
- ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
- maintains the accounting records of the council up to date in accordance with proper practices;
- assists the council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
- produces financial management information as required by the council.

1.10. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the council's transactions and to enable the RFO to ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipts and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or management information prepared for the council from time to time comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

1.11. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall in particular contain:

- entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate;
- a record of the assets and liabilities of the council; and
- wherever relevant, a record of the council's income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.

1.12. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:

- procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the council are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible;
- procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records;
- identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions;
- procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the council for approval to be written off except with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records; and
- measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.

1.13. The council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain specified decisions. In particular any decision regarding:

- setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);
- approving accounting statements;
- approving an annual governance statement;
- borrowing;

- writing off bad debts;
- declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and
- addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors, shall be a matter for the full council only.

1.14. In addition, the council must:

- determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
- approve any grant or a single commitment in excess of [£5,000]; and
- in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant committee in accordance with its terms of reference.

1.15. In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or ‘the regulations’ shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.

In these financial regulations the term ‘proper practice’ or ‘proper practices’ shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - a Practitioners’ Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

2. Accounting and audit (internal and external)

2.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate guidance and proper practices.

2.2. On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chairman [or a cheque signatory] shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the council [Finance Committee].

Replace with: **At each meeting of the Council the Clerk will provide a bank reconciliation supported by a scan of the Bank Statement(s) for members to verify the reconciliation. This will be recorded in the minutes.**

2.3. The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to the council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

2.4. The council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the council to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary for that purpose.

2.5. The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the council in accordance with proper practices.

2.6. The internal auditor shall:

- be competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
- report to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year;
- to demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
- has no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the council

2.7. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:

- perform any operational duties for the council;
- initiate or approve accounting transactions; or
- direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.

2.8. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.

2.9. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

2.10. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

3. Annual estimates (budget) and forward planning

[3.1. Each committee (if any) shall review its three-year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments. Having regard to the forecast, it shall thereafter formulate and submit proposals for the following financial year to the council not later than the end of [November] each year including any proposals for revising the forecast.]

3.2. The RFO must each year, by no later than January, prepare detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year in the form of a budget to be considered by the council.

3.3. The council shall consider annual budget proposals in relation to the council's three year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments including recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding and update the forecast accordingly.

3.4. The council shall fix the precept (council tax requirement), and relevant basic amount of council tax to be levied for the ensuing financial year not later than by the end of January each year. The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved annual budget.

3.5. The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

4. Budgetary control and authority to spend

4.1. Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:

- the council for all items over £500; or
- the Clerk, in conjunction with Chairman of Council for any items below £500.

Such authority is to be evidenced by a minute or by an authorisation slip duly signed by the Clerk, and where necessary also by the appropriate Chairman.

Contracts may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by these regulations.

4.2. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure other than by resolution of the council, or duly delegated committee. During the budget year and with the approval of council having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate ('virement').

4.3. Unspent provisions in the revenue or capital budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year.

4.4. The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually in [October] for the following financial year and such review shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chairman of Council or relevant committee. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.

4.5. In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, the clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £1,500. The Clerk shall report such action to the chairman as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.

4.6. No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.

4.7. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.

4.8. The RFO shall regularly provide the council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose "material" shall be in excess of £100 or 15% of the budget.

4.9. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by council as part of the budgetary control process.

5. Banking arrangements and authorisation of payments

5.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency. [The council shall seek credit references in respect of members or employees who act as signatories.]

5.2. The RFO shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the Agenda for the Meeting and, together with the relevant invoices, present the schedule to council. The council shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself shall authorise payment by a resolution of the council. The approved schedule shall be ruled off and initialled by the Chairman of the Meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of the meeting at which payment was authorised. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) may be summarised to remove public access to any personal information.

5.3. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the RFO to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the council.

5.4. The RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order, at the next available council [or Finance Committee] meeting.

5.5. The Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of items only in the following circumstances:

- a) If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled Meeting of council, where the Clerk and RFO certify that there is no dispute

or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council [or finance committee];

b) An expenditure item authorised under 5.6 below (continuing contracts and obligations) provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council [or finance committee]; or

c) fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £500, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.

