

**MINUTES OF THE PART I FINANCE, AUDIT & PERSONNEL MEETING OF
BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL
HELD AT PARKERS FARM, DELENTY DRIVE,
ON TUESDAY 28TH NOVEMBER 2023**

Present: Councillor Dempsey in the Chair
Councillors Allen, Atkin, Ball, Brereton, Ellis, Reeves, Scott and Simcock
Clerk – Mrs. F. McDonald
RFO / Deputy Clerk – Mrs. C. Caddock
Administrative Assistant – Mrs. H. Thomas

Apologies: Councillors Ellis (Climate Change meeting) and Evans (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 Reeves informed Members that he is no longer a Governor at Birchwood Community High School. He will amend his Register of Interests accordingly.

233/23-24 **PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

Members were asked to consider and approve the payment of accounts schedule – (see pages 151 and 152 below).

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

234/23-24 **OCTOBER 2023 PART I FINANCE, AUDIT & PERSONNEL MEETING MINUTES**

Councillor Scott **proposed**, Councillor Ball **seconded**, and it was **unanimously resolved** that: the Minutes of the Part I Finance, Audit & Personnel Meeting, held on 24th October 2023, be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

PROGRESS REPORT

235/23-24 **LOCKING STUMPS – PLAY AREA REFURBISHMENT**

The RFO stated that we have not yet received a draft of a press release from WBC regarding the play area refurbishment that BTC contributed £20,000 towards.

236/23-24 **SPEED INDICATOR DEVICE (SID)**

The RFO stated that we are still waiting for the Police to arrange for delivery of the Town Council's original mobile speed indicator device back to BTC.

237/23-24 **MEMORIALS**

To note that the Chair, Councillor Dempsey, laid a wreath during the Birchwood Annual Community Service of Remembrance held at the Birchwood Shopping Centre Memorial. The Deputy Chair, Councillor Sheridan laid a wreath on behalf of the Birchwood community, at the memorial on Birchwood Forest Park, which marks the service given by the hundreds of people who worked in the local Royal Ordnance Factories during WW2, and the Clerk and Senior Maintenance Operative laid a wreath at the Croft Lane South graveyard memorial.

238/23-24 **BENCHES**

The RFO said that Officers are still working on a consultation document to send out to residents regarding the proposed areas for two additional benches to be located.

239/23-24 **LEGIONELLA RISK ASSESSMENT**

The RFO reported that arrangements have been made for a Legionella Risk Assessment to be undertaken at the Town Council's Parkers Farm site on 9th January 2024. We did not receive a third (requested) quote back, so have chosen to contract a company that we already do other business with, which also gave us the lowest quotation of £285.00 plus VAT. This includes not only the site visit and assessment, but also the preparation and delivery of a comprehensive report and the necessary certification.

240/23-24 **REPLACEMENT OF FIVE LIGHTING UNITS**

The RFO reminded Members that five of the fluorescent lighting units within the offices will be replaced with new LED units on 11th December 2023.

241/23-24 **GDPR**

To note that Officers still need to confirm to our Data Controller whether the personal data categories processed by the Town Council have changed. The Clerk and RFO will review the categories as soon as possible.

242/23-24 **GRANT AID APPLICATIONS**

- (a) Birchwood Lions – to note that the grant award of £150 to support the annual Community Service of Remembrance, has been paid to Birchwood Lions and a note of thanks has been received.
- (b) Families United (Warrington) – to note that the grant award of £400 to support various inclusive Christmas activities for a number of Birchwood children/young adults with profound, neurodiverse and sensory disabilities has been paid.

The conditions of the grant were outlined to, and accepted by, Families United. A note of thanks was received.

243/23-24 **BTC POLICIES**

(a) **Draft Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure Policy**

The RFO asked Members to formally consider the draft Birchwood Town Council 'Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure Policy' that had been copied to them in their papers.

The draft document has been based on the ACAS 'Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures'.

