

**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY PART I FINANCE, AUDIT & PERSONNEL OF
BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL,
HELD AT PARKERS FARM, DELENTY DRIVE, WA3 6AN,
ON TUESDAY 25TH JANUARY 2022, 6PM**

Present: Councillor Bowden in the Chair
Councillors Allen, Atkin, Ball, Dempsey, Ellis, Evans, Reeves, Scott, Sheridan
and Simcock

Clerk – Mrs. F. McDonald
RFO / Deputy Clerk – Mrs C. Caddock

Apologies: Councillor Brereton (health)

Code of Conduct – Declaration of Interests

The Chair reminded members of their responsibility to declare any personal interest or prejudicial interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when the item is reached.

Councillor Ellis – Birchwood Youth and Community Centre

486/21-22 **DECEMBER 2021 PART I FINANCE, AUDIT & PERSONNEL MEETING MINUTES**

Councillor Atkin **proposed**, Councillor Ellis **seconded**, and it was **resolved** that: The Minutes of the Part I Finance, Audit & Personnel Meeting, held on Tuesday 14th December 2021 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

487/21-22 **DECEMBER 2021 PRECEPT MEETING MINUTES**

Councillor Scott **proposed**, Councillor Allen **seconded**, and it was **resolved** that: The Minutes of the December 2021 Precept Meeting, held on 14th December 2021 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

488/21-22 **PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

Members were asked to consider and approve the payment of accounts schedule – (see pages 251 and 252 below).

Councillor Atkin **proposed** the Payment of Accounts be approved; Councillor Ellis **seconded** the proposal. This was **unanimously resolved** by those Members present.

PROGRESS REPORTS ON CURRENT FINANCE, AUDIT & PERSONNEL ITEMS

489/21-22 **PARKERS FARM ESTATE**

The RFO reported that the Clerk contacted Trinity and Cube yesterday requesting a date for the final snagging work and adjustments to the soil pipe at the rear of the building to be undertaken. We are hoping this can be completed before the end of the financial year.

490/21-22 **BTC VEHICLES AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS**

- (a) To note that we took delivery of the two new Maxus eDeliver 3 vans, which have been in use since the middle of December 2021. The EV chargers were installed on 9th December 2021.

The RFO commented that, at present, they need charging about three times every two weeks. It may be less in summer months when the weather is warmer.

- (b) To note that we have been offered a trade-in value on ND09 VNL of £500.

Members **unanimously resolved** to accept this offer.

Action RFO to administer the sale of the van.

- (c) To note that the trackers have been fitted to the new vans. Officers will be undertaking a 'training' session in the next couple of weeks with the garage, and tracker suppliers, regarding the information and reports that can be gleaned from their use.
- (d) To report that ND58 BZR was stolen whilst awaiting collection to take it from one garage, to go for trade-in valuation to the garage where we purchased the electric vans. It was taken some time between 5th November 2021 and 18th December 2021. CCTV at the garage from where it was stolen only goes back to 18th December 2021. This was reported to the Police and our insurance company.

We have received a settlement offer of £1,100 (after excess has been deducted) from our insurance company.

Members **unanimously resolved** to accept the settlement offer.

Action RFO to liaise with the insurance company regarding the acceptance of the offer.

- (e) The RFO reported that the garage informed us that the rusting on NH57 CZV has become too bad to weld onto (previous quote £1000 to undertake just welding work). One alternative is to completely replace the two side panels and rear tailgate, and patch-weld the bed of the van to try to improve the longevity of the vehicle and safety for the team.

Initial verbal estimates are that it would be around £1,600 plus VAT. We asked for a quote, and for the vehicle to have a pre-MOT (£50) to see if it was worth undertaking the above work, before it is done.

The van failed the pre-MOT on a number of matters, not just the welding, but including the engine management light requiring assessment, which could be something simple, or might indicate a substantial fault.

The RFO stated that over the last two years, the van has cost £3,787.94 plus VAT in repairs – not including fuel or road tax. She had looked on the internet and similar vehicles, same year and engine size, but in excellent condition body-wise, were being advertised for between £4,500 and £6,000.