5.6. For each financial year the Clerk and RFO shall draw up a list of due payments which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation (such as but not exclusively) Salaries, PAYE and NI, Superannuation Fund and regular maintenance contracts and the like for which council may authorise payment for the year provided that the requirements of regulation 4.1 (Budgetary Controls) are adhered to, provided also that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.

5.7. A record of regular payments made under 5.6 above shall be drawn up and be signed by two members on each and every occasion when payment is authorised - thus controlling the risk of duplicated payments being authorised and / or made.

5.8. In respect of grants a duly authorised committee shall approve expenditure within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement approved by council. Any Revenue or Capital Grant in excess of £5,000 shall before payment, be subject to ratification by resolution of the council.

5.9. Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.

5.10. The council will aim to rotate the duties of members in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.

5.11. Any changes in the recorded details of suppliers, such as bank account records, shall be approved in writing by a Member.

6. Instructions for the making of payments

6.1. The council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.

6.2. Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 5 above, the council, a duly delegated committee or, if so delegated, the Clerk or RFO shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.

6.3. All payments shall be affected by cheque or other instructions to the council's bankers, or otherwise, in accordance with a resolution of council [or duly delegated committee].

6.4. Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule as presented to council or committee shall be signed by two member[s] of council in accordance with a resolution instructing that payment. A member who is a bank signatory, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to the payment in question.

6.5. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.

6.6. Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at a council or committee meeting (including immediately before or after such a meeting). Any signatures obtained away from such meetings shall be reported to the council at the next convenient meeting.

6.7. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates may be made by variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed by two members and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a variable direct debit shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

6.8. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items (principally salaries) may be made by banker's standing order provided that the instructions are signed, or otherwise evidenced by two members are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

6.9. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items may be made by BACS or CHAPS methods provided that the instructions for each payment are signed, or otherwise evidenced, by two authorised bank signatories, are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

6.10. If thought appropriate by the council payment for certain items may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained showing which members approved the payment.

6.11. Where a computer requires use of a personal identification number (PIN) or other password(s), for access to the council's records on that computer, a note shall be made of the PIN and Passwords and shall be handed to and retained by the Chairman of Council in a sealed dated envelope. This envelope may not be opened other than in the presence of two other councillors. After the envelope has been opened, in any circumstances, the PIN and / or passwords shall be changed as soon as practicable. The fact that the sealed envelope has been opened, in whatever circumstances, shall be reported to all members immediately and formally to the next available meeting of the council. This will not be required for a member's personal computer used only for remote authorisation of bank payments.

6.12. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.

6.13. Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely away from the computer in question, and preferably off site.

6.14. The council, and any members using computers for the council's financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.

6.15. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the Clerk shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate approved by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts. The bank mandate will state clearly the amounts of payments that can be instructed by the use of the Service Administrator alone, or by the Service Administrator with a stated number of approvals.

6.16. Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under "favourites"), and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for council banking work. Breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.

6.17. Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written hard copy notification by the supplier and supported by hard copy authority for change signed by two of the Clerk and a member]. A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.

6.18. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £500 unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed.

6.19. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the council. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to the council and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the Council.

6.20. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end. **Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.**

6.21. The council will not maintain any form of cash float. All cash received must be banked intact. Any payments made in cash by the Clerk (for example for postage or minor stationery items) shall be refunded on a regular basis, at least quarterly.

OR

[6.22. The RFO may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made shall be forwarded to the RFO with a claim for reimbursement.]

a) The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float of [£250] for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept to substantiate the payment.

b) Income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.

c) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on the schedule of payments presented to council under 5.2 above.]

7. Payment of salaries

7.1. As an employer, the council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salary rates shall be as agreed by council, or duly delegated committee.

7.2. Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be required to be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to the next available council meeting, as set out in these regulations above.

7.3. No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the council.

7.4. Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential record (confidential cash book). This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:

a) by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;

b) by the internal auditor;

c) by the external auditor; or

d) by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.

7.5. The total of such payments in each calendar month shall be reported with all other payments as made as may be required under these Financial Regulations, to ensure that only payments due for the period have actually been paid.

7.6. An effective system of personal performance management should be maintained for the senior officers.

7.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and reported to the council. Termination payments shall only be authorised by council.

7.8. Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case.

8. Loans and investments

8.1. All borrowings shall be affected in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The application for borrowing approval, and subsequent arrangements for the loan shall only be approved by full council.

