

CLERK'S REPORT – 24th May 2023

1. Election of Officers – Chairman and Vice Chairman

Chair and Vice Chair are elected at every Annual Parish Council Meeting, Paul Beazley-Long chair's the meeting to this point, and then whoever is nominated and elected as Chair from here on.

2. Apologies for Absence – Jonathan Woodings

7. Annual Return

- **Accounts for year ending 31st March 2024** – A Cllr. to confirm these Accounts as accurate to the Chair for signing. The Internal Auditor has also already reviewed them.
- **Auditors Report and Approval of Invoice** – To receive and approve the Internal Auditors report. Please make sure you have read this before the meeting as it informs further actions below. To approve the Internal Auditors Invoice also.
- **Review and Adoption of Standing Orders (and Financial Regulations), Risk assessment, Asset Register** – All but the Financial Regulations do not appear to require change. NALC has now issued new Model Financial Regulations and the Internal Auditor has advised changes to this document. You need to agree how you would like to manage and control payments, and then the Financial Regulations can be written accordingly.
- **Parish Council Insurance** – The renewal quote from Zurich was £300.00, unchanged from last year. It represents far and away the best value and so I have renewed accordingly.
- **Annual Return – Completion and Approval of The Annual Governance Statement 2023/24**
The meeting simply confirms these 8 statements, 9 (Trusts) being Not Applicable. Your Internal Auditor and Clerk have confirmed them for you and you do so at the meeting. There is a note from the Internal Auditor stating that you can answer YES to Assertion 4.
- **Annual Return – Approval of the Accounting Statements 2023/24.** As a Cllr. has confirmed these figures from the Accounts, then Chair and Clerk sign the document.

8. General Power of Competence – Council must confirm that it meets the requirements (two-thirds of Councillors Elected, and a Qualified Clerk) and adopt the General Power of Competence at every APCM. Without GPC you only have discretion to spend the Section 137 limit of 473 x £10.81 = £5113.13 (2024-25) on Powers other than those prescribed by the Local Government Act. For example obtaining Professional or Legal Advice on Planning Matters.

9. Financial Matters

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funds – Please review the allocated expenditure. In the absence of any further receipts of CIL there is now only £2,841.94 remaining in this reserve.

10. Parish Council Matters

Staffing – The Clerk is now requesting Council to address the need for additional Officer resource. It is suggested that an additional Officer is sought either qualified or as trainee, on 30 hours per month. Once recruited the existing Clerk will reduce his hours from 45 to 30 per month. If the new officer is unqualified they will be expected to undertake the CiLCA qualification, which the Council will fund. The Objective in either circumstance of qualified or trainee is that the new Officer will have the necessary knowledge, experience and qualifications to take the Council through the next Elections in 2027.

11. General Parish Matters

Individual Councillor responsibilities – If now agreed to confirm these.

Midford Telephone Box – The Refurbishment/Re-Location and Re-Purposing of this Parish Council Asset – The Clerk has put an allocation of £6,000 into the future commitments of the CIL report. Midford Cllrs. / Residents will report to the meeting progress with this project.

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Footpaths and Open Spaces

Churchyard – Repairs to the Churchyard Walls have quotations for £4,800 and £2,850, both of which exceed the Churchyard Reserve of £1477. Enquiries have established that neither the Diocese, nor B&NES Cemeteries are willing/able to fund this.

It is suggested therefore that the Parish Council pay for this from a combination of the Churchyard Reserve and either the general reserve (Precept) or the CIL reserve.

The Clerk makes the proposal to Council that they meet the difference between cost and current available Churchyard Agency surplus, from precept, then any Agency fund surplus in future years is returned to the precept and not held in a ring-fenced reserve. Effectively doing away with the concept of a Churchyard reserve, as it would take at least 10 years to 'repay' the above difference. The same argument applying if the CIL Reserve is used instead of the General Reserve.

17. Dates for Future Meetings – To agree dates for next meetings:-

Suggested:-

Tuesday 23rd July 2024 – 7:00 p.m. - Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday 24th September 2024 – 7:00 p.m. - Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday 26th November 2024 – 7:00 p.m. - Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday 21st January 2025 – 7:00 p.m. - Parish Council Meeting – Budget & Precept

Tuesday 25th March 2025 – 7:00 p.m. - Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday 22nd April 2025 – 7:30 p.m. – Annual Parish Meeting

Tuesday 20th May 2025 – 7:00 p.m. – Annual Parish Council Meeting