



To All Councillors,

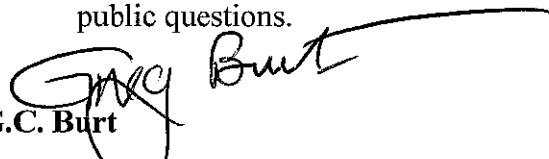
You are summoned to an **ONLINE** Annual Meeting of Billingshurst Parish Council (in adherence to The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No.392) on **Wednesday 5 May 2021 at 7pm**. A link will be sent to you explaining how to join this meeting.

To Members of the Public,

This meeting will be streamed on the internet. Follow link from website or Facebook page. This will enable you to see and hear Councillors.

If you would like to ask a question,

- a. you can either submit it to the Clerk at least 24 hours prior, who will then read it out, or
- b. you can ask it directly, but you must still notify the Clerk at least 24 hours prior, so you can be sent a link that you will enable you to join the meeting for the duration of public questions.


G.C. Burt

Clerk to the Council

28 April 2021

A G E N D A

1. Election of Chairman.
2. Election of Vice Chairman
3. Chairman's Announcements.
4. Apologies for Absence.
5. To Receive Declarations of Interest and consider any requests for a dispensation.
Adjournment for
6. Public Session (Members of the Public may speak for up to 3 minutes at the discretion of the Chairman).
Resume Meeting
7. To consider a revised proposal from Billingshurst Tennis Club for the location of a 5th Court - Appendix A.
8. To receive a brief presentation on the Rural/Market Town Group (David Inman) and consider membership - Appendix B.
9. Council Structure 2021-22
 - a. To Review Committee Terms of Reference – Appendix C. (Suggested amendments in red.)

- b. To Review Committee Structure – Appendix **D**. (Suggested amendments in red.)
 - c. To Appoint *en bloc* Committees, Working Parties and representatives on outside organisations Appendix **E**.
 - d. To Appoint Chairs to Committees. (The Chairman will invite only those members of each Cttee to vote for their Chairs and Vice Chairs.)
- 10. To readopt existing Standing Orders (in Members Handbook) in the interim and ask the Working Practices Committee to consider the new model NALC or HDC Standing Orders.
- 11. To review and readopt Financial Regulations. (In Members Handbook)
- 12. To refer *en bloc* the following to the Finance & General Purposes Committee:
 - a. Annual review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment.
 - b. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks.
 - c. Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies.
 - d. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses.
 - e. Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 13. To refer *en bloc* the following to the Working Practices Committee:
 - a. Review of the Council's complaints procedure;
 - b. Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation
 - c. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media;
 - d. Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures

Adjournment for

- 14. Reports from:
 - a. County Councillor
 - b. District Councillors
 - c. Council Representatives on Outside Bodies.

Resume Meeting

- 15. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 March 2021. (Previously sent)
- 16. Matters Arising – that are not separate agenda items
- 17. 2020-21 Accounts
 - a. To receive the Internal Audit Report, (and refer any matter requiring detailed consideration to F&GP Cttee) - Appendix **F**.
 - b. To approve the Annual Return Governance Statement - Appendix **G**.
 - c. To approve the Annual Return Accounting Statements - Appendix **H**.
- 18. To receive Minutes as approved by the following Committees:
 - a) Planning & Environment 4 February and 4 March 2021
 - b) F&GP 24 Feb and 24 Mar 2021

c) Property

17 Feb 2021

d) Working Practices

4 Nov 2020

(all previously circulated / on website.)

19. Neighbourhood Wardens - to receive Wardens' Reports for March and April – previously circulated / on website.
20. To note the current position on Council projects - Appendix I.
21. To note that physical meetings recommence Monday 10th May 2021. There is no scope for virtual or hybrid meetings to continue. We will endeavour to continue to stream meetings.
22. Any other matters for information only.
23. Date of Next Meeting – 7 July 2021

Members of the public should be aware that being present at a meeting of the Council or one of its Committees or Sub-Committees will be deemed as the person having given consent to being recorded (photograph, film or audio recording) at the meeting, by any person present.

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 5 MAY 2021

REQUEST FOR LANDLORD'S CONSENT FOR 5TH TENNIS COURT AT LSRRG

REPORT BY CLERK

FOR DECISION

At the 3 March 2021 meeting, Council considered a request from Billingshurst Tennis Club for landlord's consent to construct a 5th court at Lower Station Road Recreation Ground.

Due to concerns about the suggested position, the Council **RESOLVED** *that the request be declined but the Tennis Club be encouraged to resubmit revised proposals following consultation with the Scouts & Guides and the Billingshurst Show Committee (being the most affected parties).*

The Tennis Club have now submitted a new proposal (attached) for the court in a revised location. Whilst the Billingshurst Show Committee have no objection, the Scouts & Guides continue to object. Relevant e-mails also attached.

The Council is invited to determine the request as proposed.

Billingshurst Parish Clerk

From: Rob Falkner
Sent: 07 April 2021 21:08
To: Billingshurst Parish Clerk
Cc: Paul Berry; Mark Snelgrove
Subject: May 5th Agenda Item
Attachments: BLTC 5th Court Revised Proposal.pdf

Dear Greg

Please could you include the recreational ground 5th tennis court proposal as part of the 5th May meeting agenda?

Following the 3rd March meeting, the tennis club was tasked with discussing and hopefully agreeing a revised solution to the court positioning with both the Billingshurst show and Scouts and Guides Committee's. Our revised letter of proposal is attached which addressed all the concerns previously raised by both groups.

Following our productive discussion, today we have been informed that the Billingshurst show committee are prepared to accept our proposal and are willing to withdraw their objection. In their acceptance they have listed the agreed terms as per our proposal which we are happy to honour.

The Scouts and Guides Group have now decided to continue to object, this time on the grounds of the loss of green space. We feel that this objection is irrelevant coming from such a group considering that the agreed objective set was clear in trying to work out a solution. In doing, so our revised proposal no longer impacts any Scouts and Guide activity.

We look forward to discussing this matter further at the May meeting.

Kind regards
Rob

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

Billingshurst Parish Clerk

From: Paul Berry
Sent: 07 April 2021 21:46
To: Rob Falkner; Billingshurst Parish Clerk
Cc: Mark Snelgrove
Subject: Re: May 5th Agenda Item

Dear Rob,

Thanks for this. It is Greg's decision but from my perspective although the May agenda is quite busy, I would be very happy for the subject to be included. I appreciate you would like to know what the decision will be ASAP so you know where you stand. You have as you rightly say, done exactly what the council asked of you in March.

