### BRADLEY STOKE TOWN COUNCIL

**Full Council**

Minutes of the Full Council meeting of Bradley Stoke Town Council held at the Jubilee Centre, Savages Wood Road, Bradley Stoke on 20th March 2024 at 7.00pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors: John Bradbury

Frederic Contenot

Terri Cullen

Natalie Field

Jenny James

Dayley Lawrence (Chair)

James Nelson

Ben Randles

Kulwinder Singh Sappal

Jon Williams

Officers: Sharon Petela - Town Clerk

 Rachel Pullen – RFO/Finance Manager

Others: Councillor Franklin Owusu-Antwi (SGC Bradley Stoke North ward councillor

**1 Submissions from the Public and Councillors**

* 1. Two local residents raised concerns regarding the issues of speeding and dangerous driving in Hawkins Crescent. There have been three accidents in the past six months (at least one of which resulted in an arrest and prosecution for drink driving). Councillors commented that they had experienced dangerous driving from other vehicles when using the road. Councillors asked what the residents expectations were regarding a solution to the problem and highlighted that South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) have very long lists of traffic investigations and schemes of work to be undertaken within their highways/traffic management departments. The residents acknowledged this and commented that they did not have any specific solutions but would like to see the speed of traffic reduced for the road. Various temporary solutions were then discussed. The residents also offered to compile a petition to be presented to South Gloucestershire Council. The Chair thanked the residents for speaking and commented that there would be further discussion on this item later on the agenda.

**2 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors Dave Addison, Aleena Aditya, Tom Aditya, Roger Avenin and Brian Mead and Philip Francis (Deputy Town Clerk/Activity Centres Manager).

**3 Applications for Dispensations by Councillors**

 None

**4 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Frederic Contenot asked for Fellow of Royal Aeronautical Society to be added to his Register of Interests rather than Member of Royal Aeronautical Society.

**5 Announcements by the Chair**

The Chair congratulated Councillors Natalie Field and Jenny James and Town Council Officers Phil Francis and Sharon Petela for the organisation of the recent International Women’s Day Red Dress Project event. He also thanked Southern Brooks, Patchway Town Council and the local groups and organisations who were involved in the event.

The Chair congratulated Councillor Jenny James for the recent SGC Chairs Community Champion award for her hard work linked to Splatts Abbey Wood.

**6 Minutes of Previous Meetings**

Minutes of meeting held on 14th February 2024 were proposed for acceptance by Councillor Kulwinder Singh Sappal, seconded by Councillor James Nelson. A vote was taken, 9 in favour, 1 abstention, proposal carried.

The minutes were then signed by the Chair as a correct record.

*As there were members of the public present at the meeting, Councillor Dayley Lawrence proposed that agenda item 7.4.2 be discussed next on the agenda, seconded by Councillor John Bradbury, carried unanimously.*

**7.4.2 Speeding/use as a cut-through on Hawkins Crescent/Three Brooks Lane**

Discussion took place on the residents present earlier suggestion to organise a petition which the Town Council could then present to SGC. Concerns were raised by councillors regarding knocking on doors could put those undertaking it in challenging situations – the local residents acknowledged this concern. Councillors also commented that any petition should be carefully worded to ensure that it is completely impartial – this was acknowledged by the residents as well.

Councillors suggested that the residents could work with councillors in a neutral capacity with regard to the petition and then the completed petition is presented to the Annual Town Council meeting on 8th May 2024. The Town Council (working with the relevant SGC ward councillors) can then pass this on to SGC.

**7 Matters arising from the Minutes of 14th February 2024**

 **7.1 Update on installation of Leisure Equipment on the Jubilee Green**

Phil Francis, Activity Centres Manager/Deputy Town Clerk has provided the following update: Planning application P24/00204/F has been submitted and is currently at the Recommendation and/or Committee stage. Once we have an answer we can then continue with the project but are unable to do anything until planning application is determined.

**7.2 Update on Provision of basketball hoops at the Jubilee Centre**

Phil Francis, Activity Centres Manager/Deputy Town Clerk has provided the following update: This project is ongoing but once we have completed the gym equipment we will then review the situation with budgets and location and look to form a working a group. Councillors asked for this to be removed from the agenda for now until gym equipment is installed – it was noted that this project is not shelved, just on hold until gym equipment installed.

**7.3 Update on storage building at Brook Way Activity Centre**

 Ongoing project

**7.4 Ongoing projects**

**7.4.1 Refurbishment/Redevelopment of Baileys Court Activity Centre**

Phil Francis, Activity Centres Manager/Deputy Town Clerk has provided the following update: I have now heard from the Cricket Club and will be having a meeting with their chairman and a member of the English Cricket Board to discuss what potential grant funding could be made available.