8.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State/Welsh Assembly Government (such as Hire Purchase or Leasing of tangible assets) shall be subject to approval by the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of value for money for the proposed transaction.

8.3. The council will arrange with the council's banks and investment providers for the sending of a copy of each statement of account to the Chairman of the council at the same time as one is issued to the Clerk.

8.4. All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the council and shall be for a set period in accordance with council policy.

8.5. The council shall consider the need for an Investment Strategy and Policy which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

8.6. All investments of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.

8.7. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.

8.8. Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with Regulation 5 (Authorisation of payments) and Regulation 6 (Instructions for payments).

9. Income

9.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.

9.2. Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the council, notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the council.

9.3. The council will review all fees and charges at least annually, following a report of the Clerk.

9.4. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council and shall be written off in the year.

9.5. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.

9.6. The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.

9.7. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.

9.8. The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.

9.9. Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

10. Orders for work, goods and services

10.1. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained.

10.2. Order books shall be controlled by the RFO.

10.3. All members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimis provisions in Regulation 11.1 below.

10.4. A member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.

10.5. The RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the minutes can record the power being used.

11. Contracts

11.1. Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:

a) Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that this regulation need not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:

i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;

ii. for specialist services such as are provided by legal professionals acting in disputes;

iii. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;

iv. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the council;

v. for additional audit work of the external auditor up to an estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum the Clerk and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of council); and

vi. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and / or are only sold at a fixed price.

b) Where the council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 ("the Regulations") which is valued at £25,000 or more, the council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations

c) The full requirements of The Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU (which may change from time to time).

d) When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the council.

e) Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.

f) All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council.

g) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Orders, and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.

h) When it is to enter into a contract of less than £25,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk or RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £3,000 and above £100 the Clerk or RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10.3 above shall apply.

i) The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.

j) Should it occur that the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.

12. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

12.1. Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).

12.2. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case where it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum of 5% or more a report shall be submitted to the council.

12.3. Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the council and Clerk to the contractor in writing, the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

13. Assets, properties and estates

13.1. The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties held by the council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.

13.2. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £250.

13.3. No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a

report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).

13.4. No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).

13.5. Subject only to the limit set in Regulation 13.2 above, no tangible moveable property shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council with a full business case.

13.6. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

14. Insurance

14.1. Following the annual risk assessment (per Regulation 17), the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the council's insurers in consultation with the Clerk.

14.2. The Clerk shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.

14.3. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.

14.4. The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to council at the next available meeting.

14.5. All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually by the council.

15. Risk management

15.1. The council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Clerk shall prepare, for approval by the council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

15.2. When considering any new activity, the Clerk shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the council.

16. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

16.1. It shall be the duty of the council to review the Financial Regulations of the council from time to time. The Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these Financial Regulations.

16.2. The council may, by resolution of the council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all members of council.

ITEM 12

Income to 31st July 2019

Date	Document reference	From	In Respect of	General Administration £	War Memorial £	Other £	VAT £	Total £
23/04/2019		HM Revenue & Customs	VAT Refund				£ 164.10	£ 164.10
01/05/2019		Maldon District Council	Precept	£ 3,600.00				£ 3,600.00
Total for Year				£ 3,600.00	£ -	£ -	£ 164.10	£ 3,764.10