I have purposely remained quiet on the subject during your correspondences with the Scouts and Guides and Billingshurst Show as I felt it was important that you 3 groups discussed things and that councillors can have their say at the PC meeting; I also wanted to make sure I remained neutral and couldn't be accused of trying to influence the updated proposal; I do appreciate being kept in the loop however.

Having been copied in to the comments you received today from the S&Gs and BS, I think your email is a fair and accurate summary of their positions. I think it would be helpful if councillors could be sent today's responses from S&Gs and the BS too in their agenda pack, so I will ask Greg via this email if this would be possible, I am not sure if we would need to ask their permission to share their emails. I found their comments very enlightening and helpful and I feel the other councillors would too.

Best wishes,

Paul

Billingshurst Parish Clerk

From: Rob Falkner <
Sent: 08 April 2021 09:36
To: Paul Berry; Paul Berry; Billingshurst Parish Clerk
Cc: Mark Snelgrove
Subject: Re: May 5th Agenda Item

Hi Paul

Thanks for your feedback.

I should also mention that in addition to Paul Starkey's comments on what we have agreed, we would also offer the following.

1. Public bookers would now have access to both courts 4 and 5.
2. The club would provide use of floodlights to court 4 public bookers to extend the hours of play during winter and summer months up to 10pm. There would be an additional charge in line with what our members pay for floodlighting.

Note, we have previously stated that we are not planning on floodlighting court 5. If it was agreed to provide floodlighting in future years, then this would be extended to public bookers.

I would like to suggest the following with regards to the S&G comments about investigating court useage at the Weald school.

As our brief was to work with the BS and S&G groups to come up with a workable solution, we feel that we should only be focusing on and discussing our collaborative results during the limited time we have on 5th May.

Both the Tennis Club and BSC have been willing to make compromises in to reach an agreement. We have taken into consideration and acted on the S&G previous concerns which would no longer impact on their activities in any way.

It is a shame that the S&G have now changed tact and we do not want to be drawn into any irrelevant discussion about the Weald school during the meeting.

We have a commitment within our lease agreement to provide a well maintained court for public useage throughout the year. We intend to continue to fully honour that agreement and are happy to welcome public bookers to our facility.

Happy to discuss any points or offer further clarification if required prior to the meeting.

Kind regards
Rob

12th March 2021

Proposal for 5th Court in Lower Station Rd Recreation Ground

Dear Billingshurst Show and Scout Group Committees

Following on from the recent Parish Council meeting of Wednesday 3rd May, I am formally contacting you to discuss Billingshurst Tennis Club's proposal for an additional tennis court sited within the Lower Station Rd recreation ground.

Firstly, I would like to try to clear up a possible misunderstanding regarding communication with this matter. I understand that the Scout group were disappointed not to be consulted on our proposal prior to making any representation to the Parish Council. Our approach to the Parish Council initially was due to both discussion of the club's lease agreement, and the possibility of obtaining more land to build the new court. It has always been our intention to then discuss our proposal and possible court siting with each group, however we felt that as landowner and landlord to the Tennis Club it would be more appropriate to first consult with the Parish Council knowing that they would not rubber stamp any approval at such an early stage of the process. Subsequently, following the Property Committee meeting we were totally unaware that the Parish Council would follow up with a public consultation process and launched this on social media following the meeting.

Therefore, for you to discover our plans via the public domain suggests in hind-site we should have consulted you first via a less formal channel, so please accept my apologies.

The Parish Council have now asked us to work with you to find a solution for a possible alternative court location and we also note your comments against our original proposal. The parish clerk has now forwarded your suggested proposal of how we might site a new court.

When we were considering the possibility of constructing the 4th court nearly 10 years ago, we considered utilizing the end space next to the railway line at a slightly staggered position next to the existing 3rd court. The LTA who part funded the project, surveyed the site concluded that this position was not suited to a new court build due to the close proximity of the 3 large oak trees and possible impact of the tree's root system. Since the 4th court build, we have had to carry out expensive root damage repairs to the surface of the 3rd court. There were also other concerns relating to tree overhang, too much shade resulting in rapid surface moss build up and constant removal of tree debris from the court. In addition, as part of the foundation excavation we would have to remove a significant proportion of the tree's shallow root's which could impact the stability of these trees.

We have also considered the financial implications of carrying out the additional scope of work to undertake your suggested court reconfiguration. This would include increased soil removal and disposal, additional foundation work, adding an 18m retaining wall, breaking out and re-siting of all floodlighting and fencing, resurfacing, painting of the existing court area. This would easily double the project cost so even if the area was deemed suitable for court construction the cost would make the project unfeasible.

We would like you to consider an alternative court position alongside the existing 4th court, in the same orientation. This alternative location is a compromise to our original proposal which would alleviate all your primary concerns as raised relating to safety, general access and electrical supply during the Billingshurst show. The proposal also addresses the Scout Groups concerns over the loss of their preferred outdoor activity space.

The contained court area would be ideal for some sort of activity, or perhaps new aspect of the show. Double gates could be added at either the end facing Lower Station Road, or the side facing the industrial estate to open up the area and the tennis club would happily and safely supply electrical power to this area via one of its external power points. The use of weight bags and or tethering to the weld-mesh fence panels would allow safe positioning and anchoring of gazebo's or other coverings if required. In fact, we could provide several embedded

anchor points at various locations and would be happy to consider reasonable additional features as part of the court construction if this would help improve the functionality of this area during the show.

We appreciate that some modifications may need to be made to the show ground site plan and hope these can be accommodated as there does always seem to be some excess space available within the ground.

