

Present: Sue Ashwell, Chair,
Cllrs Anne Howell-Jones, Madeline Fraser and Emily Lankfer
Village Volunteer Group Member Betty Millard and Margaret Carter
Clerk Ramune Mimiene
Assistant Clerk Jessica Thomson (Group Secretary)

No	Agenda Item	Who	Action/Status/Update
1.	2024/25 Budget proposals for VMAG	All SA, RM SA	RM, JT and SA had prepared a first draft of items to be proposed for the 3x VMAG budget headings for 2024-25. The detail of this draft was discussed and some additional items were suggested by AG members; agreed items were added for subsequent consideration by Finance AG (all group/committee Chairmen) and then on 14 November 2023 by full Council. Priorities for VMAG expenditure were discussed and agreed. VMAG will be advised in November what is agreed by Council, including arrangements for Earmarked Reserves and CIL funds for activities which are the responsibility of VMAG. At that time the handymen, as well as VMAG members will be made aware of any proposals that are rejected or amended through this review process. It was noted that the VMAG General Purposes (GP) budget will rise significantly in 2024-25 (and also in current year) as the Council are now paying HDC for the costs of emptying BPC's 34 general waste bins, rather than through handymen hours and commercial waste disposal charges. As previously reported this change follows reductions (at the request of handymen) of their hours and therefore also associated costs. All these changes will be reflected in the 2024-25 VMAG budget. Following circulation of the Q2 summary of VMAG income & expenditure, the underpinning data for the proposals for the VMAG budget for 2024-25 was offered e.g. to help members understand how money under each heading had been accrued. <i>Post meeting note: circulated on 23 October 23 to all VMAG members. This includes the expenditure under VMAG headings of BPC revenue and capital expended on maintenance of BVHT land and assets on the playing field including play equipment.</i>

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2.	Notes	JT, RM	The notes were agreed as a true record of matters discussed at the September meeting with key points already having been summarised by SA for October Council. VMAG agreed that in future the draft notes, as reviewed by VMAG Chairman, would be included with the following Council Agenda (approx. 3 weeks later). Therefore, two sets of VMAG notes will be presented at the November Council meeting with only one set needed for all subsequent Council meetings.
3.	Gardeners Shed a. Electricity connection b. Renovation	RM, SA	Electricity is now connected and there is provision for this in VMAG budget in 2023-24 and 2024-25 We have received two quotes for transforming this for use as the workshop area for BPC including new and essential replacement electrical installations to comply with Building Regulations. SA and RM to meet with a contractor plus the handymen to discuss final design, work and potential timings. <i>Post meeting note: VMAG and Council to be advised of planned changes once agreed. These would be funded from the Earmarked Reserve for BPC storage/workshop.</i>
4.	BVHT – requesting extra handymen hours	SA, CU RM	The VHT are now able mow the steep banks on the field themselves. They asked if BPC might provide a couple more hours of handymen time each month to them instead. However, after a discussion VMAG members prioritised use of the budget to mow the foot/cycleway between Greenway and the two marinas as this would improve access for many people using Buckden footpaths. To advise BVHT before the next Council meeting We will request a price from our existing contractor to manage the verges along Mill Road instead of their work on the banks. Details of this proposal to be confirmed in consultation with other relevant AGs chairmen.
5.	Christmas lights and market	JT, RM	JT in contact with Blanchere regarding this year's installation, she is meeting them on site to discuss after October VMAG meeting. We have requested that electrician checks the current lights in the tree at Hunts End – <i>date agreed</i> The road closure on 26 November is approved, and we are waiting for an update from Buckden Community Events (BCE) on arrangements for traffic management. At this point BCE have not asked BPC to cover any costs for that and this will be dealt with through the events sub-group of Communication AG (not VMAG).

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6.	Old Christmas lights	RM	Some of these are being donated to Ian Carter for Buckfest; they will be responsible for all electrical safety testing as BPC cannot provide any such assurance. We expect to recycle the remaining lights.
7.	Parish Council Role in managing areas owned by HDC	RM	Some residents have noted that it will be difficult for them to manage leaf-fall from HDC trees close to their property once free green bins are stopped. The RHS guidance on managing fallen leaves was considered by VMAG and options were discussed about whether and how BPC might assist all residents. It was agreed that RM will instruct the handymen to use our mulching mower to mow over leaves that have fallen onto grassed areas outside home boundaries, including on HDC land, to help break the leaves up more quickly, thus helping to returning the nutrients to the soil around these trees and reduce risk associated with leaf-fall e.g. to drains.
8.	Tommy Silhouettes	RM	We ordered three Royal British Legion (RBL) silhouettes for the village, two tommy's and a female from the same period. A sub-group of BPC has agreed that they will be installed by the handymen at the war memorial at the church for Remembrance Sunday before being moved to Hunts End Unfortunately, RBL delivered the wrong items and RM/JT are having quite a difficult time getting the incorrect items collected and replaced. <i>Post meeting note: this is being resolved.</i>
9.	Trailer for handymen	RM	Trailer has now been picked up and £200 was given in part exchange for our old one; net cost £1,300 ex VAT.
10.	Churchyard update	JT	Nigel has done a great job of shaping the hedge and St Mary's is very happy with the work done
11.	Lone working arrangements	RM	SA and RM have met with the handymen individually to emphasise the Health and Safety requirements of "Lone working". <i>Post meeting note: the requirements have been set out in detail and apply to all staff and volunteers working for BPC. VMAG to review the Lone working policy at its next meeting as that was first prepared in 2020 as a response to Covid restrictions,</i>
12.	HDC bin contract	RM	HDC started their contract a month ago, they are coming on a Wednesday and have been doing a great job. Reporting arrangements from HDC to RM have already been demonstrated to work effectively

Deferred item about who should mow which areas of the village to be discussed Nov/Dec to inform review of handymen schedules and priorities on village maintenance.