

BUERTON PARISH COUNCIL

18th May 2023

Commenced: 7.15 pm

Terminated: 8.15 pm

Present: Councillors A Baddley, N Bonell, K Mort and I Shaw

Apologies for Absence: Councillors G Farrealey and D Mansell

Also in attendance were 6 members of the public.

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

The Clerk welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new Municipal Year, and highlighted that the first item on the agenda was to appoint the Chair of Buerton Parish Council Business for 2023/2024.

RESOLVED That Councillor Baddley be appointed Chair of Buerton Parish Council for the 2023-2024 Municipal Year.

Councillor Baddley then took the position of Chair.

2. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIR

RESOLVED That Councillor Farrealey be appointed Deputy Chair of Buerton Parish Council for the 2023- 2024 Municipal Year.

3. ELECTION OF COUNCILLORS

The Chair welcomed and reported on the appointment of Councillors Bonell, Mort, Shaw, Farrealey and Mansell to Buerton Parish Council.

The Clerk reported that she was collating the necessary paperwork from the Councillors which she would then submit to the Cheshire East Council Monitoring Officer as soon as possible.

RESOLVED

That the report be received.

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Farrealey and Mansell

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted from Members of the Parish Council.

6. MINUTES

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 6th April 2023 were approved and signed by the Chair of the Parish Council as a correct record.

7. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no matters raised by Members of the Public.

8. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2022/23

(i) Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement

The Clerk referred to the completed Annual Governance Statement (page 5 of 6) and asked that this be approved by the Parish Council so that it could be signed by the Chair and herself.

RESOLVED That the Annual Governance Statement (page 5 of 6) be approved by the Parish Council and signed by the Chair and Clerk

(ii) Section 2 – Accounting Statements

The Clerk circulated the completed Accounting Statements (page 6 of 6) and asked the Parish Council to approve them so that they could be signed by to be approved by the Parish Council and signed by the Chair and herself.

RESOLVED That the Accounting Statements (page 6 of 6) be approved by the Parish Council and signed by the Chair and Clerk.

9. INTERNAL AUDITOR REPORT

The Clerk circulated the Internal Auditor Report for 2022-2023. The Clerk also requested that the Parish Council approves Davenport Accountants as its Internal Auditor for the 2023-2024 Financial Year.

RESOLVED

(1) That the Internal Auditor Report for 2022-2023 and its recommendations be received.

(2) That the Parish Council approves Davenport Accountants as its permanent Internal Auditor for the 2023-2024 Financial Year, and ongoing future years.

10. FINANCES AND BUDGET 2023-2024

RESOLVED

(1) That the Parish Council approves Shires Accountants as its payroll administrators for the 2023-2024 Financial Year;

(2) That the Budget Expenditure at 30th April 2023, as detailed below be received.

Budget Head	Total	BUDGET ALLOCATED	DIFFERENCE
Salary	£236.80	£2,850.00	8.31%
Administration including Payroll	£0.00	£600.00	0.00%
Training	£0.00	£100.00	0.00%
Expenses	£19.00	£100.00	19.00%
Internal Audit	£120.00	£100.00	120.00%
Insurance	£0.00	£530.00	0.00%
Room Hire	£0.00	£180.00	0.00%
Audlem OnLine	£0.00	£115.00	0.00%

Field Caretaker	£180.00	£1,100.00	16.36%
Field Maintenance	£0.00	£3,760.00	0.00%
Annual Playground Inspection	£0.00	£175.00	0.00%
Asset Inspection	£0.00	£50.00	0.00%
Subscriptions	£161.32	£173.00	93.25%
Donations	£0.00	£375.00	0.00%
Coronation Crown	£95.00	£100.00	95.00%
Flowers	£0.00	£200.00	0.00%
Proposed Projects	£180.00	£2,500.00	7.20%
	£992.12	£13,008.00	

(3) That the Bank Reconciliation at 30th April 2023, as detailed below be noted:-

Bank Reconciliation 30 APRIL 2023		
BUERTON PARISH COUNCIL		
Financial year ending 31 March 2024		
Prepared by: Muna Clough, Parish Clerk & RFO		
	£	£
Balance per bank statements as at 30 April 2023		
Current Account		£14,124.45
Less: any unrepresented cheques		£0.00
Add: any unbanked cash	£0.00	
Net bank balances as at 30 April 2023		£14,124.45
The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book (receipts and payments account) for the year, as follows		
CASH BOOK		
Main @ 01.04.2023		£12,332.47
Opening Balance		
Add: Receipts in the year	£2,784.10	
Less: Payments in the year	£992.12	
Closing balance per cash book [receipts and payments book] must equal net bank balances above		£14,124.45