**7.4.2 Speeding/use as a cut-through on Hawkins Crescent/Three Brooks Lane**

 Covered earlier on the agenda

**7.4.3 Creation of multi-media room which can be hired out and used for council/committee meetings**

Phil Francis, Activity Centres Manager/Deputy Town Clerk has provided the following update: I have been speaking with a number of suppliers and the potential of doing multiple rooms as The woodlands suite could benefit from a similar setup that we are considering. Current estimates set the works around £6,000 to £12,000 per room and furniture around £1,500 to £3,000 depending on preference. I have rendered 3d designs of 3 potential rooms to work on that include the small meeting room in the office, the Cedar room in the Jubilee and the Woodlands Suite in the Jubilee which are on the table in front of you. The council at this time has not set a budget for this project and will need to do so.

Things I have specified so far for the rooms is as follows: Hearing Loop, TV 1, 75” Wall mounted TV, TV 2, 50” Wall TV, Camera, Speaker, Microphone.

Following discussion, Councillor John Bradbury proposed setting up a small working group of councillors (John Bradbury, Natalie Field, James Nelson, Ben Randles, Kulwinder Singh Sappal) to look into the requirements in more detail, seconded by Councillor Kulwinder Singh Sappal, carried unanimously.

**7.4.4 Provision of small kitchen area adjacent to compound at Jubilee Centre**

Phil Francis, Activity Centres Manager/Deputy Town Clerk has provided the following update: The container is now on site following chairs approval for the spend of £1,843 EXL VAT and we will shortly be emptying what’s left in the outside storeroom ready for contractors to visit and quote for works.

**7.5 Provision of extra Christmas lights on roundabouts in Bradley Stoke and Christmas tree at Jubilee centre**

Following on from the decision at the Full Council meeting on 17th January 2024 (see extract below), officers have been in contact with SGC regarding costings for 2024:

*Following discussion, Councillor Jon Williams proposed that prices are obtained to install Christmas lights on three further roundabouts in the town (Webbs Wood/Manor Farm and Baileys Court) plus the installation of a real Christmas tree at the Jubilee Centre, seconded by Councillor Dayley Lawrence, carried unanimously.*

**Purchase and Installation of Christmas Motifs on lampposts**

SGC have supplied the following quote for 2024/25 for a total of 24 lights in Bradley Stoke with conversion of 12 extra lamp posts. It should be noted that the cost per unit is not dependent on the number of installations:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Item**  | **Qty** | **Cost per unit** | **Total (Excl VAT)** |
| Supply and install Commando Sockets and timeclocks | 12 | £220.00 | £2,640.00 |
| Installation and Removal of Motifs (Including power consumption) | 24 | £165.00 | £3,960.00 |
| Storage of motifs  | 24 | £18.00 | £432.00 |
|  |  | **Total** | **£7,032.00** |

For comparison, the costs for the 2023/24 Christmas Lights in Bradley Stoke are detailed below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Item**  | **Qty** | **Cost per unit** | **Total (Excl VAT)** |
| Supply and install Commando Sockets and timeclocks | 12 | £200.00 | £2,400.00 |
| Installation and Removal of Motifs (Including power consumption) | 12 | £165.00 | £1,980.00 |
| Storage of motifs  | 12 | £18.00 | £216.00 |
|  |  | **Total** | **£4,596.00** |

The motifs for 2023 were purchased from The Festive Lighting Company – with purchase and delivery of 12 festive lights costing £4,157.60 + VAT.

We have been in touch with Festive Lighting and they have supplied the 2024 lighting brochure. It is suggested, for ease, that councillors could consider purchasing the same 12 lights as in 2023 for the new roundabouts as the ones installed for 2023 were well received.

**Installation of the Christmas tree at the Jubilee Centre.**

We are thinking of installing the tree either in the flower bed adjacent to the main conservatory or nearer to the main railings. The cheapest option is in the flower bed, however, advice from Landacre tree and plant nursery is that it is not advisable to plant a Norway Spruce so close to the building due to their root spread.

Officers have obtained prices for the following:

Landcare Tree and Plant Nursery

Purchase of 4m Norway Spruce (rooted tree) - £170.00 (inc. VAT)

Prestige Grounds

Have offered to plant the tree free of charge

A1 Property Maintenance

Option 1 - To take the supply from Jubilee office and install a weatherproof double socket on the adjoining wall to the office, with an isolator inside so it can be isolated when not in use. We would need to include some housing around the double socket so as not to compromise the IP (weatherproof) rating, as the plugs for the lights are likely to be the larger box-style. - Cost £310+VAT

Option 2 - As above, but we could also duct out to the tree location, where we would install a pit, and take a 12v supply to the tree to make it extra safe. - Cost £510+VAT

Cost of lights

Basic Internet research suggests that a 12 foot tree should have either 600 mini lights or 200 C7 lights. Indicative cost for 200 C7 lights is approximately £250+

**Budgets**

All the budget allocated for 2023/24 has been spent. Going forward there is £2,650 (N/C9023) for the existing lights installation and storage for 2024 onwards.

