

**MINUTES OF THE PART I FINANCE, AUDIT & PERSONNEL MEETING OF  
BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL  
HELD AT PARKERS FARM, DELENTY DRIVE,  
ON TUESDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> MAY 2023**

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

Clerk – Mrs. F. McDonald  
Deputy Clerk/Deputy RFO – Mrs. C. Caddock  
Administrative Assistant – Mrs. H. Thomas

**Apologies:** Councillor Bowden (WBC Cabinet Meeting)

**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.

064/23-24 **PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

Members were asked to consider and approve the payment of accounts schedule – (see pages 34 to 35 below).

Councillor Atkin **proposed** the payment of accounts be approved; Councillor Evans **seconded** the proposal. This was **unanimously resolved** by those Members present.

065/23-24 **APRIL 2023 PART I FINANCE, AUDIT & PERSONNEL MEETING MINUTES**

Councillor Dempsey **proposed**, Councillor Atkin **seconded**, and it was unanimously **resolved** that: the Minutes of the Part I Finance, Audit & Personnel Meeting, held on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2023, be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

**PROGRESS REPORT**

066/23-24 **LOCKING STUMPS – PLAY AREA REFURBISHMENT**

The RFO stated that we do not yet have a specific date regarding a formal opening.

Disappointingly, some of the equipment has already been marked with graffiti.

067/23-24 **SPEED INDICATOR DEVICE**

- (a) The RFO informed Members that she has asked the company to hold the quote for us, which they are prepared to do, in order for us to confirm installation sites before we formally order the SIDs.
- (b) The RFO said that we have been liaising with the local Police regarding their suggestions for site preferences. The PCSO is checking whether an area that has a site code for their speed enforcement operations can also have a SID installed near the same location. The RFO is waiting for PCSO Palfrey to get back to her regarding this issue.

068/23-24 **MEMORIAL PLAQUE BIRCHWOOD FOREST PARK**

WBC sent over a copy of the information board that will be placed adjacent to the memorial. The Clerk marked up a few minor changes that need to be made to the board.

The RFO stated that the memorial should be completed in time for the Carnival.

069/23-24 **INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2023/2024**

The RFO is continuing with the production of the end of year documents.

070/23-24 **BENCHES**

The RFO stated that we are still awaiting a response from WBC regarding location proposals.

071/23-24 **TIPPER HIRE / PURCHASE**

The RFO said that we are continuing to look for suitable vehicles that might be available within the budget set by Councillors.

072/23-24 **GRANTS – TOMMY TOTS**

The RFO confirmed that the grant awarded to Tommy Tots for the purchase of sensory play equipment has now been paid (via the church's account).

073/23-24 **CESHIRE PENSION FUND / ILL HEALTH LIABILITY INSURANCE (IHLI)**

- (a) To note that the Clerk and RFO attended the first of three virtual training sessions with the Cheshire Pension Fund.
- (b) The RFO has sent the relevant information, as required, regarding BTC's IHLI. This is updated with staff details as they stand on 1<sup>st</sup> April in each financial year.
- (c) To note that there is additional training available from West Cheshire Pension Fund.

074/23-24 **GENERAL ITEMS FOR NOTING/REPORTING**

- (a) To note that the 2023/2024 precept was paid into BTC's Nationwide account on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023.
- (b) The ChALC Affiliation Fee renewal for 2023/2024 - £1,510.87 has been paid.
- (c) To note that we are awaiting the second EV charger grant, received by our contractor to be paid into our Co-operative Bank account.

**NEW FINANCE, AUDIT AND PERSONNEL ITEMS**

075/23-24 **BANK ACCOUNT RECONCILIATION**

To receive the Town Council's Income and Expenditure Statements and Bank Reconciliation Schedules for the account periods 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

The payroll figure for March 2023 was £11,047.59 (8 staff). The payroll figure for April 2023 was £11,540.02 (8 staff).

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** that they are happy with the schedules as presented. These will be signed by the RFO and the Chair, following the meeting.