Members **unanimously resolved** to adopt the 'Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure Policy'

(b) **Budget and Precept Setting Timetable Policy**

The RFO informed Members that she is in the process of preparing answers to the 2023/2024 interim audit checklist, along with various documents, to be submitted to our Internal Auditor as soon as the list is completed. One of the questions on the checklist asks whether BTC has a (formal) Budget and Precept Setting Timetable. The RFO said that we do not currently have a formal document in place, but that it would be possible to create one for consideration at the December 2023 meeting for adoption, as the Council follows a similar pattern each year – which she outlined in detail to Members.

Following a brief discussion, it was **unanimously resolved** that the Council was happy for a formal Budget and Precept Setting Timetable Policy to be created by the RFO and that they would consider it for approval at the December 2023 Meeting.

Action RFO to create a draft Budget and Precept Setting Timetable Policy and circulate it to Members, for consideration/approval at the December 2023 meeting.

244/23-24 **GENERAL MATTERS FOR REPORTING / NOTING**

- (a) To note that BTC is still awaiting the second grant payment for the EV Chargers to be paid to us. This has been chased again.
- (b) To note that the paediatric defibrillator pads are still on back order as there is a nationwide shortage due to supplier issues.

NEW FINANCE, AUDIT AND PERSONNEL ITEMS

245/23-24 **BANK ACCOUNT RECONCILIATION**

To receive the Town Council's Income and Expenditure Statements and Bank Reconciliation Schedules for the account periods 1st April 2023 – 31st October 2023.

The payroll figure for September 2023 was £12,893.75 (9) staff. The payroll figure for October 2023 was £12,804.96 (9 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.

Councillor Atkin **proposed**, Councillor Brereton **seconded**, and it was **unanimously resolved** that Members are happy with the schedules as presented. These will be signed by the RFO and the Chair, following the meeting.

246/23-24 **EMPLOYER PENSION DISCRETIONS**

The RFO asked Members to consider the draft '*Employer Pension Discretions Policy Statements for Employees*'. This has been updated to reflect a request from the Cheshire Pension Fund to use their template discretion policy format.

Members **unanimously resolved** that they are happy with the 'Employer Pension Discretions Policy Statements for Employees' as presented in the new template format.

Action Clerk's office to send a copy of the updated document to the Cheshire Pension Fund.

247/23-24 **GENERAL ITEMS FOR REPORTING/NOTING**

- (a) To note that information regarding the Local Government Services Pay Agreement has been received. Discussion of this item was moved to Part II Finance.
- (b) To note the receipt of the invoice for the renewal for the Clerk's membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) due 1st January 2024.

Members **unanimously resolved** that the Council is happy to continue to pay this membership fee (£298).

Action Clerk's office to arrange for the payment of this invoice.

- (c) To note that the invoice for the hanging basket 2023 season was sent to the shopping centre (£950) and the payment has been received.
- (d) To note a very slight reduction in our water bills – one by 27 pence per month, and the other by £7.12 per month.
- (e) To note that our fire alarm contractor was called out to attend an intermittent fault, sounding in the office building. It appeared to be an issue occurring within the barn complex. This seems to have been resolved by the engineer (£112.50 +VAT).
- (f) To note that the Maintenance Team required 2 x new petrol blowers and 1 x long-reach hedgecutter to enable them to carry out current work commitments more efficiently.

These were ordered, between meetings, following a thorough search for best prices by the Clerk, and (as per Financial Regulation 3.5) in consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair, Leader and members of the Finance Sub-Committee. The cost for the three items was £1,017.95 plus £203.59 VAT (total £1,221.54).

The Clerk asked YHG if they might consider making a contribution towards the cost of the new equipment; and they have very kindly donated £500.

Members expressed their thanks to the Clerk for contacting YHG to enquire about the possibility of a donation, and to YHG for the generous donation they gave for the new equipment.