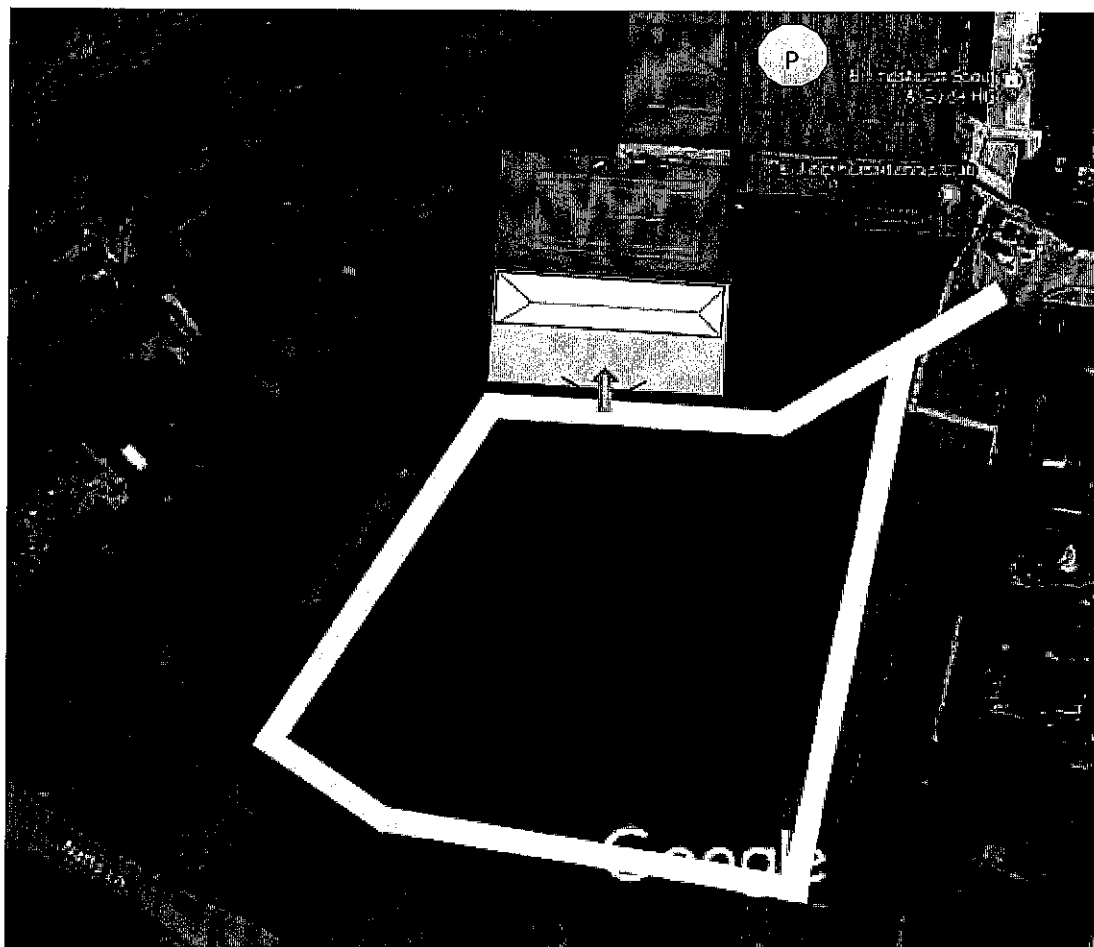
Finally, as part of our proposal we would like to offer the use of some of the tennis club's facilities on the day of the show. In addition to providing external power supply, we would like to offer the use of the clubhouse kitchen and toilet facilities to all show volunteers as well as the disabled toilet facilities.

Apart from the increasing demand for the tennis facility throughout the year, we have the Scout Group using the field during some of the Summer period and the Billingshurst show 1 day of the year. It is good to see dog walkers and it's good to have a green open space, but there is little demand for much activity here. It is underused in the Summer months and without drainage easily turns into a muddy field in the winter months. Our proposed extension would not compromise the small football area or the overspill of junior football from Jubilee Field's.

We would welcome your comments to our proposal and look forward to working with you. If there is any common ground to be found then perhaps, we can meet to discuss further after some of the restrictions are lifted from 29th March.

Kind regards

Rob Falkner



Subject:

FW: Billingshurst Show Response to Proposed 5th Court

From: Paul Starkey <
Sent: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 14:18
To: Rob Falkner; Mark Snelgrove
Cc: Graeme Acraman; Paul Berry
Subject: Billingshurst Show Response to Proposed 5th Court

Dear Rob and Mark,

Following our earlier discussion on the Tennis Club's proposal for a fifth court on the Recreation Ground, and the revisions that you suggested during this discussion, we on behalf of the Billingshurst Show have decided to withdraw our objection to your original proposal, on the following conditions:

- The new court is not sited near the entrance to the field, since this would make it very difficult for us to run the Show safely. Your revised proposal, with the new court directly in front of the existing fourth court, would be an acceptable solution.

- You make a binding commitment, via a clause in the lease or otherwise, that the Tennis Club will not make any further applications to take over land on the Recreation Ground, either for another court or for any other purpose.

- You agree to construct the court in such a way that we are able to make good use of the court on the day of the Billingshurst Show. The exact details of how this is to be done will need to be worked out, and you will involve us in discussions during the planning process. There will need to be safe access to the court from the field via a sufficiently wide gate on one of the sides of the court. We will expect to investigate options for installing tethering points within the court to allow gazebos or marquees to be safely installed there. All costs relating to these measures will be borne by the Tennis Club. This aspect is very important to us since the area removed from the field equates to the loss of thirty standard sized stallholder pitches, and we therefore have no option but to look for ways to make use of the court area on the day of the Show.

- You give us full and exclusive access to the court both for the whole of the day of the Show and for the whole of the day beforehand, since much of the setting up work for the Show is done on this day.

- We will undertake not to site any activities on the court that would obviously be likely to cause damage to the court, but we cannot be held responsible for minor wear and tear as a result of people coming on to the court area during the Show, for example by spilling drinks onto the surface. We will clear away any litter that may be left on the court after the Show. We understand that you may carry out your annual court maintenance and cleaning after the Show.

- If we require the facilities, you will arrange for electricity and running water supplies to be available on the court on the day of the Show, at your expense.

- If we require the facilities, you will provide us with access to the clubhouse facilities including the kitchen and toilets (including disabled toilet) on the day of the Show. We will leave the area clean and tidy after the Show if we do take up this offer. If we make use of the kitchen facilities, we will need preferential access for at least the morning.

- All of the above conditions would apply in perpetuity, unless otherwise agreed between the Tennis Club and the Billingshurst Show committee.

I hope that you find this satisfactory; please contact me should you have any questions concerning our response.

Thanks and best wishes,

Paul Starkey

Chairman, Billingshurst Show Organising Committee

Billingshurst Parish Clerk

From: Graeme Acraman
Sent: 07 April 2021 16:29
To: Rob Falkner; Mark Snelgrove
Cc: Paul Berry; Billingshurst Parish Clerk; Paul Starkey
Subject: 5th Tennis Court Proposal

All

Thank you for taking the time to meet with both Paul and I.