We have been advised that NH57 CZV now requires a whole new body, which would have to be made bespoke, and costs would start in the region of around £3,000.

Members were asked whether they wanted to try to keep the van on the road, or whether we should try to sell it, possibly only for spares or repairs.

The RFO said that, as we now have two new vehicles, and still have one other tipper, and the caddy van, NH57 CZV does not need to be replaced in the short term.

Members **unanimously resolved** that trying to keep NH57 CZV on the road would be ‘throwing good money after bad’ and the cost of ongoing repairs might exceed the value of the vehicle. Officers were asked to look into selling the vehicle.

Action Officers to investigate selling the vehicle.

491/21-22 **LOCKING STUMPS – PROPOSED PLAY AREA REFURBISHMENT**

To note that we are still awaiting more specific costs from WBC regarding the proposed refurbishment of the small play area, on Borough Council land, behind the Turf & Feather public house in Locking Stumps. This matter was raised with WBC at a recent partnership meeting.

The Clerk reported that apparently the delay is being caused, in part, as WBC does not have a specific Parks Officer in post at present.

She added that she has spoken to YHG to ask if they might be interested in putting some funds into this play area.

492/21-22 **PRECEPT**

To note that Birchwood Town Council’s precept information for 2022/2023 was submitted to Warrington Borough Council on 5th January 2022. Details have been published on our website.

493/21-22 **GENERAL ITEMS FOR REPORTING / NOTING**

- (a) To note that the Data Protection / GDPR meeting with our specialist GDPR consultant took place on 20th December 2021. There are some changes expected to GDPR rules in the near future.
- (b) To note that we are still awaiting feedback following our request to WBC asking if they would consider adopting the two BTC owned lighting columns near the garages on Armstrong Close.
- (c) To note that the Town Council’s chosen cleaning services company started their services at our premises on 4th January 2022.
- (d) To note the payment of the annual renewal subscription for the Clerk’s membership to SLCC. There was a £24 increase on the previous year (to £294) due to a change in wages banding.
- (e) To note that our 2021/2022 interim internal audit took place earlier today. The auditor had one recommendation, that we create a ‘Quotations’ file, so that it is easy to locate a record of quotations, if necessary.
- (f) To note that we are currently requesting quotations for the five-yearly fixed wire testing, which is due in March 2022.
- (g) To note that the local government pay claim for 2021/2022 (which BTC currently mirrors for senior Officers’ pay rates) has still not been agreed.

- (h) To note that we have been advised that global chip shortages are affecting availability and prices of IT, hardware, software and communication technologies. At present this does not affect BTC.

NEW FINANCE, AUDIT & PERSONNEL ITEMS

494/21-22 **BANK ACCOUNT RECONCILIATION**

To receive the Town Council's Income and Expenditure Statements and Bank Reconciliation Schedules for the account period 1st April 2021 – 30th November 2021.

The payroll figure for November 2021 (9 staff) was £11,945.70. The figure for December 2021 (9 staff) was £11,940.39.

After consideration and approval by Members the schedules will be signed by the Clerk or RFO and the Chair, as soon as is practicable.

Members **unanimously resolved** they were happy with the reconciliation documents.

495/21-22 **GENERAL ITEMS FOR REPORTING/NOTING**

- (a) We received notification, between meetings, that our SAS Protect membership was due for renewal on 13th January 2022.

For continuity, as SAS Daniels has been involved in advising the Council regarding a current ongoing matter, we asked the Chair, Vice Chair and Leader if, under delegated powers, they would approve BTC renewing the contract for at least one more year. They approved this renewal, which was actioned.

There is a slight increase in the cost from £1377.00 plus VAT to £1405.00 plus VAT.