Therefore, to enable the purchase, installation and storage of the extra lights and Christmas tree etc. councillors will need to agree budgets. This will obviously impact the Forward Plan as the ongoing storage and installation/removal fees will increase from £2,650 to £4,392 per annum based upon current quotes which will be in addition to the one-off purchases and timeclock installation costs.

The current street furniture and Christmas Lights reserve (N/C3019) holds £14,700 to cover the cost of new bins and public benches etc. As there is no current budget for the additional Christmas items, perhaps the best option is to utilise this budget for items purchase in 2023/24, to be reimbursed from any additional year end surplus. The 2024/25 budget could then also be increased from this surplus once audit figures have been confirmed in May/June 2024.

Following discussion, Councillor Jon Williams proposed the option 2 location quote of £510+ VAT from A1 Property Maintenance (adjacent to the railings) for the installation of the Christmas tree, purchasing the 4m Norway Spruce from Landcare Tree and Plant Nursery and accepting the free offer of tree planting from Prestige Grounds, with funding coming from N/C6046, Jubilee Centre Grounds Maintenance budget, seconded by Councillor Dayley Lawrence. A vote was taken, 8 in favour, 2 against, proposal carried.

Following further discussion, Councillor Ben Randles proposed that the Town Council install one extra set of lights on the Webbs Wood/Bradley Stoke Way roundabout with indicative costings from SGC as detailed below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Item**  | **Qty** | **Cost per unit** | **Total (Excl VAT)** |
| Supply and install Commando Sockets and timeclocks | 4 | £220.00 | £880.00 |
| Installation and Removal of Motifs (Including power consumption) | 16 | £165.00 | £2,640.00 |
| Storage of motifs  | 16 | £18.00 | £288.00 |
|  |  | **Total** | **£3,808.00** |

plus the purchase of four more lamppost motifs from The Festive Lighting Company (final cost to be confirmed in due course) with the current Street Furniture and Christmas Lights Reserve (N/C3019) being utilised to purchase all items within this financial year (2023/24) with the budget to be reimbursed from any additional year end surplus, seconded by Councillor Natalie Field. A vote was taken, 9 in favour, 1 against, proposal carried.

**8 To receive the Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 28th February 2024 and to deal with matters referred to Council not covered elsewhere on the Agenda**

The Minutes of the Finance Committee meetings held on 28th February 2024 were received.

**9 To receive the Minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee held on 28th February 2024 and to deal with matters referred to Council not covered elsewhere on the Agenda**

The Minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 28th February 2024 were received.

**10 To receive the Minutes of the Staffing Committee held on 26th February 2024, and to deal with matters referred to Council not covered elsewhere on the Agenda**

The Minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 26th February 2024 were received.

**11 To receive the Minutes of the Leisure, Youth & Amenities Committee held on 19th February 2024, and to deal with matters referred to Council not covered elsewhere on the Agenda**

The Minutes of the Leisure, Youth & Amenities Committee meeting held on 19th February 2024 were received.

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**12 Updates from South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) Ward Members relevant to Bradley Stoke and Bradley Stoke Town Council Press Spokesperson**

* Councillor John Bradbury – Speeding on Hawkins Crescent + suggested that Town Councillors carry out a few litter picks around the town.
* Councillor Terri Cullen – concerns from residents regarding introduction of parking charges by SGC + increase in green waste collection charges + changes to black bin collections.
* Councillor Franklin Owusu-Antwi – Changes to bus services from April 2024.
* Councillor Ben Randles – similar issues raised by residents along the lines of Councillor Terri Cullen’s comments above
* Press spokesperson – regular column in Bradley Stoke Voice + Annual Reports to be delivered over next couple of weeks.

**13 Financial Matters**

**13.1 To Receive 2023/24 Internal Governance Report**

Rachel Pullen, RFO/Finance Manager presented the following report:

Councillors Ben Randles and John Bradbury carried out the internal governance inspection on 4th March 2024.

A copy of the up-to-date schedule of the Town Council’s 2023/24 Risk Management Policy and the Financial Risk Assessments itemising the internal controls, procedures and review dates, had been provided to the councillors ahead of the inspection together with a copy of the internal audit report.

The inspection was carried out in two main stages with the first stage reviewing the 2023/24 Financial Risk Schedule which highlights the financial internal controls/procedures and risk management with the second stage reviewing the effectiveness of the 2023/24 mid-year internal audit and report.