Following our joint and productive meeting between the BTC, Billingshurst Show and Scouts and Guides we have continued our discussions mainly electronically with the Scout and Guide executive.

While I appreciate you have been considerate with the Billingshurst Show the executive of the Scouts and Guides still have major concerns with the erosion of the available open space available for use.

A short list of comments are below

- the recreation ground is underused is irrelevant as it is ALWAYS available at any time for any member of the public to use. Another tennis court would only be available if it were free and not in use by the club for any reason, thus adding exclusivity to the problem!
- The reasons for not using the school courts were felt to be poor, as the football clubs have no issues in using the Astro pitched during the winter. Even
 - Also to reduce any green space is wrong when there is courts up the road with better parking and a leisure centre attached which provides access out of school hours.
- From a Guiding point of view I would agree with Scouts that the loss of more green space is something that we should object to. There appear to be 4 multi use courts at the Weald, can the BTC not explore the possibilities with the Weald or better yet the Leisure centre (who could easily handle public bookings of the courts) further to completely establish the usability of these courts. I would also agree that potentially supporting the upgrade of these courts (re surfacing) must be more cost effective than a brand new court on the field.

It is with regret that we are still opposed to the creation of a 5th court on the recreation ground at this time and would assist and support engagement with the Weald on use of and maybe upgrading of one of the WEALD courts

Best Regards

Graeme

Graeme Acraman
Chairman
Billingshurst Scouts and Guides



Dear Billingshurst Councillors,

The Rural Services Network is the national champion for rural services, ensuring that people in rural areas have a strong voice. We are fighting for a fair deal for rural communities to maintain their social and economic viability for the benefit of the nation as a whole. We are a small but very committed organisation - the only one tackling rural services and seeking to set up a comprehensive rural network. We argue exclusively the national rural service case.

THE EXISTING RURAL SERVICES NETWORK

We have run an alliance of rurally based Principal Local Authorities for over 20 years. We currently have over 120 such local authorities engaged with our work. We have created strategic networks across services and at Westminster. Representing rural service partners organisations, the Rural Service Partnership, Around law and order; the Rural Crime Network. In Health, the Rural Health and Care Alliance. In parliament, we have introduced a Rural Services All Party Parliamentary Group, a Rural Fair Share Group and the Rural Lords Group. In terms of Rural Research, we have created the Rural England CIC. Rural areas by their very nature are disparate. However, they have to establish national rural consensus viewpoints from a range of service areas; look for rural best practice; and seek opportunities for rural representation to assist themselves. At a time when many other rural groups have had to close, by bringing people living and working in rural areas together, we can represent the rural case to purpose.

We feel that a Rural/ Market Towns Group is in the interest of both the towns and their surrounding rural areas. Towns of less than 35,000 in population act as the service hubs for their surrounding countryside and that role is fundamental to the economy of the town and the wellbeing of the surrounding areas. It is not possible to argue a comprehensive rural case without such a Rural/Market Town grouping coming into the rural equation. There was previously a Market Towns grouping we worked with, but it found financial narrowing difficult. Over the last year we have established a new grouping of 183 rurally based towns at the very root of what has become known over centuries as Rural Market Towns. This phrase that once came out of ancient charters and livestock and produce sales now personify attractive, often historic communities that are the service hub on which the surrounding rural communities are themselves reliant. While the prefix Market is common the description by which the community calls itself varies. Some call themselves Towns, some prefer the continuation of the word Parish. It makes little difference - it is the hub activity of the largest community in an area and its interrelationship with its catchment that is crucial.

Why a Rural/Market Town Group now?

The RSN believes that Rural Communities and their Towns are frequently overlooked in a policy environment dominated by urban thinking and policy concerns. This often means communities either miss out on the benefits or experience unintended consequences from policies which are poorly thought through from a rural perspective. This means that government policy currently neglects the many hundreds of important rural towns across England. That can only be corrected if the case is made.

We believe these towns play a vital role not only in the lives of their inhabitants but also in both the local and national economy. That is why we want them to receive more focus. We will argue that it is in the overall national interest to do that.

Therefore, rural areas with their intricate network of differing rural communities should be able to realise their potential within the national economy. To do that they need to be appropriately recognised and supported in government thinking and actions.

What will it be?

To underline the importance of these rurally based English towns, the role they play and their potential going forward, the Rural Services Network have developed a new initiative to develop a Rural Market Town Grouping within the Rural Services Network. This new Grouping will work to add to our Call on Government for an overall Rural Strategy.

We have begun this RMTG initiative by approaching one town or the largest village in each of the 200+ rural areas across England which have been identified by Defra for their distinctive rural characteristic. This process is now being expanded to ensure that all those that wish to be involved are fully engaged.

Whilst we appreciate and celebrate the diversity of our rural areas, we seek to create a common united voice to represent all different types of rural areas across England ensuring that no form of rural area is excluded.

Up to until now we have in our group 183 Towns and Parishes. It is now time to complete the sought network of 200 as well as opening out from there.

What service would the Council get back from membership?

Services provided to the group will include:

- Involvement in the Rural Strategy campaign to ensure feedback from member Market Towns is considered within the Revitalising Rural documentation and its updates.
- Cataloguing and disseminating good practice and learning material related to the key policy areas and delivery challenges or opportunities for rural/market towns.
- Receiving the 'Rural Bulletin', a weekly newsletter provided by the Rural Services Network highlighting rural news, issues affecting rural communities, and highlighting the work of the Rural Services Network.
- Provision of a dedicated quarterly newsletter 'Rural Market Towns Group Roundup' highlighting relevant latest policy developments, showcasing interesting member practice and flagging relevant initiatives or funding opportunities.

Periodic online surveys of the members of rural/market towns to gather representative

information about topics of particular interest to this grouping.

- Free access for Councillor representatives or their nominee to the 9 topic RSN Cross Service Seminar programme.
- Twice yearly Rural Town Networking Meetings held online.
- Meetings of a RMTG Town Clerk's Advisory Panel.
- Whilst statistical information is almost always presented by Government at County and/or District level it is vital the messages this contains are known about across rural areas. We will issue an area rural statistical profile once a year to members of this grouping based on their nearest Principal Council area.
- The pattern of local area Market Town meetings seem mixed across England. We would like to look at this in a little detail to see if it is at all feasible to secure any improvement in areas where meetings/joint working are not taking place currently and also look at how liaison can take place between this national facing group and existing area meetings.