This part of the meeting concluded at 7.10 pm

Payment of Accounts:

Resolved: that the following payments be approved as the residual July 2023, August 2023 and part of the September 2023 accounts

Date	Ref	Payee	Description	Net	VAT	Gross
17.07.2023	DD	Avoira	2 x Adobe Acrobat Pro licences for 1 year	£ 349.80	£ 69.96	£ 419.76
17.07.2023	DD	Financial Direct Fees	FD online charges	£ 41.00		£ 41.00
19.07.2023	DD	Allstar	Fuel (equipment)	£ 7.42	£ 1.48	£ 8.90
21.07.2023	DD	E-on Next	Electricity - Locking Stumps MUGA	£ 8.85	£ 0.44	£ 9.29
21.07.2023	*	PREMIClean	Office cleaning services July 2023	£ 446.98	£ 89.40	£ 536.38
25.07.2023	*	Farnworth 2000 t/a PSD	Part 1 payment inv 7253 - tipper SC19 TYF inc. £320 vehicle tax	£ 13,320.00	£ 2,600.00	£ 15,920.00
26.07.2023	*	Farnworth 2000 t/a PSD	Final (Part 2) payment invoice 7253 - SC19 TYF	£ 11,655.00	£ 2,331.00	£ 13,986.00
26.07.2023	*	Reimburse C Caddock	Amazon Seller - plastic wallets A4 x 36	£ 13.24	£ 2.65	£ 15.89
26.07.2023	*	Reimburse C Caddock	OBCO Ltd - 12m Tipp-ex correction tape x 10	£ 17.39		£ 17.39
26.07.2023	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment, mowers)	£ 104.05	£ 20.80	£ 124.85
27.07.2023	DD	British Gas	Gas - Parkers Farm 8 June 2023 to 7 July 2023	£ 29.42	£ 1.47	£ 30.89
28.07.2023	*	Holidays	HR consultancy fees	£ 1,750.00	£ 350.00	£ 2,100.00
28.07.2023	*	S&S Marquees Ltd	(Grant) Hire of marquee/table/chairs 2023 Bwd Carnival	£ 1,775.50	£ 355.10	£ 2,130.60
28.07.2023	DD	Firstcom Europe	Office phone charges	£ 68.14	£ 13.63	£ 81.77
28.07.2023	DD	BNP Paribas	Copier Lease	£ 210.00	£ 42.00	£ 252.00
31.07.2023	DD	LEVL	Geotab Pro Plus (in advance - August monthly subscription)	£ 30.00	£ 6.00	£ 36.00
31.07.2023	DD	James Todd (Go Cardless)	Payroll services (June 2023)	£ 59.40	£ 11.88	£ 71.28
01.08.2023	DD	Waterplus	Water and wastewater services (4083868280)	£ 25.83		£ 25.83
02.08.2023	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment, mowers)	£ 145.40	£ 29.08	£ 174.48
03.08.2023	*	Elite Industrial Supplies	PPE and workwear (inc. for new staff member)	£ 238.96	£ 47.79	£ 286.75
03.08.2023	*	Risley MOT & Truck Ltd	Repairs to tilt bed and supply / replace n/s mirror head	£ 654.59	£ 130.92	£ 785.51
04.08.2023	DD	Legal and General	Ill health insurance	£ 159.87		£ 159.87
04.08.2023	*	Reimburse Mrs F McDonald	Petty Cash Float	£ 100.00		£ 100.00
04.08.2023	*	Warrington Borough Council	Fleet services on HK64 NNM - tyres (jobs 18550 & 18551)	£ 145.20	£ 29.04	£ 174.24
04.08.2023	*	Warrington Borough Council	Fleet services on HK64 NNM - tyres (jobs 18476)	£ 84.58	£ 16.92	£ 101.50
04.08.2023	*	HMRC	Tax £1,274.60 NI £2,164.20 (6 July 2023 to 5 August 2023)	£ 3,438.80		£ 3,438.80
04.08.2023	*	Cheshire Pension Fund	Pension conts. re: July 2023 Eee £965.27 Eer £3,546.24	£ 4,511.51		£ 4,511.51
04.08.2023	*	Reimburse Mrs C Caddock	Amazon - 90 piece first aid kit for SC19 TYF	£ 7.89	£ 1.58	£ 9.47
04.08.2023	*	Reimburse Mrs C Caddock	Amazon - 1 x 500mm heavy duty pallet stretch wrap	£ 10.41	£ 2.08	£ 12.49
04.08.2023	*	Reimburse Mrs C Caddock	Uttamji & Sons Ltd - van mats for SC19 TYF	£ 9.99	£ 2.00	£ 11.99
04.08.2023	*	Reimburse Mrs C Caddock	Gearbybear Ltd - Eco spill control kit 20 ltr for SC19 TYF	£ 20.03	£ 4.00	£ 24.03
04.08.2023	*	Reimburse Mrs C Caddock	Asda - toilet rolls	£ 4.54	£ 0.91	£ 5.45
07.08.2023	*	August 2023 Wages	9 staff	£ 12,924.56		£ 12,924.56