## 076/23-24 TELEPHONE SYSTEM

To inform Members that Avoira, our current specialist IT company, can now supply and maintain telephone systems. The RFO requested a quotation for a system with them. We would be able to use our current handsets (which BTC own) with Avoira's system – so these would not need replacing.

Avoira has quoted £462.50 +VAT for set-up and configuration of the three user accounts, and for a specialist onsite engineer visit to reconfigure our existing handsets onto their platform. The monthly costs for the options they suggest is £34.50 +VAT. We would need to discuss and confirm these with them, and might wish to remove some items and add another (exceptional call reporting; which is useful if the lines are ever 'hacked').

At the moment BTC pays approximately £87.00 +VAT per month to our current provider. We have given them the opportunity to review their pricing (at their request) but they have not yet come back with a quote.

The RFO asked Members to consider whether they might wish BTC to change the phone system software. It would take approximately nine months to recoup the initial set-up costs, then there would be a potential 'saving' of around £50 per month.

The Council has a short window in which to make a decision as two contracts (a maintenance, and a phone line & calls contract) have to be cancelled, in writing – the maintenance contract by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at the latest.

We have looked at other phone system suppliers but they are upselling new handsets with multiple features, such as video calling capability and various other options that Officers would not use, nor need to.

Councillor Ellis stated that Avoira is a known company within the Council and has local offices should we need any further help, so are a good choice.

The RFO asked Members if they are happy for Officers to move forward with this adding that she will come to the Council for approval once she has a final recommendation.

Members discussed the option and **unanimously resolved** that it would be financially responsible to change to a new supplier at the rates quoted.

**Action:** RFO and Administrative Assistant to investigate this option further.

## 077/23-24 GENERAL ITEMS FOR REPORTING/NOTING

- (a) To note that we have recommenced our 'paused' service with Direct365 for the supply and monthly emptying of a feminine hygiene disposal unit (£88.80 pa +VAT). We will set up a direct debit payment for this contract.
- (b) The RFO asked Members whether they wish to consider a request from the North Warrington Cavy Club (NWCC) which will be using BYCC for events about four times a year. They are looking for storage space for some metal folding pens, boards and trestle legs. They visited the office on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 and looked at potential space with the Clerk.

As they are an inclusive club with lots of local members plus an international interest, Members were asked to consider if we could let the space for less than they are currently paying.

Councillor Ellis proposed a figure of £300 per annum and it was **unanimously resolved** that this would be the amount to be charged to the Cavy Club for their first year of storage.

Members **unanimously resolved** that they are happy, in principal, for arrangements to be made for NWCC to store some items in BTC's barn area.

The RFO stated that a formal arrangement will be drawn up to be approved by the Council prior to presenting it to NWCC.

**Action:** Clerks office to contact Cavy Club regarding this.

**Action:** RFO to put together a draft agreement for consideration by the Council at the June 2023 meeting regarding the above request from NWCC.

(c) To note that the £150 excess, initially paid in relation to the insurance claim for MK71 FUU has now been repaid to BTC by our insurance company.