This is a comprehensive service using grouping to achieve a value well in excess of the small charge.

What cost is involved to the Council?

We recognise the service has to be affordable and therefore in overall budgetary relatively insignificant. It also has to be self-sustaining by being attractive to many councils. Eventually we would like to exceed 400 Rural Councils. For local councils of up to 5,000 population the annual charge will be £110 per annum, for those between 5,000 and 10,000-£130 p.a., and those over 10,000 in population a yearly subscription of £150. VAT has to be added but is normally recoverable.

Free Trial Period

We will give you free membership until the end of September 2021 as you request it. You can take that service without commitment and decide whether you wish to continue with us next summer. If you decide to continue, we will then only charge you 50% of the annual fee for 21/22.

CONCLUSION

We have to come together to establish a common argument based on rural places which serve their catchments. We have to represent ourselves nationally to get our individual value recognised across the country and the importance of our 'market' role properly appreciated. The term Market Town or Market Place itself is a marketable commodity often now commonly used by the tourist industry as a descriptive phrase in guidebooks. Its importance is not however being fully appreciated in every quarter. By working together we can demonstrate its overall value and achieve significantly more. We do hope you will consider this invitation as a Council and decide to join and to work with us. We attach this offer in a graphic version for copying and circulation to your members.

Many thanks for your consideration. Please do let us know your decision when it has been made.



APPENDIX C

TERMS OF REFERENCE **FOR COMMITTEES**

MAY 2021

PREAMBLE

All Full Committees have delegated authority on all matters within their remit, except

- a) For those items where the law prescribes that such decisions are taken by Full Council (in which case a Committee may make recommendations to Council as appropriate.)
- b) Where a Committee consider that the matter should be resolved by all Councillors.

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Main Function:

The undertaking of all financial matters and other miscellaneous matters. The efficient and effective administration of the Council's affairs with specific attention to resource allocation and financial well-being.

Terms of References:

- (a) To approve monthly accounts for payment.
- (b) To review the monthly bank reconciliation
- (c) To prepare a budget for each year and to monitor the Parish Council's expenditure.
- (d) Dealing with matters specifically referred by the Council or any other Committee and with matters not specifically referred or delegated to any other Committee.
- (e) To consider all grant applications.

- (f) Giving consideration to, agreeing and making appropriate recommendations in respect of the Council's revenue estimates, including reimbursable expenditure.
- (g) To ensure the Council is meeting its obligations to HMRC.
- (h) To ensure that the Council has appropriate insurance policies and reviews annually the Council's Risk Assessment.
- (i) To review annually the Council's Fixed Asset Register and ensure that property valuations and insurance cover are adequate.
- (j) To maintain bi-annual Internal Audits of the Council using a suitable independent Internal Auditor.
- (k) To review the year-end accounts and annual return for the External Auditor and recommend to the full Council for approval.
- (l) To consider all highway (excl. footpath/ROW) matters and public transport issues.
- (m) To co-ordinate the investigation of the incidences and cause of flooding in the parish.
 - i. To gather and document evidence of flooding.
 - ii. To work with stakeholders in a joined up approach to investigate and seek to resolve parish flooding issues.
 - iii. To submit applications to Operation Watershed for funding for works to alleviate flooding.
 - iv. To liaise with the Planning & Environment Committee regarding flooding issues.

(n m) The maximum membership of this Committee is 10.

Policy:

The Committee will:-

- (i) Look to provide the Council's services at the minimum cost, commensurate with full and effective fulfillment of the Council's operational role and policy aims.
- (ii) Seek to ensure the most profitable and efficient investment management policies.
- (iii) Recognise the need for good business management in operating its services, and will, as appropriate, undertake performance and systems reviews to ensure an economic, effective and efficient Council. Where beneficial, consider opportunities for the introduction of new technology within the Council's office systems.

- (iv) Recognise the need for, and benefits of, Member and staff training. Initiate and react to positive and appropriate opportunities within the context of overall budget resources.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Main Functions:

The management of all Council property including playing fields and open spaces, together with provision and maintenance of playground equipment. The upkeep and repair of Churchyard and provision and maintenance of parish street lighting.

Terms of Reference:

- (a) Dealing with the maintenance of the Adversane Hall, Public Conveniences, Jubilee Fields Sports Pavilion, Council-owned open spaces and play equipment within the Committee's approved budget and the making of recommendations annually to the Finance and General Purposes Committee to rents and charges.
- (b) Dealing with the provision of:-
 - i. Bus shelters
 - ii. War Memorial
 - iii. Public Notice Boards
 - iv. Public Seats
 - v. Christmas Lights
- (c) Dealing with the maintenance of the Churchyard.
- (d) Dealing with Parish footway lighting and all up-grading schemes.
- (e) Review the schedule of inspection of Council property and open spaces including five yearly electrical safety inspections.
- (f) Review the Risk Assessments for individual property, open spaces and working practices in relation to property matters.
- (g) The maximum membership of this Committee is 10.

Strategy:

The efficient and effective administration and maintenance of all Parish property.

Policy:

- (i) Seek to maintain and enhance the appearance of all its land holdings recognizing the significance and importance of such standards.

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Main Functions:

The consideration of planning and licensing applications and other planning issues relating to the Parish.

Terms of Reference:

- (a) To consider all planning applications for the Parish.
- (b) The making of representations in respect of appeals against the refusal of planning permission.
- (c) To make recommendations regarding street naming.
- (d) To consider and monitor Parish development plans (Local Development Framework).
- (e) To seek to ensure that the general environment within the Parish is monitored, so far as is possible and to report to the appropriate authority any potential hazards, breaches, etc.
- (f) To bear in mind environmental aspects when considering planning applications.
- (g) To seek to ensure that appropriate landscaping is incorporated sympathetically in planning applications, when appropriate, to enhance the environment.
- (h) To consider and respond to various environmental statutory documents.
- (i) Public Footpath and R.O.W. matters.
- (j) The maximum membership of this Committee is 10.

Strategy

To seek to ensure high standards to planning for all new developmental activity within the Parish boundary with specific attention to all appropriate local and statutory plan policies and to seek to ensure that any development is commensurate with the character of the Parish.