1. **Financial Risk Schedule Review**

The internal controls and procedures/systems were reviewed and discussed and found to be comprehensive and robust and the following items were raised for further action/consideration.

**Items Raised/Noted for Consideration:**

* **Standing Orders**

It was commented that the suspension of standing orders to make future changes without the normal waiting period, should be seriously considered before implementation especially when used to change standing orders. Although use of this suspension is very rarely used within Bradley Stoke Town Council, the fact that it was used in May 2023 should not set a precedent as due consideration and democratic debate cannot take place without the normal waiting period which is currently 1 month.

**Recommendation**: Due consideration should be applied in the future before implementing any suspension especially in order to change standing orders.

* **Change in the Vat on Sports Hires**

It was noted that following several upheld court cases raised by a few local authorities over the prior few years against HMRC concerning the VAT treatment of sports hires, the HMRC decided last year to concede and accept that sports hires are now exempt from VAT. Following further investigation, the RFO has now received final confirmation of the impact of this decision and will require direction from Council concerning the future treatment of sports charges for hirers who could previously reclaim the Vat element. It will not impact those who cannot reclaim VAT.

**Recommendation**: The matter will be considered by March Council as a separate item.

* **Outsource Payroll**

Councillor Ben Randles advised that South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) is in the process of moving to a new improved payroll system and once up and running, it may be worth considering outsourcing the council’s payroll which is currently calculated in-house. This was looked at a few years ago and the cost and time involved made it prohibitive however another review should be considered following this change.

**Recommendation**: The RFO to contact SGC Payroll Dept in the new financial year after their payroll system has been upgraded to ascertain costs and benefits before returning to Council for a decision at a later date.

* **Fuel Genie**

At the 2023 internal governance review Councillor Anthony Griffiths requested that pictures of the vehicle’s mileage and fuel gauge be taken at the start and end of each week to substantiate the mileage forms and expenditures to be monitored by the Premises Manager. After discussion, it was felt this will no longer be required after the approved tracking system has been installed on the vehicle.

**Recommendation**: Pictures of the vehicle mileage and fuel gauges will cease upon installation of the approved tracking device.

* **Town Clerk’s Remit:**

Councillors discussed the current £750 Town Clerk’s remit, and it was felt this should be increased as it has been at this level for well over 14 years. It was noted that a low remit can be beneficial as sometimes contractors reduce their charge to within this remit to avoid being involved with council having to obtain additional quotes. In addition, a lower remit allows council to retain greater control and an increase to £1,000 was therefore suggested.

**Recommendation**: Increase the Town Clerk’s remit from £750 to £1,000 as from 1st April 2024 and update the Financial Regulations accordingly as detailed below:

***3. BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND***

*3.1 Expenditure on revenue items may be incurred up to the amounts included in the*

 *approved budget as approved by council. This authority is to be determined by:*

* + *the Council or Finance Committee for all items over £5,000;*
	+ *a duly delegated committee of the council for items over ~~£750~~ £1,000; or*
		- *the Clerk for any items below ~~£750~~ £1,000 unless authorised to the contrary in Regulation 3.3*

*3.3 The Clerk may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council, which is necessary to carry*

*out any repair, replacement or other work, which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of ~~£750~~ £1,000 (ex VAT). The Clerk shall report the whole action to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter. If the emergency work required is in excess of ~~£750.00~~ £1,000 (ex VAT) but under £2,500.00 (ex VAT) then this expenditure may be incurred after consultation and agreement with the Chair of Council and the Chair of the relevant committee(s). (Refer to Appendix A).*

***APPENDIX A***

***FINANCIAL REGULATION 3.3***

*Minute from May 2006 Overridden by Minute from March 2024.*

***16 Standing Orders and Financial Regulations***

*There were no amendments or suggestions for change, although it was noted that meetings sometimes clashed with those for South Gloucestershire Council. The dates and times of South Gloucestershire meetings would be ascertained in the first instance. An appendix to the Financial Regulations would record that the Finance and Leisure Committee may authorise expenditure up to £2500 and the Clerk up to ~~£750~~ £1,000.*

**Summary of Financial Risk Review**

After a thorough review, Councillors Ben Randles and Jon Bradbury were happy with the remainder of the internal controls and procedures and no further actions were recommended.

1. **Scope and Effectiveness of the Internal Audit**

The scope of the internal audit had already been approved by Full Council on 15th November 2023 and the in-year internal audit was carried in February 2024 by South Gloucestershire Council Internal Audit Services. Councillors Ben Randles and John Bradbury inspected the resultant internal audit report and found it to be comprehensive, constructive and effective and noted that council’s financial control procedures were rated at a high standard (being the highest level attainable) and one low priority matter arising was identified.

**Auditor Identified Matters Arising**

No items were identified.