**This part of the meeting concluded at 7.35 pm**

Payment of Accounts:							
Resolved: that the following payments be approved as the residual March 2023 and part of the April 2023 accounts							
Date	Ref	Payee	Description	Net	VAT	Gross	
21.03.2023	DD	E-on Next	Electricity - Locking Stumps MUGA	£ 9.51	£ 0.48	£ 9.99	
22.03.2023	DD	Allstar	Fuel (vans & equipment)	£ 60.34	£ 12.07	£ 72.41	
22.03.2023	*	Atlas (formerly Uniqw in)	Key holding services March 2023	£ 37.13	£ 7.43	£ 44.56	
28.03.2023	*	PREMIIClean	Cleaning services 2023	£ 446.98	£ 89.40	£ 536.38	
29.03.2023	DD	Allstar	Fuel (vans & equipment)	£ 53.93	£ 10.79	£ 64.72	
30.03.2023	DD	James Todd (Go Cardless)	Payroll services (February 2023)	£ 48.00	£ 9.60	£ 57.60	
30.03.2023	DD	Firstcom Europe	Office phone charges	£ 71.51	£ 14.30	£ 85.81	
30.03.2023	*	HMRC	Tax £1,275.20 NI £1,800.46 (6 March 2023 to 5 April 2023)	£ 3,075.66		£ 3,075.66	
30.03.2023	*	Cheshire Pension Fund	Pension contributions re: March 2023 Eee £783.19 Eer £2,747.0	£ 3,530.28		£ 3,530.28	
31.03.2023	DD	LEVL	Geotab Pro Plus (in advance - April monthly subscription)	£ 30.00	£ 6.00	£ 36.00	
03.04.2023	DD	Waterplus	Water and wastewater services (4083868280)	£ 25.83		£ 25.83	
03.04.2023	*	Zurich Municipal	Insurance Cover 1/4/23 to 31/3/24 (inc. £599.64 IPT)	£ 5,596.56		£ 5,596.56	
03.04.2023	*	St John Ambulance	3 x First Aid requalification courses (ES, JW, SJ) booked for late	£ 795.00	£ 159.00	£ 954.00	
			in the 2023/2024 financial year				
04.04.2023	DD	Legal and General	Ill health insurance	£ 159.87		£ 159.87	
04.04.2023	*	JDW Services Ltd	Jetting/unblocking drains and small repair to soil pipe	£ 200.00	£ 40.00	£ 240.00	
05.04.2023	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment)	£ 64.40	£ 12.88	£ 77.28	
06.04.2023	*	April 2023 Wages	8 staff	£ 11,047.59		£ 11,047.59	
12.04.2023	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment)	£ 48.87	£ 9.77	£ 58.64	
13.04.2023	DD	Waterplus	Water/wastewater services (4083867607)	£ 92.81		£ 92.81	

Payments of Account since 14th April 2023

Date	Ref	Payee	Description	Net	VAT	Gross
17.04.2023	DD	FD Online	Financial Direct Fees (Co-Operative Bank Account)	£ 39.60		£ 39.60
18.04.2023	DD	Avoira	IT support, backups, internet services (4 x inv.) April 2023	£ 234.68	£ 46.94	£ 281.62
20.04.2023	DD	British Gas (taken over Avanti	Gas - Parkers Farm (includes balance owed to Avanti Gas)	£ 515.82	£ 5.60	£ 521.42
21.04.2023	DD	E-on Next	Electricity - Locking Stumps MUGA	£ 10.19	£ 0.51	£ 10.70
21.04.2023	*	Matco Direct	Mat cleaning Oct 22 - March 2023	£ 225.75	£ 45.15	£ 270.90
21.04.2023	*	Atlas Contractors	Key Holding - April 2023 - March 2024	£ 437.18	£ 87.44	£ 524.62
24.04.2023	*	PREMclean	Office cleaning services April 2023	£ 378.22	£ 75.64	£ 453.86
26.04.2023	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment)	£ 58.28	£ 11.66	£ 69.94
27.04.2023	DD	Firstcom Europe	Office phone charges	£ 77.95	£ 15.59	£ 93.54
28.04.2023	DD	BNP Paribas	Copier Lease	£ 170.00	£ 34.00	£ 204.00
28.04.2023	*	Viking	Stationery	£ 69.48	£ 13.90	£ 83.38
28.04.2023	*	Cheshire Pension Fund	Pension contributions re: April 2023 Eee £824.70 Eer £3,002.53	£ 3,827.23		£ 3,827.23
28.04.2023	*	HMRC	Tax £1,478.00 NI £1,982.80 (6 April 2023 to 5 May 2023)	£ 3,460.80		£ 3,460.80
02.05.2023	DD	Waterplus	Water and w astew ater services (4083868280)	£ 25.83		£ 25.83
02.05.2023	DD	LEVL	Geotab Pro Plus (in advance - May monthly subscription)	£ 30.00	£ 6.00	£ 36.00
02.05.2023	DD	James Todd (Go Cardless)	Payroll services (March 2023)	£ 48.00	£ 9.60	£ 57.60
03.05.2023	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment, mow ers)	£ 78.19	£ 15.64	£ 93.83
04.05.2023	DD	Legal and General	Ill health insurance	£ 159.87		£ 159.87
05.05.2023	*	Risley MOT & Truck Ltd.	HK64 NNM - investigate oil leak and change oil filter/top up oil	£ 103.87	£ 20.77	£ 124.64
05.05.2023	*	Cheshire Association of Local Councils	Annual subscription renewal	£ 1,510.87		£ 1,510.87
05.05.2023	*	May 2023 Wages	8 staff	£ 11,047.59		£ 11,047.59
10.05.2023	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment, mow ers)	£ 133.29	£ 26.65	£ 159.94
10.05.2023	*	Tommy Tots (via Church a/c)	Grant - sensory play area equipment	£ 500.00		£ 500.00
11.05.2023	*	Risley MOT & Truck Ltd.	PO51 WLE - investigate indicator fault - new flasher unit installed	£ 96.42	£ 19.28	£ 115.70