Policy:

- (i) To ensure positive and constructive input to Horsham District Council in respect of all planning applications submitted.
- (ii) To monitor the Conservation Areas and ensure that the style of development and general decoration, including signage, shop fronts and street furniture, is

in keeping with those Listed Buildings situated therein, in accordance with any Conservation Area documents.

- (iii) To monitor and review the success of the Parish Design Statement in influencing local planning authority decisions.
- (iii) To seek to ensure, within overall resources, maximum publicity and awareness of planning applications by means of public notices.
- (iv) To give due consideration, where possible, to sustainable development policies.
- (v) To positively contribute to discussions, evaluations and consultations in respect of major or contentious new development activity, including the establishment of formal meetings with professional planning staff, to exchange views and consider details proposals whenever necessary.
- (vi) Work to retain public open space, including playing fields whenever possible.

WORKING PRACTICES COMMITTEE

Main Function:

The consideration of all employment-related matters and Council policy and procedure documents.

Terms of Reference:

To make recommendations to the Council on all employment related matters including contracts, salary reviews and superannuation.

To review Council policy documents in accordance with statutory advice: Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct, Scheme of Members Allowances, Discipline and Grievance Procedure.

To ensure there are policies to maintain good working relationship with Councillors, staff and the general public including Dignity At Work, Councillor/Staff Protocol and Code of Practice for Handling Complaints.

To ensure the Council's Health and Safety Policy is reviewed and updated in accordance with latest legislation.

Adopt positive staffing policies and ensure compliance with national conditions of service, welfare and health and safety at work legislation, and any other legal requirements.

The maximum membership of this Committee is 10.

FLOODING COMMITTEE

Main Function:

~~To co-ordinate the investigation of the incidences and cause of flooding in the parish.~~

Terms of Reference:

- ~~i. To gather and document evidence of flooding.~~
- ~~ii. To work with stakeholders in a joined up approach to investigate and seek to resolve parish flooding issues.~~
- ~~iii. To submit applications to Operation Watershed for funding for works to alleviate flooding.~~
- ~~iv. To liaise with the Planning & Environment Committee regarding flooding issues.~~

Billingshurst Parish Council as Trustee

Accounts

- To review the twice yearly internal audit report.
- To set the budget annually.
- To review the year-end accounts and Trustees report.
- To review the submission of the annual return to the Charity Commission.

Health and Safety

- To review the Centre's insurance.

Marketing

- To approve the Business Plan and market the Centre and its facilities.

Hiring

- To approve the annual review of the schedule of hire charges.
- To approve the review terms and conditions of hire.

Licensing

- To approve the licensing policy.

Billingshurst Centre Committee

Committee Size: Maximum 10 Councillors

Terms of Reference

Management

- To consider queries relating to the day to day operation of the Centre raised by the Clerk.

Accounting

- To approve monthly accounts for payment.

- To review the monthly bank reconciliation, profit and loss account and balance sheet.
- To make a recommendation to the Council as Trustee:
 - To review the twice yearly internal audit report.
 - To set the budget annually.
 - To review the year-end accounts and Trustees report.
 - To review the submission of the annual return to the Charity Commission.

Health and Safety

- Annual risk assessment for the Centre.
- Annual Health and Safety check.
- Fire risk assessment and compliance.
- To make a recommendation to the Council as Trustee on insurance.
- Food Hygiene.

Maintenance

- To review the Fixed Asset Register for the Centre.
- To create and operate a program of maintenance.
- To consider maintenance issues as they arise.

IT/Audio

- To review and update IT facilities at the Centre.
- To review and update stage facilities at the Centre.

Marketing

- To create a Business Plan for the approval of the Council as Trustee and market the Centre and its facilities.
-

Hiring

- To formulate and review annually the schedule of hire charges and make a recommendation to the Council as Trustee for approval.
- To produce and review hiring agreements.
- To produce and review terms and conditions of hire and make a recommendation to Council as Trustee for approval.
- To review debtor list.
- To consider hirers' complaints, that cannot be dealt with by the Manager or Clerk.

Licensing

- To ensure the Centre meets the Licensing Act requirements.
- To formulate policy for licensing and make a recommendation to the Council as Trustee for approval.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WORKING PARTY

Main Function:

Consultation with the community and stakeholders for the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan for Billingshurst.

Membership:

6 Councillors (max), plus non-Councillor members and District and County Councillors as appropriate.

Terms of Reference:

- To define a timetable for the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- To produce a statement of community and stakeholder engagement.
- To implement the statement of community and stakeholder engagement at the earliest opportunity and throughout the process.
- To apply for grant funding for the Neighbourhood Plan process.
- To prepare a brief to seek quotations for specialist help in the creation of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- To prepare a brief detailing quotation obtained for specialist help to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan and recommendation of selection of specialist for approval and appointment by the Council.
- To work with the specialists and the community to develop a vision for the parish for approval by the Parish Council.
- To appoint focus groups to develop further the different aspects of the vision for the parish.
- To build an evidence base to support the Neighbourhood Plan.
- To develop policy, guidance and proposals for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- To call for site allocations.
- To present the pre-submission consultation Neighbourhood Plan to the Council for approval.
- To present the submission Neighbourhood Plan and consultation statement to the Council for approval.
- To consider any modifications recommended by the Independent Examiner and make a recommendation to the Council.

Secretariat

Billingshurst Parish Council to provide full secretariat support to the Working Party in accordance with Standing Orders. The Neighbourhood Plan agendas, minutes, consultations and updates can be added to the Council's website.

Financial

Billingshurst Parish Council to retain full responsibility for the administration of the finances of the Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with Financial Regulations.