11. PARISH COUNCIL POLICIES

RESOLVED

That the following policies/documents be approved:-

- (i) Councillor Code of Conduct
- (ii) Small Grant Policy and Application Form

(iii) Hire/Use of Buerton Playing Field Terms and Conditions and associated Booking Form

12. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Parish Council discussed the following planning updates from Councillor Baddley:-

• New Planning Applications

No new planning applications had been submitted within the Parish.

• Ongoing Planning Applications

Further to Minute 10(iii) of the previous meeting, discussions ensued regarding concerns over the retention of a historical orchard within the grounds of Malt Kiln Farm. The Chair reported that she had spoken to Cheshire East Planning Officer, Gemma Haughton over these concerns, particularly as planning conditions detailed in previous applications had not been met. Ms Haughton had agreed to refer this matter to the Council's Ecologists for further advice. The Chair confirmed that she would pursue this and establish the name and contact details of the Ecologist involved.

RESOLVED

The Chair to report back to a meeting of the Parish Council when any updates are available.

13. RISK ASSESSMENT REPORT OF CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND

Members considered the Risk Assessment Report for Buerton Parish Council's Children's Playground and discussed the salient points including:-

- (i) The gate by bus shelter was not a self closing gate as required;
- (ii) New signs had been secured on the fence;
- (iii) Weather dependent, there were leaves and sludge in the tunnel;
- (iv) There were some loose bolts on the activity trail;
- (v) Concerns regarding the football posts included protruding bolts on the football posts; rusting frames; damaged and loose football nets;
- (vi) There was algae and moss on the ropes and woodwork;
- (vii) Loose wooden stepping post;
- (viii) Playground signage had now been replaced and updated;
- (ix) Picnic benches had been installed;
- (x) The Chair had purchased locks for the bollards.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the gate by the bus shelter be secured with a chain and locked;**
- 2. That the Work/Job sheet for the Parish Council Caretaker be reviewed and updated if necessary;**
- 3. That Councillor Mort inspect and repair any loose bolts on the activity trail whilst the Work/Job Sheet for the Parish Council Caretaker is being reviewed;**
- 4. That Councillors inspect the football posts and discuss their findings and proposals at a future meeting;**
- 5. That the loose wooden stepping post be removed;**
- 6. That the monthly Playground Inspection Sheet be reviewed;**
- 7. That Councillor Shaw to make enquiries on how to clean algae and moss from ropes and woodwork and report back to a future meeting.**

14. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair reported that she wished to discuss fund raising ideas, particularly to support work that was required to preserve the oak tree. She reminded the Members that funding was very tight, yet work was also required on the playground. The following suggestions were raised:-

- A 2024 Fete
- Table top sales
- Crowd funding
- Scarecrow Trails

RESOLVED

That the Chair to consider arranging a separate meeting to consider fund raising ideas and report back to the next meeting.

15. FEEDBACK FROM ADDITIONAL PARISH MEETINGS

Councillor Shaw reported that she had attended a Burial Board Meeting, and she was concerned to report that discussions had been held on cutting the costs involved in ground work, by reducing the frequency of maintenance works. The Councillors referred to the possibility of misguided financial savings in doing so, as the work required would simply increase.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

16. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

RESOLVED

That the following dates for future meetings of the Parish Council for 2023-2024 be confirmed:-

Thursday, 3rd August 2023
Thursday, 5th October 2023
Thursday, 7th December 2023
Thursday, 1st February 2024
Thursday, 4th April 2024

17. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

There were no items raised for consideration at the next meeting, at this time.

18. URGENT ITEM

The Chair reported that the following item of business should be considered as a matter of urgency as it affected an important feature of the Parish.

19. OAK TREE

Councillor Baddley reported that a survey on the condition of the oak tree had been completed by Bucklands in November 2022. The survey report referred to initial strapping and then removing some of the weight. As an application to undertake work to the tree had to be submitted to Cheshire East Council, the Chair had contacted the appropriate

Department at the Council and had been extremely disappointed to learn that despite Bucklands agreeing to submit the necessary application, it had not done so. The Chair was now pursuing this.

RESOLVED

That the Chair report back to the next meeting with an update.