- (b) Received – December 2021 Review Reports from YellowBus re: our computer systems – all is well. YellowBus has now been incorporated into another company – 'Avoira'. We have checked this company is listed at Companies House and have checked their VAT registration information.
- (c) To note that a drain clearing company attended Parkers Farm on 17th January 2022, as the drain blockage situation had become an immediate health and safety matter. Six companies were contacted, only two were available to speak to, one of which did not cover WA3 areas. None of the others returned our calls.
- (d) To note that a tree survey, of the trees on our land around Parkers Farm and the Youth and Community Centre, was undertaken by WBC on 14th January 2022. There were no issues raised other than an advisory to keep an eye on the Ash trees ref: Ash die back. WBC undertook this survey free of charge.
- (e) To note that the annual review of our fire alarm system, intruder alarm system and emergency lighting system, and the check of our fire extinguishers, safety blankets and signage, was undertaken on Monday 17th January 2022.

We were advised that it would be preferable for the two electric vans to have CO2 extinguishers in them, rather than the powder extinguishes that we had in our diesel vehicles. This is because putting out a fire with powder will render the vehicle a 'write-off' due to the fact that the powder corrodes whatever it touches.

The RFO stated that we have ordered two CO2 extinguishers for the new vans, but have kept the powder extinguishers, which can be used if there is a fire involving the petrol fuelled tools.

- (f) Received – a reminder regarding the re-enrolment of eligible staff into the pension scheme.
- (g) To note that a VAT claim for £15,038.19, which covers October, November and December 2021 has been made to HMRC. This is larger than usual, as it included the VAT on BTC's new vans.

This part of the meeting concluded at 6.50 pm

Payment of Accounts:						
Resolved: that the following payments be approved as the residual November 2021 and part of the December 2021 accounts						
Date	Ref	Payee	Description	Net	VAT	Gross
15.11.2021	DD	Yellowbus Solutions	IT support, backups, internet services (4 x inv.)	£ 188.70	£ 37.74	£ 226.44
16.11.2021	DD	Eon Next	Gas Parkers Farm (closing invoice)	£ 101.87	£ 5.10	£ 106.97
17.11.2021	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment)	£ 72.00	£ 14.40	£ 86.40
18.11.2021	DD	Avanti Gas	Gas Parkers Farm (from 2nd Oct 2021)	£ 104.28	£ 5.21	£ 109.49
18.11.2021	DD	Financial Direct Fees	FD online charges	£ 34.20		£ 34.20
18.11.2021	*	HMRC	Tax £1252.60 NI £2,112.69	£ 3,365.29		£ 3,365.29
18.11.2021		Cheshire Pension Fund	Pension contributions Eee £831.94 Eer £2,936.44	£ 3,768.38		£ 3,768.38
22.11.2021	DD	SSE SWALEC	Electricity - Parkers Farm	£ 132.20	£ 6.61	£ 138.81
22.11.2021	*	James Todd & Co Limited	Payroll services (October 2021)	£ 54.00	£ 10.80	£ 64.80
24.11.2021	DD	Eon Next	Electricity Locking Stumps MUGA	£ 10.42	£ 0.52	£ 10.94
24.11.2021	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment)	£ 92.21	£ 18.43	£ 110.64
25.11.2021	*	E Smith & Son	Bedding plants and compost for planters	£ 172.40	£ 34.48	£ 206.88
26.11.2021	*	Electric-Call Services Ltd	Deposit (40%) for EV charger installation	£ 1,422.00	£ 284.40	£ 1,706.40
29.11.2021	DD	Firstcom Europe	Phone charges	£ 50.43	£ 10.09	£ 60.52
30.11.2021	DD	CopyriteSystems	Photocopier charges	£ 103.17	£ 20.63	£ 123.80
01.12.2021	DD	Waterplus	Water and wastewater services (4083868280)	£ 23.37		£ 23.37
01.12.2021	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment)	£ 141.95	£ 28.38	£ 170.33
01.12.2021	DD	Screw fix Direct Ltd	(B&Q account) decorating supplies (kitchen)	£ 77.18	£ 15.44	£ 92.62
02.12.2021	*	Vans Northw est Ltd	MK71 FVC Total payment made in 2 parts (£32,000.60)	£ -		
03.12.2021	*	Vans Northw est Ltd	(£20,000 plus £12,000.60)	£ 32,038.00	£ 6,407.60	£ 38,445.60
			Plus registration fee (no VAT)	£ 55.00		£ 55.00
			Minus deposit	-£ 416.67	-£ 83.33	-£ 500.00
			Minus OLEV grant	-£ 6,000.00		-£ 6,000.00
06.12.2021	*	Vans Northw est Ltd	MK71 FUU Total payment made in 2 parts (£32,000.60)	£ -		
07.12.2021	*	Vans Northw est Ltd	(£20,000 plus £12,000.60)	£ 32,038.00	£ 6,407.60	£ 38,445.60
			Plus registration fee (no VAT)	£ 55.00		£ 55.00
			Minus deposit	-£ 416.67	-£ 83.33	-£ 500.00
			Minus OLEV grant	-£ 6,000.00		-£ 6,000.00
06.12.2021	DD	Legal and General	Ill health insurance	£ 166.51		£ 166.51
07.12.2021	*	December Wages	9 staff	£ 11,940.39		£ 11,940.39