**Councillor Recommendation**

No further action was required as the internal audit met council’s requirements. It should be noted that South Gloucestershire Internal Audit Services has been employed on a 3-year contract to include the audits for 2022/23 - 2024/25 inclusive, as approved by Council in March 2022.

**Summary of Effectiveness of Internal Audit Review**

Following the audit review Councillors Ben Randles and John Bradbury completed Parts 1 and 2 of the Internal Audit Review Checklist confirming the internal audit to be broad, effective, constructive, in-depth and met all the criteria required.

Following discussion, Councillor Jon Williams proposed acceptance of all recommendations (en bloc) as detailed above, seconded by Councillor Natalie Field, carried unanimously.

*Councillor John Bradbury left the meeting at this point*

**13.2 To Receive 2023/24 Mid-Year Internal Audit Report**

Rachel Pullen, RFO/Finance Manager presented the following report:

The In-Year Internal Audit by South Gloucestershire Council Internal Audit Services has recently been carried out and the financial control procedures were rated at a high standard (being the highest level attainable) with the following comment:

*Systems and processes are excellent providing good assurance. Significant strengths have been identified and are to be commended, any recommendations made will serve to further strengthen existing arrangements.*

Council has received a completely clear audit with no key risks, actions or advisory points identified. A copy of the Audit Report has been circulated which highlights the key strengths.

Following discussion, Councillor Jon Williams proposed a vote of thanks to Rachel Pullen and the team for their hard work to achieve another clear mid-year audit, seconded by Councillor Ben Randles, carried unanimously.

*Councillor John Bradbury rejoined the meeting at this point*

**13.3 To Review treatment of VAT on Sports Hire Charges**

Rachel Pullen, RFO/Finance Manager presented the following report:

**Background**

HMRC’s guidance prior to January 2023 was that local authority sports and leisure services can either be taxable or exempt from VAT. This has been challenged in the courts, with test cases for England, Scotland and Northern Ireland going on for several years. In Chelmsford City Council [2020] UKFTT432(TC) the First Tier Tribunal determined that such services are provided under a ‘special legal regime’ and can be treated as ‘non-business’, providing that does not give rise to significant distortions of competition. Non–Business activities do not incur VAT in most cases.

HMRC unsuccessfully appealed the first part of that decision, as they did not accept the reasoning that local authority sports services are subject to a ‘special legal regime’. The Upper Tier Tribunal [2022] UKUT149(TCC) dismissed that appeal in March 2022.

On 26 January 2023, HMRC advised Chelmsford City Council that they will **NOT be pursuing the ‘significant distortion of competition’ argument and accept that local authority sports services can be treated as non-business and outside the scope of VAT.**

Following the above decision, the SLCC advised councils to no-longer apply VAT on sports hires and to reclaim back any VAT applied to such hires charged over the prior 4 years, being the legal cap.

Bradley Stoke Town Council has been registered as ‘Opted to Tax’ for a number of years as all of the hired facilities are subsidised by the local community and are not profit making. The Option to Tax allows councils in such a position to reclaim all Vat for the running of the sites but Vat had to be applied to all hires with a very small exception prior to this judgement.

The RFO therefore contacted HMRC in February 2023 to clarify the position including the treatment of two leases for the Cricket and Bowls Clubs and, after chasing for a response, was told verbally in June 2023 that this will not apply to ‘Option to Tax’ facilities. Written confirmation was then requested from HMRC via the online contact portal and again, after further chasing, a definitive response has only very recently been received stating that Vat will not be chargeable on our sports hires and the previous advice given was incorrect. The RFO is now in communication directly with a Tax Specialist at HMRC.

**Action Taken**

Following the latest clarification, the RFO has lodged claims for the prior 4-year period in respect of the VAT charged on sports hires together with another claim for the 5th year as HMRC had taken a year to correctly respond to councils’ queries. The total amount being reclaimed for the 5-year period amounts to £14,677.99 which includes treating the cricket and bowls leases as 50% exempt, pending confirmation from the Tax Specialist.

This reclaim is currently being looked at by the HMRC Tax Specialist and a response regarding the claim and the additional year is awaited together further clarification regarding the treatment of the leases. In the meantime, the Tax Specialist has already confirmed that as our sites effectively run at a loss, council can legally retain the reclaimed Vat as it would not be classed as an ‘Enrichment’.

A further claim for Vat paid for the period January to March 2024 will be lodged in April 2024 after the return has been processed.

**Impact**

Vat will not be applied to any sports hires as from 1st April 2024, however, council needs to consider the position regarding these charges going forward as some years ago council decided to absorb the VAT element within the quoted hire charges due to its ‘Opt to Tax’ status.

The new Vat treatment of sports hires may complicate the future charges quoted as any Vat registered organisation previously able to reclaim Vat would be unable to do so when the charges become Vat exempt. This effectively increases their hire charge.

