

**MINUTES OF THE PART I FINANCE, AUDIT AND PERSONNEL MEETING  
OF BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL, HELD AT  
PARKERS FARM COMMUNITY CENTRE, DELENTY DRIVE, RISLEY  
ON TUESDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2015**

**Present:** Councillor T. Hearldon in the Chair  
Councillors Balding, C. Bolton, J. Bolton, M. Hearldon,

Clerk – Mrs. F. McDonald  
Deputy Clerk – Mrs. C Caddock  
Business and Finance Officer - Mr. G. Crowe

**Apologies:** Councillors Evans, Fitzsimmons, Higgins, Nelson and Spencer  
(Apologies were also received by email from Councillors Bowden and Allman; which had not been picked up prior to the meeting)

**Councillor J. Bolton proposed, Councillor M. Hearldon seconded and it was resolved that:**

**The Minutes of the Part I Finance, Audit and Personnel meeting of the Town Council which took place on Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> February 2015, be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.**

**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.

182/2014 **PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

Members were asked to consider and approve the payment of accounts schedule (see pages 5 and 6 below).

Councillor M. Hearldon proposed the Payment of Accounts be approved; Councillor J. Bolton seconded the proposal. This was agreed by those Members present.

**PROGRESS REPORTS ON CURRENT ISSUES**

183/2015 **BIRCHWOOD YOUTH AND COMMUNITY CENTRE**

As Councillor Nelson was unable to attend tonight's meeting there was no additional information update available regarding the Birchwood Youth and Community Centre.

The BAFO confirmed that the Youth and Community Centre currently appears to be doing well in terms of increased bookings.

184/2015 **WEBSITE**

The BAFO informed Members that an upgrade to the website has been undertaken 'in the background'. A meeting will be held soon with the website provider and Officers to discuss what visual improvements and/or changes might be made to the upgraded website.

185/2015 **DEFIBRILLATOR**

The defibrillator is now installed on the outside of the Police Station wall. We are still awaiting an invoice for our part-funding of the defibrillator.

186/2015 **BROOK FOOTPATH FUNDING**

The BAFO stated that there is no progress to report regarding this matter at the present time, other than to confirm that the information requested by Borough Council Officers was sent to them.

Despite requesting updates since November, there has been no more information forthcoming from the Borough Council about alternative potential funding sources, as we understand the LSTF funding has already been earmarked for the footpath/cycleway improvements already underway. The BAFO reminded Members that although the footpath is owned by the Borough Council, the Town Council has indicated that it is prepared to part-fund improvements to parts of this footpath.

The Clerk said that this is another instance she spoke to Katherine Fairclough, the Assistant Chief Executive at the Borough Council about when she attended a recent Parish Liaison meeting. The Clerk reiterated that it is very frustrating when, month to month, she has to report back to Town Council Members that there is 'nothing further to report', despite chasing the Borough Council on several occasions for an update.

187/2015 **BIRCHWOOD FOREST PARK RECREATION SCHEME**

The BAFO reported that the woodland works are now almost completed. He added that information had been received today that the final stages are underway of the contract formalities and the official contract will soon be signed by the Entrust and WREN board. Once this contract is formally in place work should start, hopefully around 7<sup>th</sup> April 2015, on the installation of the new play and fitness equipment.

**Action** Clerk's office to continue to liaise with the Borough Council.

188/2015 **WILDFLOWER MEADOWS**

The BAFO said that he had received the costs for sowing wildflowers this year along part of Ordnance Avenue near the Forest Park (£350) and part of Birchwood Park Avenue (£1,050). He asked Members if they wished to go ahead with the scheme this year.

Members agreed for these areas to be seeded with wildflowers this year.

**Action** Clerk's office to contact the Borough Council regarding the above.

189/2015 **GRANTS**

(a) **Warrington Community Transport**

At the January meeting, a letter requesting grant aid was received from Warrington Community Transport. Members asked for the application to be made formally on one of our Grant Aid forms and for some additional information.

A form was sent, along with a request for some additional information.

At the February meeting, the BAFO summarised the batch of documentation that had been received on the day of the meeting. He reiterated that it was a practically identical application that had been received as in the previous financial year, for which the Town Council had awarded a one-off grant. It had been agreed to defer the item for consideration at tonight's meeting.