Payments of accounts for approval at the May 2023 meeting

Date	Ref	Payee	Description	Net	VAT	Gross
all tbc	DD	Legal and General	Ill health insurance	£ 159.87		£ 159.87
	DD	Telesis	Phone/enhanced internet speed charges	tbc		
	DD	Waterplus	Water and w astew ater services (4083868280)	£ 25.83		£ 25.83
	DD	Waterplus	Water/w astew ater services (4083867607)	£ 92.81		£ 92.81
	DD	Avoira	IT support, backups, internet services (4 x inv.) March 2023	£ 232.11	£ 46.42	£ 278.53
	DD	James Todd	April payroll fee	£ 52.80	£ 10.56	£ 63.36
	DD	E-on	Electricity - Locking Stumps multi-use games area	£ 9.67	£ 0.46	£ 9.67
	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans and equipment)	£ 75.24	£ 15.05	£ 90.29
	DD	CopyriteSystems	Photocopying charges	£ 35.32	£ 7.06	£ 42.38
	*	Premiclean	Cleaning services May 2023	tbc		
	DD	LEVL	Geotab Pro Plus (monthly subs.- in advance) June 2023	£ 30.00	£ 6.00	£ 36.00
	*	Arco	Safety boots (JW and MA)	£ 108.74	£ 21.75	£ 130.49
	*	Wynchco Solutions	1 year Joomla! Support/Domain renewal/hosting	£ 858.95		£ 858.95
	*	Elas Occupational Health Ltd	New starter pre-employment medical (HT)	£ 250.00	£ 50.00	£ 300.00
	*	HMRC	Tax £1,290.40 NI £1,951.03 (6 May 2023 to 5 June 2023)	£ 3,241.43		£ 3,241.43
	*	Cheshire Pension Fund	Pension contributions re: May 2023 Eee £826.59 Eer £3,009.72	£ 3,836.31		£ 3,836.31
	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans and equipment)	£ 87.72	£ 17.53	£ 105.25
	*	ESI	Replace & commission 8 x fire extinguishers & dispose of old	£ 388.00	£ 77.60	£ 465.60
	*	Elan City Ltd	2 x solar-powered speed indicator devices & related equipment	£ 4,948.80	£ 989.76	£ 5,938.56
	DD	Financial Direct Fees	FD online charges	£ 39.40		£ 39.40
	DD	CopyriteSystems	Photocopying charges	£ 14.82	£ 2.97	£ 17.79
	*	E Smith & Son Nursery	Hanging baskets, plants and compost	tbc		
	*	Elas Occupational Health Ltd	New starter pre-employment medical (SM)	tbc		
	DD	SSE SWALEC	Electricity - Parkers Farm Feb/March/April 2023	£ 364.81	£ 18.24	£ 383.05