Payments of Account since 7th December 2021

Date	Ref	Payee	Description	Net	VAT	Gross
08.12.2021	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment)	£ 124.40	£ 24.88	£ 149.28
13.12.2021	DD	Waterplus	Water/wastewater services (4083867607)	£ 81.32		£ 81.32
14.12.2021	*	Amazon	6 x ring binders	£ 11.40	£ 2.28	£ 13.68
14.12.2021	*	Amazon	Pack 100 C4 gusset envelopes	£ 19.41	£ 3.88	£ 23.29
14.12.2021	*	Quantum IT Distribution Ltd	Dell keyboard	£ 16.67	£ 3.33	£ 20.00
14.12.2021	*	Quantum IT Distribution Ltd	Dell mouse	£ 9.88	£ 1.98	£ 11.86
14.12.2021	*	Amazon	Dell SE2422HX 24 inch full HD monitor	£ 99.99	£ 20.00	£ 119.99
14.12.2021	*	Electric-Call Services Ltd	Final payment re: EV charger installation	£2,133.00	£ 426.60	£2,559.60
15.12.2021	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment)	£ 55.84	£ 11.17	£ 67.01
15.12.2021	DD	Financial Direct Fees	Online banking charges	£ 33.40		£ 33.40
15.12.2021	*	Signs Unlimited	Supply and install graphics to MK71 FVC & MK71 FUU	£ 450.00	£ 90.00	£ 540.00
16.12.2021	DD	Yellowbus Solutions	IT support, backups, internet services (4 x inv.)	£ 188.70	£ 37.74	£ 226.44
16.12.2021	DD	Yellowbus Solutions	Dell Optiplex 3080 Micro Form Factor, Intel i5 Core processor, 8GB RAM, 256GB SSD, WiFi enabled, Windows 10 Pro and set-up services	£ 560.00	£ 112.00	£ 672.00
17.12.2021	*	HMRC	Tax £1256.20 NI £2,116.82	£3,373.02		£3,373.02
17.12.2021	*	Cheshire Pension Fund	Pension contributions Eee £832.89 Eer £2,939.91	£3,772.80		£3,772.80
17.12.2021	DD	Avanti Gas	Gas Parkers Farm (from 1st - 30th Nov 2021)	£ 199.49	£ 39.90	£ 239.39
21.12.2021	DD	Eon Next	Electricity Locking Stumps MJGA	£ 10.65	£ 0.53	£ 11.18
22.12.2021	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment)	£ 65.83	£ 13.17	£ 79.00
29.12.2021	*	ESI	Annual Intruder Alarm Maintenance & System Monitoring 2022	£ 162.00	£ 32.40	£ 194.40
30.12.2021	DD	James Todd & Co Limited	Payroll services (November 2021)	£ 54.00	£ 10.80	£ 64.80
31.12.2021	DD	CopyriteSystems	Photocopier charges	£ 62.88	£ 12.57	£ 75.45
31.12.2021	*	SLCC	SLCC Subs	£ 294.00		£ 294.00
31.12.2021	*	Terrain	Specialist Health & Safety services 2022	£1,575.00	£ 315.00	£1,890.00
04.01.2022	DD	Legal and General	Ill health insurance	£ 166.51		£ 166.51
04.01.2022	DD	Waterplus	Water and wastewater services (4083868280)	£ 23.37		£ 23.37
04.01.2022	*	Office Depot	Stationery	£ 68.77	£ 13.75	£ 82.52
04.01.2022	*	Infotone	Brother MFC-L2710DN Printer	£ 90.00	£ 18.00	£ 108.00
04.01.2022	*	Infotone	5 x toner cartridges	£ 155.70	£ 31.14	£ 186.84
05.01.2022	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment)	£ 46.05	£ 9.20	£ 55.25
05.01.2022	*	N A Hall	Gas Safety Check and Boiler Service	£ 80.00		£ 80.00
12.01.2022	DD	Waterplus	Water/wastewater services (4083867607)	£ 81.32		£ 81.32