Those hirers who are not Vat registered will not be financially impacted as they were never able to reclaim the Vat element. That being said, some hirers may feel they should be paying the 2024/25 agreed sports charges net (deducting 20% Vat from the approved charges) despite the fact they were previously unable to reclaim the VAT.

The RFO has contacted a lot of the sports hirers, including the cricket and bowls clubs, to ascertain their Vat position and no hirers have as yet been identified as being VAT registered and therefore able to possibly reclaim VAT dependent upon their full Vat status.

**Recommendation**

As the sites and particularly the sports facilities, are already heavily subsidised by the precept as they are non-profit making, the recommendation is to maintain the total hire charges approved for 2024/25 as this will have no impact upon the current hirers who were unable to reclaim the Vat element. This will improve the sports income for council which can be used to improve services and reduce the burden on the community in subsidising the sports facilities.

To ensure that everyone is treated fairly, the hirers will be advised of the VAT change on their invoices and any existing clubs and/or organisations that already hire council’s sports facilities and are able to reclaim the Vat element, will be charged the current hire charge less 20% for 2024/25. The burden will be upon the hirer to provide a VAT registration and written proof from HMRC that VAT can be reclaimed at the start of the financial year. This reduction can then be reduced by 5% p/a over the following 3 years to soften the switch to a Vat exempt supply.

**Summary**

1. Retain the approved sports hire charges without a reduction for the Vat element for hires as from 1st April 2024. The Vat element will be used to reduce the burden upon the local community and help fund the ground maintenance costs.
2. A preferential hire will be applied for any existing sports hirer that is Vat registered and able to reclaim the VAT on hire charges. The hirer will be responsible for advising Council of this position and will also be required to provide written proof from HMRC at the start of the financial year. This preferential rate will not apply to any new hirers commencing hire on or after 1st April 2024.
3. Any preferential hire charge will be supported for a 4-year period with a reduced annual reduction applied as below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Tax Year** | **Annual % Sports Hire Reduction** |
| 2024/25 | 20% |
| 2025/26 | 15% |
| 2026/27 | 10% |
| 2027/28 | 5% |
| 2028/29 | 0% |

Following discussion, Councillor John Bradbury proposed a vote of thanks to Rachel Pullen for her hard work on this matter and accepted all officer recommendations as detailed above, seconded by Councillor Dayley Lawrence, carried unanimously.

**13.4 To approve Bills for payment**

The following Bills were approved for payment (and include VAT where appropriate) by Councillor Dayley Lawrence, seconded by Councillor Natalie Field, carried unanimously.