Expenditure to 31st July 2019

Date	Document Reference	Invoice Reference	Payable To	In Respect of	Clerk's Salary £	Elections £	Subscriptions £	Audit Fees £	Insurance £	War Memorial £	Information Commissioner £	Housing Needs Survey	Litter Picking £	Other £	Total Net of VAT £	VAT £	Total £
23/04/2019	554		G N Mussett	Clerk's Salary	£ 125.15										£ 125.15		£ 125.15
23/04/2019	555		H Bendall	Litterpicking									£ 41.60		£ 41.60		£ 41.60
23/04/2019	556		EALC	Annual Subscription			£ 63.74								£ 63.74		£ 63.74
23/04/2019	557		G N Mussett	Printer ink and paper								£ 35.42			£ 35.42	£ 7.08	£ 42.50
14/05/2019	558		BHIB	Insurance					£ 314.53						£ 314.53		£ 314.53
14/05/2019	559		G N Mussett	Clerk's Salary	£ 125.15										£ 125.15		£ 125.15
14/05/2019	560		H Bendall	Litterpicking									£ 52.00		£ 52.00		£ 52.00
14/05/2019	561		G N Mussett	McAfee Renewal										£ 74.99	£ 74.99	£ 15.00	£ 89.99
11/06/2019	562		SALC	Internal Audit Fee				£ 225.00							£ 225.00	£ 45.00	£ 270.00
11/06/2019	563		G N Mussett	Litterpicking sacks									£ 11.65		£ 11.65	£ 2.33	£ 13.98
11/06/2019	564		H Bendall	Litterpicking									£ 41.60		£ 41.60		£ 41.60
11/06/2019	565		G N Mussett	Clerk's Salary	£ 125.15										£ 125.15		£ 125.15
11/06/2019	566		HMRC	PAYE/NI	£ 95.60								£ 31.80		£ 127.40		£ 127.40
Total for Year					£ 471.05	£ -	£ 63.74	£ 225.00	£ 314.53	£ -	£ -	£ 35.42	£ 178.65	£ 74.99	£ 1,363.38	£ 69.41	£ 1,432.79

Budget Analysis

2019/20	Budget		Figures are net of VAT			
Item	£	Income £	Expenditure £	Income	%age Budget Sp	Notes
Clerk's Salary	£ 1,900.00		£ 471.05		24.8%	
Subscriptions	£ 65.00		£ 63.74		98.1%	
Audit Fees	£ 105.00		£ 225.00		214.3%	
Insurance	£ 350.00		£ 314.53		89.9%	
War Memorial	£ 375.00	£ 331.00	£ -	£ -	0.0%	
Information Commissioner	£ 55.00		£ -		0.0%	
Grass Cutting	£ 400.00		£ -		0.0%	
Hall Hire	£ 360.00		£ -			
Transparency Fund			£ 74.99			Restricted funds
Other	£ 200.00		£ -		0.0%	
Election Fees	£ 90.00					
Remembrance Day Parade	£ 200.00		£ -		0.0%	
Parish Plan						Restricted funds
Village Fete						Restricted funds
Litterpicking	£800	£ 800.00	£ 178.65		22.3%	Restricted funds
Housing Needs Survey			£ 35.42			Restricted funds
Defibrillator						Restricted funds
Precept		£ 3,600.00		£ 3,600.00		
Neighbourhood Watch Meetings			£ -			Restricted funds
Data Protection Officer			£ -			
VAT Refund		£ 180.00		£ 164.10	91.2%	
Totals net of VAT	£ 4,900.00	£ 4,911.00	£ 1,363.38	£ 3,764.10		

Bank Reconciliation



MG 000557 F1VH140A 709F30QBH00003 36300 9710194438 A

MR GORDON MUSSETT
25 EBENEZER CLOSE
WITHAM
CM8 2HX

LITTLE BRAXTED PARISH COUNCIL

Sort Code 20-97-40
Account No 20189405
SWIFTBIC BUKBGB22
IBAN GB53 BUKB 2097 4020 1894 05
Issued on 01 August 2019

Your Community Account

Date	Description	Money out £	Money in £	Balance £
29 Jun	Start Balance			30,279.22
10 Jul	Cheque Issued <small>Ref: 100562</small>	270.00		30,009.22
31 Jul	Balance carried forward			30,009.22
Total Payments/Receipts		270.00	0.00	

At a glance

29 Jun - 31 Jul 2019

Start balance	£30,279.22
Money out	£270.00
▶ Commission charges	£0.00
Money in	£0.00
▶ Gross interest earned	£0.00
End balance	£30,009.22

Anything wrong? If you notice any incorrect or unusual transactions, see the next page for how to get in touch with us.

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Your deposit is eligible for protection by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

BANK RECONCILIATION	
As at 31/03/19	
Petty Cash	£ 0.58
Barclays Bank	£ 28,451.75
Total	£ 28,452.33
Less Uncashed Cheques	-£ 815.44
Total	£ 27,636.89
Add Income for year	£ 3,764.10
Less Expenditure for year	-£ 1,432.79
Total	£ 29,968.20
As at 31/7/19	
Represented by	
Petty Cash	£ 0.58
Barclays Bank	£ 30,009.22
Total	£ 30,009.80
Less Uncashed Cheques	-£ 41.60
Total	£ 29,968.20