

BERE FERRERS PARISH COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held in the Council Chambers on Tuesday 21st November 2023 at 7.30 pm.

Present:

Cllr. R. Leithall	Chair of the Committee
Cllr. P. Crozier	Chair of the Council
Cllr. P. Dennis	Cllr. B. Lamb
Cllr. D. Pengelly	

In Attendance: Cllrs. Archer and Patterson.

377. Apologies

Cllrs. Grose and Maycock sent their apologies. The Committee accepted their apologies.

378. Declaration of Interest

There were no declaration of interests made.

379. Notification of items for information at the discretion of the Chair. No action can be taken on these items at this meeting

Cllr. Leithall had sent all members of the Council, a breakdown of the electrical usage at the Pavilion for this year. To be investigated, why the electrical usage is so high in the summer months, especially in June and July.

Cllr. Dennis stated there has been discussions on Facebook regarding the poor lighting at night on Fore Street, Bere Alston. Could the Council apply to Devon County Council for an additional street light be installed? The Clerk to look into this.

Cllr Lamb also brought up the poor lighting at night between the Doctors Surgery's carpark and the Parish Hall carpark. It was agreed to put this on the next F & G.P agenda for further discussions.

380. Matters arising from the meeting held on the 24th October 2023

The minutes were adopted and approved at a Council meeting held on Tuesday 31st October 2023.

Matters Arising

Minute 305

Cllr. Crozier is looking into how to solve the issues in the Bere Ferrers recreational field car park.

Minute 252 (168 (103 (28 (620 (548)))

The original deeds to the Parish Hall were posted back by the Land Registry but have not been received by the Clerk. Cllr. Leithall asked the Clerk to check with the Land Registry what method it was posted by.

Minute 306 (252 (168 ((111)))

Transferring the Southern Links training funds to Buckland Monachorum Parish Council is still in process.

Minute 313

An email sent by the Southern Links Training Committee regarding training opportunities for Councillors have been forwarded to all members.

381. To accept the November 2023 accounts for payment

Two payments were not on the list of accounts for payment sent out to all Councillors prior to the meeting. The Clerk therefore asked for approval of accounts for payment, plus the below additional payments:

Bere Alston Post Office £6 debit card payment for purchase of stamps.

Adam Smith Electrical £58.80 labour for work on Bere Alston Defib heater/light not working and Bere Ferrers gent public toilets, hand dryer not working.

H & A Sleep £37.15 fuel for grass cutting machine.

Cllr. Lamb proposed payment of the accounts, seconded by Cllr. Dennis.

382.To accept the F & G.P Detailed Receipt and Payment Report ending 31st October 2023

Cllr. Leithall proposed acceptance of the report, seconded by Cllr. Crozier.

383. To accept the reconciled bank statement ending 31st October 2023

Cllr. Leithall proposed acceptance of the reconciled bank statement, seconded by Cllr. Crozier.

384. Alternative website providers

Due to current website accessibility requirements for local governments, including Parish Councils, the website provider of the Council's website needs updating, as it does not fit the requirements and it is therefore a recommendation of the Clerk that the provider be changed. The Government Digital Services (GDS) are currently in the progress of auditing websites. It is currently focusing on larger Council, but will be auditing Parish Councils in due course. It is also highly recommended that Councillors do not use their personal email addresses for Council work, as it is deemed not secure enough, for example if there is a freedom of information or data request, Councillors would have to surrender their private emails.

Two alternative website providers researched by the Clerk, would give the Council's website the accessibility requirements, with either a .gov.uk email address and domain name, or a .org.uk email addresses, both of which are deemed to have an appropriate level of control and security. After discussions, Cllr. Leithall proposed budgeting for the more costly website provider and deferring the decision on which provider to switch to and when, to a later date. Seconded by Cllr. Dennis.

385. 2024/25 Budget

Discussions took place on the proposed budget for 2024/25. After minor amendments, Cllr. Leithall proposed approval of the budget, seconded by Cllr. Pengelly.

386. Approve staff pay increase

Cllr. Leithall proposed going into Part 2, seconded by Cllr. Dennis.

Cllr. Leithall proposed coming out of Part 2, seconded by Cllr. Dennis.

Cllr. Crozier proposed the Council accept the NALC proposed pay increase for 2023/24 for the Clerk and the Workman, seconded by Cllr. Dennis.

Cllr. Crozier proposed the Toilet Cleaner wage increase as per contract from April 2024. Seconded by Cllr. Dennis.

The Clerk to formally write to staff members informing them of their pay rises.

387. Approve Clerk's November overtime

The Clerk requested the Council approve four hours overtime for November 2023. Cllr. Leithall proposed the overtime, seconded by Cllr. Dennis.

388. De-registration of Playground or Pleasure Ground Charity

The Council currently have a Playground or Pleasure Ground charity registered with the Charity Commission and Cllrs. Lamb and Leithall, the Trustees have discussed de-registering the charity. After discussions, Cllr. Lamb proposed the charity be de-registered, seconded by Cllr. Crozier. The Clerk to write a letter to the Charity Commission for the trustees to sign.

389. Report on number of visitors to the Council Office

The Clerk reported there had been four visitors to the office over a 2-month period. It was discussed and agreed that the Clerk advertise on social media/Council's website, a weekly Wednesday Drop-in clinic, between 10 am to 12 pm, for Parishioners to visit the Clerk.

390. Review and approve the Privacy Notice for Staff, Councillors and Role Holders Policy

Amendments were proposed for the policy. Cllr. Lamb proposed, after the amendments were made, the Council adopt the policy, seconded by Cllr. Crozier.

391. Correspondence

1. The Council have received three donation requests from Bere Alston in Bloom, Youth2Youth and Bere Peninsula Food Bank.

It was agreed to add these requests to the 28th November 2023 Council meeting's agenda.

2. The Victorian Evening will take on Saturday 2nd December 2023 and the Carnival Committee have asked if the Parish Hall carpark can be closed, but how to manage this.

It was agreed to add this to the 28th November 2023 Council meeting's agenda for discussion.

392. Agenda items for the next meeting

1. Annual inspections of the Bus Shelters.

393. Questions from the public, at the discretion of the Chair

There was no members of the public present at the meeting.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked members for attending the meeting and declared the meeting closed at 9.08 pm.

Signed by the Chair

Dated 28th November 2023