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| **BRADLEY STOKE TOWN COUNCIL** |
| **MONTHLY EXPENDITURE - 20th March 2024 - Council** |
|  |
| **SUPPLIER PAYMENTS REQUIRED IN ADVANCE** |
|  | BRADLEY STOKE COMMUNITY SCHOOL (Olympus Academy Trust) |   |
| **Date** | **Ref** | **Details** | **Net Amount** | **Tax Amount** | **Gross Amount** |
| 05/03/2024 | 90006964 | BSCS - IWD - Hall Hire 8/3/24 re Red Dress Event | 433.32 | 86.67 | 519.99 |
| 05/03/2024 | 90006964 | BSCS - IWD - Hall Hire 8/3/24 re Red Dress Event | 216.33 | 0.00 | 216.33 |
|   | **Amount Paid 5/3/24** | 649.65 | 86.67 | **736.32** |
|   |
|  | **ONE OFF SUPPLIERS - BY INTERNET PAYMENT** |   |
| **Date** | **Ref** | **Details** | **Net Amount** | **Tax Amount** | **Gross Amount** |
| 07/03/2024 | I01240308768 | **S Jones Containers** - JC Shipping container for office storage | 1843.00 | 368.60 | 2211.60 |
|   |
| 08/02/2024 | 2572 | **Upshot Systems** - Youth System Licence 9/2/24 - 8/2/25 | 1100.00 | 220.00 | 1320.00 |
| 08/02/2024 | 2572 | **Upshot Systems** - 2 Day Consultancy, Training & Set Up | 1190.00 | 238.00 | 1428.00 |
|   | **Account Totals:** | 2290.00 | 458.00 | 2748.00 |
|   | **Amount Paid 5/3/24** | 4133.00 | 826.60 | **4959.60** |
|   |
| **SUPPLIERS** |
|  | A1 Maintenance Ltd |   |
| **Date** | **Ref** | **Details** | **Net Amount** | **Tax Amount** | **Gross Amount** |
| 01/04/2023 | 1370 | BC - Building Maintenance 1/4/23 - 31/3/24 | 683.37 | 136.67 | 820.04 |
| 01/04/2023 | 1370 | BW - Building Maintenance 1/4/23 - 31/3/24 | 370.87 | 74.17 | 445.04 |
| 01/04/2023 | 1370 | JC - Building Maintenance 1/4/23 - 31/3/24 | 333.29 | 66.66 | 399.95 |
| 01/04/2023 | 1370 | Office - Building Maintenance 1/4/23 - 31/3/24 | 124.99 | 25.00 | 149.99 |
| 01/04/2023 | 1370 | JC CR - Building Maintenance 1/4/23 - 31/3/24 | 320.79 | 64.16 | 384.95 |
| 01/04/2023 | 1370 | Skate Park - Building Maintenance 1/4/23 - 31/3/24 | 79.17 | 15.83 | 95.00 |
| 07/12/2023 | 1466 | BW - Replace Timer Switch to Outside Lights  | 110.00 | 22.00 | 132.00 |
|   | **Account Totals:** | 2022.48 | 404.50 | 2426.97 |
|  | AMBIENCE LANDSCAPES LTD |   |
| **Date** | **Ref** | **Details** | **Net Amount** | **Tax Amount** | **Gross Amount** |
| 29/02/2024 | 20914 | Street Maintenance - Feb 24 | 1272.87 | 254.57 | 1527.44 |
|   | **Account Totals:** | 1272.87 | 254.57 | 1527.44 |
|  | AVON SPORTSGROUND MAINTENANCE CO |   |
| **Date** | **Ref** | **Details** | **Net Amount** | **Tax Amount** | **Gross Amount** |
| 29/02/2024 | SI- 822467 | BC - Bowls Maintenance - Feb 24 | 533.83 | 106.77 | 640.60 |
|   | **Account Totals:** | 533.83 | 106.77 | 640.60 |
|  | MATTERS MAGAZINES |   |
| **Date** | **Ref** | **Details** | **Net Amount** | **Tax Amount** | **Gross Amount** |
| 13/03/2024 | 23/3218 | 2023/24 Annual Report Delivery | 675.00 | 135.00 | 810.00 |
|   | **Account Totals:** | 675.00 | 135.00 | 810.00 |
|  | BS1 FIRE & SECURITY |   |
| **Date** | **Ref** | **Details** | **Net Amount** | **Tax Amount** | **Gross Amount** |
| 21/02/2024 | SI20424 | Skate Park - Replace Kitchen Smoke Detector with Heat Detector | 100.00 | 20.00 | 120.00 |
| 27/02/2024 | SI20454 | BW - Replace door contacts and rear door keypad (W&T) | 279.12 | 55.82 | 334.94 |
|   | **Account Totals:** | 379.12 | 75.82 | 454.94 |
|  | FOUR TOWNS & VALE LINK COMMUNITY TRANSPORT |   |
| **Date** | **Ref** | **Details** | **Net Amount** | **Tax Amount** | **Gross Amount** |
| 29/02/2024 | 203377 | Youth - Vehicle Hire 14/2/24 for Paintball Trip | 41.25 | 0.00 | 41.25 |
|   | **Account Totals:** | 41.25 | 0.00 | 41.25 |
|  | Magic Cleaning Solutions Ltd |   |
| **Date** | **Ref** | **Details** | **Net Amount** | **Tax Amount** | **Gross Amount** |
| 29/02/2024 | I17898 | JC-Toilet Rolls, Refuse Sacks, Hand towels & toilet brushes with holders | 81.75 | 16.35 | 98.10 |
| 29/02/2024 | I17899 | BW - Toilet Rolls, Antibacterial hand soap + toilet brushes with holders | 51.80 | 10.36 | 62.16 |
| 07/03/2024 | I17983 | Office - Blue Roll | 35.44 | 7.09 | 42.53 |
|   | **Account Totals:** | 168.99 | 33.80 | 202.79 |
|  | **ONE OFF SUPPLIERS - BY INTERNET PAYMENT** |   |
| **Date** | **Ref** | **Details** | **Net Amount** | **Tax Amount** | **Gross Amount** |
| 08/03/2024 | BSTC 9638E | Liz Evans - IWD Refreshment Costs | 45.15 | 0.00 | 45.15 |
| 08/03/2024 | BSTC 9638E | Liz Evans - IWD Kitchen Towel | 1.13 | 0.22 | 1.35 |
| 08/03/2024 | BSTC 9638F | Liz Evans - IWD Heart Pictures Supplies | 24.17 | 4.83 | 29.00 |
|   | **Account Totals:** | 70.45 | 5.05 | 75.50 |
|  | RE- ENERGIZE |   |
| **Date** | **Ref** | **Details** | **Net Amount** | **Tax Amount** | **Gross Amount** |
| 29/02/2024 | 3942 | 2024 - Community Festival Management Fee - Feb 24 | 1148.00 | 0.00 | 1148.00 |
|   | **Account Totals:** | 1148.00 | 0.00 | 1148.00 |
|  | RelyOn Guarding & Security Services Ltd |   |
| **Date** | **Ref** | **Details** | **Net Amount** | **Tax Amount** | **Gross Amount** |
| 01/02/2024 | 641028 | Skate Park - Annual Key Holding Service 1/2/24 - 31/1/25 | 150.00 | 30.00 | 180.00 |
| 01/02/2024 | 641029 | BC - Annual Key Holding Charge 1/2/24 - 31/1/25 | 150.00 | 30.00 | 180.00 |
| 01/02/2024 | 641030 | BW - Annual Key Holding Charge 1/2/24 - 31/1/25 | 150.00 | 30.00 | 180.00 |
| 01/02/2024 | 641031 | JC - Annual Key Holding Charge 1/2/24 - 31/1/25 | 150.00 | 30.00 | 180.00 |
|   | **Account Totals:** | 600.00 | 120.00 | 720.00 |
|  | SOLTECH IT LTD |  |  |  |   |
| **Date** | **Ref** | **Details** | **Net Amount** | **Tax Amount** | **Gross Amount** |
| 07/03/2024 | 26568 | Office - Microsoft 365 Cloud Back Up x 12 - 25/3/ - 24/4/24 | 42.00 | 8.40 | 50.40 |
| 07/03/2024 | 26567 | Soltech IT Contract 22/3 - 21/4/24 | 150.00 | 30.00 | 180.00 |
|   | **Account Totals:** | 192.00 | 38.40 | 230.40 |
|  | SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL |   |
| **Date** | **Ref** | **Details** | **Net Amount** | **Tax Amount** | **Gross Amount** |
| 21/02/2024 | 3805496062 | Empty 33 Dog Bins + 10 Additionals - Jan - Mar 2024 | 2008.65 | 401.73 | 2410.38 |
|   | **Account Totals:** | 2008.65 | 401.73 | 2410.38 |
|   | **Supplier Totals:** | **9112.64** | **1575.64** | **10688.27** |