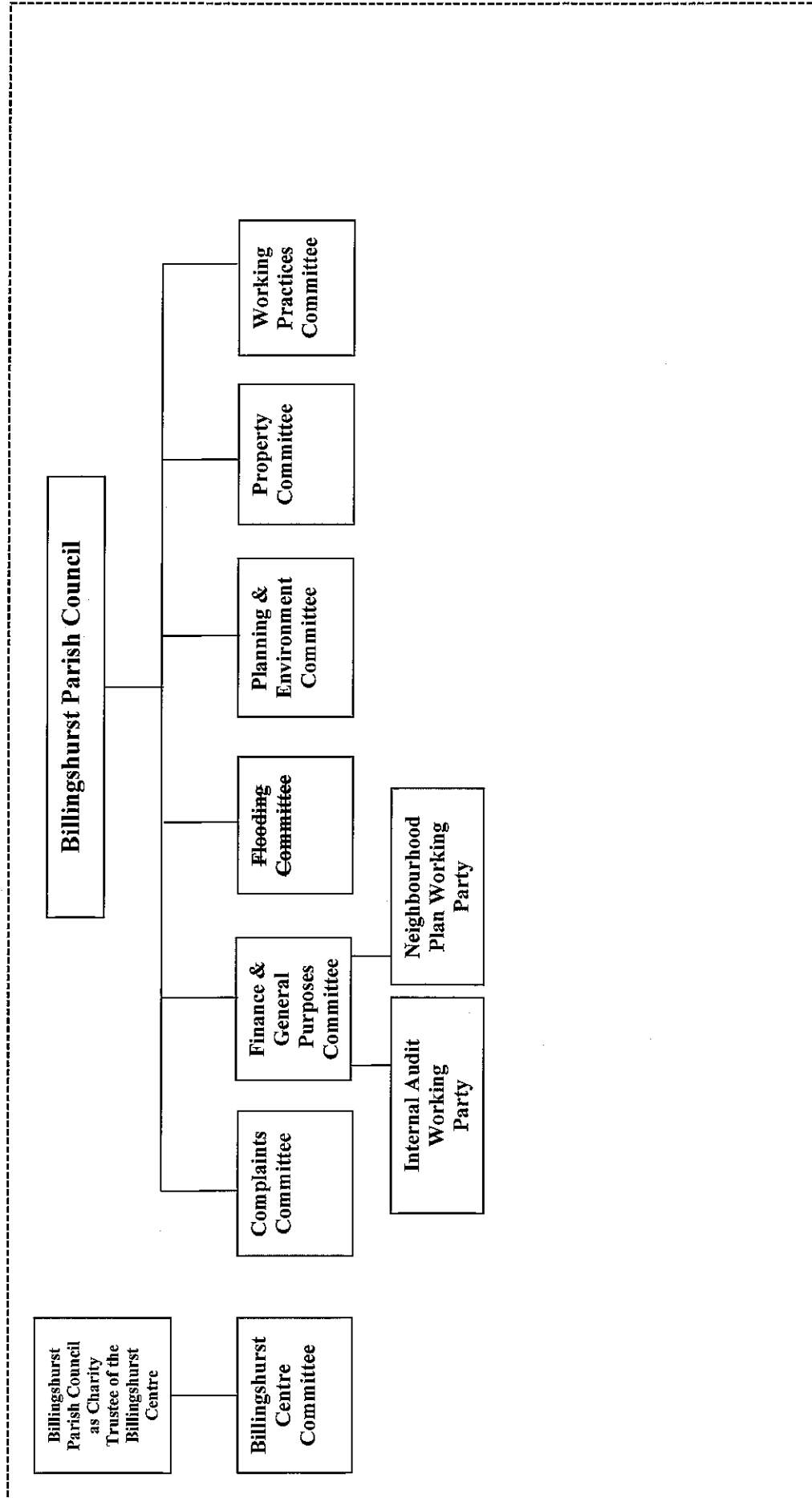
Focus Groups

- The Neighbourhood Plan Working Party may appoint Focus Groups to investigate specific Neighbourhood Plan issues.
- These Focus Groups may be comprised of all non-Councillor members.
- Their role will be to investigate and make a report to the Steering Committee.
- Members will have no voting rights, as they are an advisory group only.

Footnote

As a Working Party, it has no delegated powers as per an ordinary Committee, thus, all significant decisions must be made in the form of a recommendation to the parent committee, F&GP.

Billingshurst Parish Council Structure May 2021



BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL**WEDNESDAY 5 MAY 2021****APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES ETC****REPORT BY CLERK****FOR DECISION**

At the Annual Meeting of the Council, the Council reviews the membership of all committees, working parties and appointments to outside bodies etc.

All Councillors were invited to inform the office of their intentions regarding these positions.

Councillors are invited to check that the attached table reflects their intentions and to raise in the meeting any corrections or further offers to fill vacancies, when invited to do so by the Chairman.

The Council is invited to appoint committees, working parties and representatives to outside bodies etc. accordingly.

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

2021-22

(The Council has set the max. membership for Committees to 10 members.)

COMMITTEES

Planning & Environment	EB, GC, DH, JM, CBP, SW, DW
Property	GA, BB, PB, SD, DH, RM, CG
Finance & General Purposes	GA, BB, EB, PB, DH, RM, KP, CG
Working Practices	PB, DH, RM, MW, DW
Billingshurst Centre	GA, KP, SW, SD, CG, RM
Flooding	
Complaints (5 members Max)	PB, SD, RM
Complaints Chairman	SD

WORKING PARTIES

Neighbourhood Plan	GA, SD, MW
Emergency Planning	GA, EB, SD
Internal Audit	GA, DH, RM
East St Traffic Calming	PB, GA
Youth Liaison	RM, MW, SW, CG
Jubilee Skatepark WP	BB, PB, DH, CG
CCTV	PB, RM, GA
Local Plan	DH, BB, GA

Bold indicates Chairman/Vice Chairman

REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Allotments Society	EB
Adversane Traffic WP	
B'hurst Sports & Recn. Assn. (BSRA)	CG
Friends of Station Road Gardens x1	BB, SD
HALC (H'ham Assn Local Ccls)	GA + SD
N'hood Warden Steering Group x2	GA, SD, PB, Clerk
Public Art Steering Group	Clerk
SPD Working Group	SD + Clerk
Trustee of Adversane Hall x1	SD
Trustee of Dauxwood Pre-School x1	MW
West Sussex Association Local Councils (WSALC) AGM x2	SD, GA
Youth Council	MW
B'hurst Flood Action Group	GA



6 Uplands Road
Farnham GU9 8BP

Greg Burt

Clerk to Billingshurst Parish Council

Billingshurst Centre

Roman Way

Billingshurst

West Sussex RH14 9QW

21 April 2021

Dear Greg

Billingshurst Parish Council - Internal Audit 2020-21

The internal audit of Billingshurst Parish Council for the 2020-21 financial year is now complete. I am pleased to be able to report that I have signed off the attached internal audit report with no comments. The final audit was again carried out remotely due to pandemic restrictions.

As stated in the engagement letter, the scope of our work is limited to completing the audit testing and enquiries we deem necessary to complete Section 4 of the Annual Report for Local Councils in England. We do not provide assurance over or accept responsibility for areas of work not included in this scope, unless specifically agreed with the Council during the financial year.