Members reconsidered the application in light of the additional information received. They concluded that they did not wish to award a grant in this instance for a number of reasons; including the facts that the organisation still has a significant bank balance and that it could not be proven that any money awarded would be directly beneficial to any residents of Birchwood who might use the service (of which there are a small number). Councillors raised concerns that grant money might simply get swallowed up by the projected shortfall in the organisation's finances.

Item 2 of the Town Council's terms and conditions of awarding a grant specifically states that, '*Grants will only be awarded where there is a clear, direct benefit to the people of Birchwood, the Town Council, the Birchwood area or its residents.*'

In addition, item 5 states that, '*Groups/organisations with large balances will not normally be considered for grant aid funding.*'

Members acknowledged that they had waived these terms and conditions when they considered an application and awarded a grant to Warrington Community Transport in 2013 as a 'one-off', as they had considered it to be 'exceptional circumstances' at that time.

It appears, however, that the situation remains the same and Councillors think that the Town Council could find itself in the position of being approached year on year, just to supplement the organisation's finances, rather than the money being specifically allocated to benefit Birchwood residents.

To use the Dial-a-Ride service patrons have to pay to join as members (currently £15 annually for single membership) and potentially to use the service. (Journeys commencing prior to 9.30am Monday to Friday are charged at the full adult single journey fare, 5 years to 16 years half fare, blind pass holders and essential carers travel free at all times. After 9.30am Monday to Friday and all day Saturday free travel concessions apply with an eligible bus pass.)

**Action** Clerk's office to contact the applicant regarding the Council's decision.

#### 190/2015 **YOUR HOUSING GROUP**

The BAFO informed Members that Officers will liaise with the applicant with regard to the grant aid funding awarded towards some hanging bags, compost and plants for the sheltered housing scheme in Rawlings Close.

**Action** Clerk's office to liaise with the applicant regarding obtaining the bags, etc.

#### 191/2015 **GENERAL ITEMS FOR REPORTING / NOTING**

- (a) The invoice sent for the hanging baskets at Birchwood Shopping Centre for the 2014 season (£2,200) has been paid and arrangements are ongoing to supply the hanging baskets for 2015.
- (b) To report the receipt of the annual renewal invoice for our key holding service from 22/03/15 to 21/03/2016. (£337.65 +VAT).

## **NEW FINANCE, AUDIT AND PERSONNEL ITEMS**

### 192/2015 **BANK ACCOUNT RECONCILIATION**

To receive from the Business and Finance Officer the Town Council's Income and Expenditure Statements and Bank Reconciliation Schedules for the accounts period 1st April 2014 – 28th February 2015.

The payroll figure for January is £11,347.61 and £10,697.03 for February.

After consideration by Members the schedules were signed by the Business and Finance Officer and the Chair.

### 193/2015 **GENERAL ITEMS FOR REPORTING/NOTING**

- (a) Received - notification of our business rates for the year 2015/2016. The total amount due to be paid in ten monthly instalments is £1,944.00.
- (b) Received – From Cheshire Pension Fund – Employer News.
- (c) Received – Notification from Legal and General that the annual renewal of our Ill Health Liability Insurance is due on 1st April 2015. We will be advised of the new premiums once renewal data has been received by them and the account produced.
- (d) To note the receipt of a number of updated employee tax codes for 2015/2016 from HMRC.
- (e) To note the receipt of an information article from SAS Daniels LLP regarding parental leave.
- (f) To report the receipt of the annual renewal invoice for our key holding service from 22/03/15 to 21/03/2106. (£337.65 +VAT).
- (g) To note the receipt of the invoice for the annual renewal of our comprehensive insurance policy with Zurich; this is the third year of three year fixed-price contract (£7,226.26 plus £433.57 IPT – total £7,659.83).
- (h) Received – Change of bank details from Cheshire Constabulary.
- (i) To note that we asked the supplier we usually use for signage to quote for a 'Private Car Park' sign. The cost for a 600mm x 600mm aluminium composite sign would be approximately £75.