**14 To deal with Miscellaneous Matters**

**14.1 Annual Review of BSTC Five Year Forward Plan**

Draft amendments for the 2024-2029 Five Year Forward Plan have been circulated.

Following discussion, Councillor Jon Williams proposed acceptance of all the amendments identified plus adding page numbers to the document, seconded by Councillor Ben Randles, carried unanimously.

**14.2 Review/Refresh of BSTC Equality & Diversity Policy**

Draft amendments to the BSTC Equality & Diversity Policy have been circulated.

Following discussion, Councillor Jon Williams proposed acceptance of the amendments to the draft policy, seconded by Councillor Dayley Lawrence. A vote was taken, 8 in favour, 2 abstentions, proposal carried.

**14.3 Review of BSTC Committee Structures for 2024/25**

Following discussion, Councillor Dayley Lawrence proposed that the Finance committee structure be reduced to six councillors for 2024/25, seconded by Councillor Jon Williams. A vote was taken, 9 in favour, 1 abstention, proposal carried.

It was noted that an amendment to Standing Order 42.4(a) will be required. This will be added to April Full Council meeting agenda.

*Councillors John Bradbury and Ben Randles declared an interest in agenda item 14.4 and abstained in the vote*

**14.4 Renewal of SGC Street Trading Consent – LI24/1591/STS – Snack in the Mouth**

Documentation circulated.

Following discussion, Councillor Jon Williams proposed no objection to the renewal of the Snack in the Mouth Street Trading Consent, seconded by Councillor Natalie Field. A vote was taken 8 in favour, 2 abstentions, proposal carried.

*It was proposed by Councillor Ben Randles, seconded by Councillor Natalie Field, carried unanimously, that, in line with Standing Orders 69 and 70, in view of the confidential nature (staffing matters) of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw.*

 **14.5 Staffing Matters**

 **14.5.1 Update on zero-hours Leisure Assistant Recruitment**

Three new members of staff have been recruited to join the zero-hours leisure assistant team and it is hoped that they will start during April once all necessary paperwork and checks are completed.

 **14.5.2 Possible Honorarium payment to cover member of staff**

Following discussion, Councillor Jon Williams proposed acceptance of officers recommendation with regard to honorarium payment to cover member of staff’s absence (in line with BSTC Acting Up and Honorarium Policy), seconded by Councillor Dayley Lawrence, carried unanimously.

### 15 To note the dates of forthcoming meetings

 15.1 15 April Leisure, Youth & Amenities

 15.2 17 April Full Council

 15.3 22 April Staffing

 15.4 24 April Finance

 15.5 24 April Planning & Environment

 The Meeting closed at 8.55pm