Payments of accounts for approval at the January 2022 meeting

Date	Ref	Payee	Description	Net	VAT	Gross
all tbc	DD	Legal and General	Ill health insurance	£ 166.51		£ 166.51
	DD	Telesis	Phone/enhanced internet speed charges	£ 50.43	£ 10.09	£ 60.52
	DD	Waterplus	Water and wastewater services (4083868280)	£ 23.37		£ 23.37
	DD	Waterplus	Water/wastewater services (4083867607)	£ 81.32		£ 81.32
	DD	Financial Direct Fees	FD online charges (inc. £60 +VAT for new token)	£ 100.20	£ 12.00	£ 112.20
	*	C Caddock	Reimburse re: keysafe with combination lock	£ 20.83	£ 4.17	£ 25.00
	DD	Yellow bus Solutions	IT support, backups, internet services (4 x inv.)	£ 188.70	£ 37.74	£ 226.44
	DD	James Todd	December 2021 payroll fee	£ 54.00	£ 10.80	£ 64.80
	DD	E-on	Electricity - Locking Stumps multi-use games area	£ 11.05	£ 0.55	£ 11.60
	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans and equipment)	tbc		
	DD	CopyriteSystems	Photocopying charges	£ 50.77	£ 10.15	£ 60.92
	*	HMRC	Tax £933.00 NI £2,117.85 (5 January 2022 to 19 February 2022)	£ 3,369.55		£ 3,369.55
	*	Cheshire Pension Fund	Pension contributions Dec 21 Eee £832.42 Eer £2,938.17	£ 3,770.59		£ 3,770.59
	*	Hi Vis (Elite Industrial Supplies)	PPE and work wear	£ 167.62	£ 33.52	£ 201.14
	*	Elas Group	Pre-employment medical	£ 250.00	£ 50.00	£ 300.00
	DD	Avanti Gas	Gas - Parkers Farm December 2021	tbc		
	DD	O2	Final McAfee payment	£ 3.00	£ 0.60	£ 3.60
	*	HMRC	Tax £1,254.80 NI £2,114.75 (6 Dec 2021 to 5 January 2022)			
	*	SAS Daniels LLP	SAS Protect Service (employment law specialists)	£ 1,405.00	£ 281.00	£ 1,686.00
	*	PREMI Clean	Parkers Farm contract cleaning services - January 2022	£ 446.98	£ 89.40	£ 536.38
	*	ESI	Annual review of fire, intruder alarm, emergency lighting and fire safety equipment, signs, etc.	tbc		
	*	Warrington Borough Council	Tree survey	tbc		
	*	BNP Paribas	Photocopier rental - 10/02/2022 to 09/05/2022	£ 343.00	£ 68.60	£ 411.60
	*	Able	Drain clearance re: blockage to rear of Parkers Farm	tbc		