08.08.2023	*	MidMeds	Paediatric Defibrillator pads (on back order nationwide)	£ 114.39	£ 22.88	£ 137.27
08.08.2023	*	Signs Unlimited	Supply and install graphics to tipper SC19 TYF	£ 200.00	£ 40.00	£ 240.00
09.08.2023	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment, mowers)	£ 37.16	£ 7.42	£ 44.58
14.08.2023	DD	Waterplus	Water/wastewater services (4083867607)	£ 92.81		£ 92.81
15.08.2023	DD	ASL (previously t/a CopyriteSystems)	Photocopying charges	£ 83.56	£ 16.71	£ 100.27
15.08.2023	DD	Financial Direct Fees	FD online charges	£ 40.00		£ 40.00
16.08.2023	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment, mowers)	£ 84.85	£ 16.96	£ 101.81
17.08.2023	DD	Avoira	IT support, backups, internet services (4 x inv.) April 2023	£ 232.11	£ 46.42	£ 278.53
22.08.2023	DD	E-on Next	Electricity - Locking Stumps MUGA	£ 9.21	£ 0.46	£ 9.67
23.08.2023	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment, mowers)	£ 72.88	£ 14.58	£ 87.46
24.08.2023	*	JDW Services Ltd	Jetting / unblocking drains	£ 150.00	£ 30.00	£ 180.00
24.08.2023	*	Clr J Dempsey	Part 1 Chair's allowance	£ 400.00		£ 400.00
25.08.2023	*	PREMIClean	Office cleaning services August 2023	£ 412.60	£ 82.52	£ 495.12
30.08.2023	DD	James Todd (Go Cardless)	Payroll services (July 2023 fee)	£ 59.40	£ 11.88	£ 71.28
30.08.2023	DD	Firstcom Europe	Office phone charges	£ 68.14	£ 13.63	£ 81.77
30.08.2023	*	Viking	Brother replacement drum for RFO's printer	£ 59.50	£ 11.90	£ 71.40
31.08.2023	DD	SSE	Electricity - Parkers Farm	£ 391.24	£ 19.56	£ 410.80
31.08.2023	DD	LEVL	Geotab Pro Plus (in advance - September monthly subscription)	£ 30.00	£ 6.00	£ 36.00
01.09.2023	DD	Waterplus	Water and wastewater services (4083868280)	£ 25.83		£ 25.83
01.09.2023	DD	DVLA	HK64 NNM - vehicle tax (12 Months)	£ 320.00		£ 320.00
01.09.2023	DD	DVLA	PO51 WLE - vehicle tax (12 Months)	£ 320.00		£ 320.00
03.09.2023	DD	Legal and General	Ill health insurance	£ 159.87		£ 159.87
06.09.2023	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment, mowers)	£ 66.08	£ 13.21	£ 79.29
07.09.2023	*	Risley MOT & Truck	HK64 NNM - MOT	£ 122.89	£ 13.58	£ 136.47
07.09.2023	*	Risley MOT & Truck	PO51 WLE - MOT & Service	£ 191.51	£ 28.31	£ 219.82
07.09.2023	*	September 2023 Wages	9 staff	£ 12,893.75		£ 12,893.75
07.09.2023	*	Clr J Dempsey	Part 2 Chair's allowance	£ 400.00		£ 400.00
07.09.2023	*	PKF Littlejohn	Limited assurance review of AGAR for year end March 23	£ 840.00	£ 168.00	£ 1,008.00
11.09.2023	DD	Public Works Loan Board	Loan ref: PW487017	£ 9,710.00		£ 9,710.00
12.09.2023	DD	Waterplus	Water/wastewater services (4083867607)	£ 92.81		£ 92.81
13.09.2023	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment, mowers)	£ 64.53	£ 12.90	£ 77.43
15.09.2023	DD	Avoira	IT support, backups, internet services (4 x inv.) Sept 2023	£ 232.11	£ 46.42	£ 278.53
15.09.2023	DD	ASL (previously t/a CopyriteSystems)	Photocopying charges	£ 17.31	£ 3.47	£ 20.78
15.09.2023	DD	Financial Direct Fees	FD online charges	£ 40.40		£ 40.40
15.09.2023	*	Viking	Stationery	£ 66.92	£ 13.38	£ 80.30
15.09.2023	*	JDW Services Ltd	Drainage work to rear of Parkers Farm	£ 2,100.00	£ 420.00	£ 2,520.00
15.09.2023	*	HMRC	Tax £1,376.80 NI £2,163.15 (6 Aug 2023 to 5 Sept 2023)	£ 3,539.95		£ 3,539.95
15.09.2023	*	Cheshire Pension Fund	Pension conts. re: August 2023 Eee £965.03 Eer £3,545.34	£ 4,510.37		£ 4,510.37