**Part I of the Finance Meeting concluded at 8.55pm**

Resolved: that the following payments be approved as the residual January/February accounts transactions of the Council since the Council meeting held on the 27th January 2015					
Payee	Chq No	Description	Net	VAT	Gross
<b>Online payments</b>					
<b>Cheque payments</b>					
NIL					
<b>Online payments</b>					
Allstar Business	DD	Fuel	£ 84.68	£ 16.93	£ 101.61
G Crowe	*	Petty cash reimbursement	£ 150.00		£ 150.00
Allstar Business	DD	Fuel	£ 8.66	£ 1.74	£ 10.40
Legal & General	DD	Ill Health Liability Insurance	£ 87.66		£ 87.66
February Wages	*	Wages total this month £10,697.03 (10 staff)	£ 10,697.03		£ 10,697.03
All Star Business - fuel	DD	Fuel	£ 120.01	£ 24.00	£ 144.01
Financial Direct Fees	DD	(re: FD Online Transactions)	£ 35.60		£ 35.60
O2	DD	G Crowe mobile	£ 65.86	£ 13.17	£ 79.03
EON	DD	Electricity Locking Stumps MUGA	£ 8.33	£ 0.42	£ 8.75
United Utilities	DD	Surface water and highway drainage (Jan and Feb 15)	£ 108.52		£ 108.52
Telesis	DD	Phone charges (80p of the (net) payment to be recredited to BTC on next bill from Telesis due to overpayment by bank )	£ 173.31	£ 34.50	£ 207.81
All Star Business - fuel	DD	Fuel	£ 66.67	£ 13.33	£ 80.00
BNP Paribas Leasing	DD	Photocopier leasing charges	£ 373.00	£ 74.60	£ 447.60
Acumen Wages	*	January and February payroll services	£ 67.95	£ 13.59	£ 81.54
Warrington Borough Cour	*	Period 8 charges for repairs to vehicles	£ 243.70	£ 48.74	£ 292.44
Regal Polythene	*	Bin liners	£ 341.00	£ 68.20	£ 409.20
ADS Recycling	*	Tip charges (WM7809 and WM7828)	£ 550.00	£ 110.00	£ 660.00
Cheshire Pension Fund	*	(E'ee £466.33 E'er £1,402.24)	£ 1,868.57		£ 1,868.57
HM Revenue and Custom	*	(Tax £1350.60 NI £1384.49)	£ 2,735.09		£ 2,735.09
Arco	*	Boots and PPE	£ 97.37	£ 19.47	£ 116.84
Copyrite Digital Systems	DD	Photocopying charges	£ 27.44	£ 5.49	£ 32.93
Legal and General	DD	Ill Health Liability insurance	£ 87.66		£ 87.66
HM Revenue and Custom	*	(Tax £1380.60 NI £1463.43)	£ 2,844.03		£ 2,844.03
Cheshire Pension Fund	*	(E'ee £464.77 E'er £1,397.37)	£ 1,862.14		£ 1,862.14
Wynhcote Limited	*	Upgrade to website Joomla! 2.5.28 to Joomla! 3.3.6	£ 288.00		£ 288.00
Public Works Loan Board	DD	Loan repayment	£ 12,940.00		£ 12,940.00