Payments of Account since 15th September 2023

Date	Ref	Payee	Description	Net	VAT	Gross
20.09.2023	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment, mowers)	£ 151.73	£ 30.34	£ 182.07
20.09.2023	*	Hollis Electrical & Security Services	Electrical work in the mess room and disabled toilet and repair to one of the car park lighting columns	£ 162.00	£ 32.40	£ 194.40
21.09.2023	DD	E-on Next	Electricity - Locking Stumps MUGA	£ 9.53	£ 0.48	£ 10.01
22.09.2023	*	PREMI Clean	Office cleaning services September 2023	£ 446.98	£ 89.40	£ 536.38
25.09.2023	*	CMUK Visual Safety (t/a Eureka)	First Aid supplies and stock refill	£ 181.55	£ 36.31	£ 217.86
27.09.2023	DD	British Gas	Gas - Parkers Farm 26/07/23 - 07/09/23	£ 5.70	£ 0.29	£ 5.99
28.08.2023	DD	Firstcom Europe	Office phone charges	£ 49.96	£ 9.99	£ 59.95
29.09.2023	*	ESI	6-monthly fire maintenance service & 2 x new 12v batteries	£ 219.60	£ 43.92	£ 263.52
29.09.2023	*	ESI	6-monthly emergency lighting maintenance service	£ 75.95	£ 15.19	£ 91.14
02.10.2023	DD	Waterplus	Water and wastewater services (4083868280)	£ 25.46		£ 25.46
02.10.2023	DD	LEVL	Geotab Pro Plus (in advance - October monthly subscription)	£ 30.00	£ 6.00	£ 36.00
02.10.2023	DD	James Todd (Go Cardless)	Payroll services (August 2023 fee)	£ 66.00	£ 13.20	£ 79.20
04.10.2023	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment, mowers)	£ 78.62	£ 15.73	£ 94.35
04.10.2023	DD	Legal and General	Ill health insurance	£ 159.87		£ 159.87
06.10.2023	*	Cheshire Association of Local Councils	Training 'Meetings and Procedures' HT	£ 25.00		£ 25.00
06.10.2023	*	October 2023 Wages	9 staff	£ 12,804.96		£ 12,804.96
06.10.2023	*	C Caddock	Reimb. 3 x poppy wreaths	£ 150.00		£ 150.00
06.10.2023	*	Matco Direct	Mat maintenance October 2023 - March 2024	£ 251.72	£ 50.34	£ 302.06
06.10.2023	*	Warrington Borough Council	Election charges May 2021 - part 3/3 (final payment)	£ 1,079.83		£ 1,079.83
11.10.2023	DD	British Gas	Gas - Parkers Farm	£ 7.19	£ 0.36	£ 7.55
11.10.2023	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment, mowers)	£ 165.29	£ 33.06	£ 198.35