**Payments of Account since 24th February Council Meeting**

Payee	Chq No / online payment *	Description	Net	VAT	Gross
<b>Cheque payments</b>		<b>NIL</b>			
<b>Online payments</b>					
Telesis	DD	Phone charges (80p of the (net) payment to be recredited to BTC on next bill from Telesis due to overpayment by bank )	£ 173.31	£ 34.50	£ 207.81
All Star Business - fuel	DD	Fuel	£ 66.67	£ 13.33	£ 80.00
BNP Paribas Leasing	DD	Photocopier leasing charges	£ 373.00	£ 74.60	£ 447.60
Acumen Wages	*	January and February payroll services	£ 67.95	£ 13.59	£ 81.54
Warrington Borough Council	*	Period 8 charges for repairs to vehicles	£ 243.70	£ 48.74	£ 292.44
Regal Polythene	*	Bin liners	£ 341.00	£ 68.20	£ 409.20
ADS Recycling	*	Tip charges (WM7809 and WM7828)	£ 550.00	£ 110.00	£ 660.00
Cheshire Pension Fund	*	(E'ee £466.33 E'er £1,402.24)	£ 1,868.57		£ 1,868.57
HM Revenue and Customs	*	(Tax £1350.60 NI £1384.49)	£ 2,735.09		£ 2,735.09
Arco	*	Boots and PPE	£ 97.37	£ 19.47	£ 116.84
Copyrite Digital Systems	DD	Photocopying charges	£ 27.44	£ 5.49	£ 32.93
All Star Business - fuel	DD	Fuel	£ 48.02	£ 9.60	£ 57.62
Legal and General	DD	Ill Health Liability insurance	£ 87.66		£ 87.66
SSE Southern Electric	DD	Gas	£ 609.85	£ 121.97	£ 731.82
United Utilities	DD	Water/wastewater - council building PF	£ 12.01		£ 12.01
United Utilities	DD	Water/wastewater - former PF building	£ 19.42		£ 19.42
March Wages	*	Wages total this month £10,937.11 (10 staff)	£10,937.11		£10,937.11
Public Works Loan Board	DD	Loan repayment	£12,940.00		£ 12,940.00
Wynchcote Limited	*	Upgrade to website Joomla! 2.5.28 to Joomla! 3.3.6	£ 288.00		£ 288.00
HM Revenue and Customs	*	(Tax £1380.60 NI £1463.43)	£ 2,844.03		£ 2,844.03
Cheshire Pension Fund	*	(E'ee £464.77 E'er £1,397.37)	£ 1,862.14		£ 1,862.14
All Star Business	DD	Fuel	£ 60.78	£ 12.15	£ 72.93
Npower - electricity	DD	Npower - electricity	£ 153.92	£ 7.70	£ 161.62
Financial Direct Fees	DD	FD Online Transactions	£ 33.60		£ 33.60
O2	DD	G Crowe mobile	£ 65.66	£ 13.13	£ 78.79
Acumen Wages	*	March 2015 payroll	£ 32.90	£ 6.58	£ 39.48
Office Depot	*	Stationery	£ 67.76	£ 13.55	£ 81.31
Uniqwin UK Ltd	*	Key holding 22/3/15 - 21/03/16	£ 337.65	£ 67.53	£ 405.18
ADS Recycling Ltd	*	Bulky waste disposal WM7848 & WM7870	£ 550.00	£ 110.00	£ 660.00
Millhouse Training	*	Banksman, signing and guarding course	£ 550.00	£ 110.00	£ 660.00
All Star Business	DD	Fuel	£ 69.29	£ 13.85	£ 83.14
Steve Cross	*	Repayment re: purchase of new lock from Safeguard	£ 40.55	£ 8.11	£ 48.66
E-on	DD	Electricity L/S MUGA	£ 9.13	£ 0.46	£ 9.59

**Payments of accounts presented for approval at the March 2015 Meeting**

Payee	Description	Net	VAT	Gross
Telesis	DD Phone (net is minus 80p for credit from previous over payment)	£ 50.48	£ 10.26	£ 60.74
All Star Business	DD Fuel	£ 4.58	£ 0.91	£ 5.49
Elite Industrial Supplies Ltd	* Workwear/PPE	£ 93.90	£ 18.79	£ 112.69
Mr G Crowe	* Petty cash reimbursement	£ 150.00		£ 150.00
Risley MOT & Truck	* NH57 CZV - light unit repair	£ 39.95	£ 7.99	£ 47.94
Arco - workboots	* Workboots - LB, SJ, SC, KA	£ 199.99	£ 40.00	£ 239.99
Copyrite	DD Photocopying charges	£ 61.78	£ 12.36	£ 74.14
Millhouse Training	* Lantra Brushcutter course (1 staff) inc. Lantra fee	£ 154.00	£ 30.80	£ 184.80
Millhouse Training	* Pesticide refresher course - 2 days (1 staff)	£ 200.00	£ 40.00	£ 240.00
Zurich	* Annual insurance policy (£7226.26 plus £433.57 IPT)	£ 7,659.83		£ 7,659.83

Items marked \* have been / will be paid online by Officers (not direct debits)