Payments of accounts for approval at the October 2023 meeting

Date	Ref	Payee	Description	Net	VAT	Gross
all tbc	DD	Legal and General	Ill health insurance	£ 159.87		£ 159.87
	DD	Firstcom Europe	Phone/enhanced internet speed charges	tbc		
	DD	Waterplus	Water and wastewater services (4083868280)	£ 25.46		£ 25.46
	DD	Waterplus	Water/wastewater services (4083867607)	£ 92.81		£ 92.81
	DD	Avoira	IT support, backups, internet services (4 x inv.) October 2023	£ 232.11	£ 46.42	£ 278.53
	DD	James Todd	September payroll fee	£ 66.00	£ 13.20	£ 79.20
	DD	E-on	Electricity - Locking Stumps multi-use games area	£ 9.63	£ 0.48	£ 10.11
	*	Premiclean	Cleaning services October 2023	£ 446.98	£ 89.40	£ 536.38
	DD	LEVL	Geotab Pro Plus (monthly subs.- in advance) November 2023	£ 30.00	£ 6.00	£ 36.00
	DD	Allstar	Fuel (office vans, equipment, mowers)	tbc		
	*	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	£ 40.00		£ 40.00
	*	HMRC	Tax £1,244.40 NI £ 2,174.71(6 Sept 2023 to 5 Oct 2023)	£ 3,419.11		£ 3,419.11
	*	Cheshire Pension Fund	Pension conts. re: September 2023 Eee £967.63 Eer £3,555.23	£ 4,522.86		£ 4,522.86
	DD	BNP Paribas	Photocopier Lease	£ 170.00	£ 34.00	£ 204.00
	DD	Information Commissioner's Office	Data Protection Renewal Fee	£ 35.00		£ 35.00
	*	ASL (previously t/a Copyrite)	Photocopying charges	£ 11.05	£ 2.21	£ 13.26
	DD	British Gas	Gas - Parkers Farm	tbc		
	DD	B&Q Account	Items to repair bin store/fence and tarmac/concrete/gravel/sand and a hacksaw/woodsaw and screw driver bits	£ 103.70	£ 20.74	£ 124.44
	*	Viking	Stationery	£ 61.02	£ 12.20	£ 73.22
	*	Gallus Online Ltd	Office chair	£ 159.95	£ 31.99	£ 191.94
	*	ASL	Photocopying charges	£ 28.37	£ 5.68	£ 34.05
	*	HMRC	Tax £1,396.40 NI £ 2,163.15(6 Oct 2023 to 5 Nov 2023)	£ 3,559.55		£ 3,599.55
	*	Cheshire Pension Fund	Pension conts. re: October 2023 Eee £965.03 Eer £3,545.34	£ 4,510.37		£ 4,510.37
	DD	B&Q Account	Toilet seat, rubble sacks, sharp sand and sealant	£ 43.54	£ 8.71	£ 52.25