In providing internal audit services we are not conducting a financial statement audit in accordance with standards and guidelines issued by the Audit Practices Board and our procedures are not designed to provide assurance over the reliability and quality of your financial statements and management information – that is the job of external audit.

We are required by the Annual Internal Audit Report included in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to review controls in place at the Council against predefined control assertions. These control assertions are set out below, together with the results of my internal audit work for 2020-21.

The audit was carried out in two stages. The interim audit carried out remotely on 4 December 2020 concentrated on in year financial transactions and governance controls. The final audit was carried out remotely, due to Covid 19 restrictions. This work was carried out during the week of 16 April 2021 and concentrated on the statement of accounts and balance sheet.

I would like to thank Greg for his assistance with the audit, and diligence in ensuring the Council has maintained robust financial controls throughout this difficult time.

A - Appropriate books of account have been kept properly throughout the year

Interim Audit

The Council continues to use the RBS accounting system, an industry specific accounting solution well suited to this Council. This is the third year the Council has used RBS and the system is now well bedded in. I was able to confirm that:

- Supporting documentation could be located using referencing on RBS
- All reconciliations tested are working well
- Council is making use of the reporting available in RBS to improve financial reports available to councillors.

The Council had not yet received the external audit certificate for 2019-20 at the time of my audit. I will therefore check opening balances and proper publication of audit reports at my final audit.

I reviewed the Council's VAT records and checked that the VAT return had been submitted to HMRC for the period to 30 September 2020, and that the VAT reclaimed could be agreed to a schedule of transactions recorded on RBS.

Final Audit

The accounting statements have been agreed back to balance sheet and income and expenditure reports produced from the RBS Accounting system. All comparatives reported in the financial statements have been agreed back to the audited 2019-20 accounts as published on the Council website.

Arithmetic within the draft accounts was checked and found to be correct.

I confirmed that the year-end VAT return has been completed. This was submitted to HMRC on 9 April 2021. VAT due per the balance sheet at 31.3.21 was £19,763. This is due to VAT being owed for quarters 1 and 3. This should be chased up as a matter of urgency as these VAT refunds should have been processed by HMRC by now.

The Council reviewed my interim audit report at the December 2020 meeting of F&GP Committee, and appropriate minute was recorded. The External audit certificate was reported to the Full Council meeting on March 3rd 2021.

I am satisfied that the Council has met this control objective.

B - The Council's financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved, and VAT was appropriately accounted for

Interim Audit

Financial Regulations and Standing Orders were last reviewed in 2019-20. There have been no significant changes since the last review, so this is acceptable

The Council approves expenditure via the annual budget process. Each month, the Council records the future expenditure to be made in the minutes of a council meeting, supported by a detailed list of payments. 2 councillor signatures are then required on the physical payment. This is a strong system, compliant with financial regulations. The Council made no change to payment processes during lockdown – Councillors came into the office to sign cheques and invoices, in line with financial regulations.

I tested a sample of expenditure transactions and was able to confirm the following for all transactions sampled:

- Cashbook entry could be agreed back to an invoice from the supplier
- VAT accounting correct
- Signature of two councillors was viewed on each invoice tested.
- Payment noted in minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee

I note that the Council still intends to move to online banking once this has been trialed for payments made by the Billingshurst Centre. This has been held up by the Covid emergency, but I would urge the Council to move to electronic banking as soon as possible.

The Council is compliant with the 2015 Transparency Code, with information published on the Finance page on the website. I checked the following:

- Expenditure information was up to date at the time of the audit
- The grants page on the financial information had not been updated since last financial year
- Contract summary has not been updated since July 2019

Final Audit

Non pay expenditure per box 6 to the accounts amounted to £338,353, down from £691,515 in 2019-20. Reduction due to purchase of high street property in previous financial year.

As a larger Council, with income / expenditure in excess of £200K, Billingshurst is required to follow the 2015 Transparency Code. The Council meets this code by publishing financial data on the finance page on the website. I sample checked data reported on this webpage. I am satisfied that the Council is largely compliant with requirements of the Code.

- Grant information published is for 20-21 financial year

- Expenditure over £500 updated to March 2021

I selected a further sample of transactions from cashbook for the last 3 months of the financial year. For all transactions tested I was able to confirm that:

- Transactions could be agreed back to invoice
- Payment approved at a meeting of the Council
- VAT accounted for appropriately.
- Payment signed off on face of invoice by 2 councillors
- Cheque stub initialled by 2 councillors
- Payment reported to a meeting of Council and recorded in minutes

I am satisfied that the Council is meeting this control objective.

C - The Council assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.

Interim Audit

I have confirmed that the Council has a comprehensive risk management process in place which results in a formal risk assessment that is approved at the January Full Council meeting. I will review the risk assessment at my year end visit. I note that the Council has completed a Covid risk assessment, which was presented to Council in November.

The Council is insured by BHIB, on a standard local council policy. I reviewed the insurance certificate and confirmed it is in date with an expiry date of October 2021. I note that the policy is a joint policy, which also covers the Billingshurst Community and Conference Centre. I have reviewed the policy and it appears that asset coverage is adequate.

I have confirmed that the Council backs up computer data to a cloned server in the Community Centre, and to a cloud-based solution hosted by an external provider. The Clerk confirmed back up has been tested, and that homeworking during lockdown has ensured that back up arrangements operate as expected.

Final Audit

The Council risk assessment has been subject to further review in 2020-21. Council approval of the risk assessment was confirmed in a minute of F & GP in January 2021, and subsequently reviewed at Full Council on March 3 2021. I confirmed an appropriate minute was recorded.

I am satisfied that the Council met this control objective

D - The annual precept requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.

Interim Audit

I have confirmed with the Clerk that budget preparation for 2020-21 is well underway. A budget workshop was held on 12 November in order to prepare the first iteration of the budget for Council review. Budget will be taken to the December Finance and General Purpose Committee (F&GP), with precept and budget approval planned for the 6 January meeting of Full Council.

The F&GP Committee are due to receive a budget monitoring report at their meeting on 16 December. This is the first time a budget monitoring report has been presented to councillors this financial year. This is not in line with the requirements of the Financial Regulations, which state

“The RFO shall regularly provide the council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose “material” shall be in excess of [£100] or [15%] of the budget”

Budget monitoring reports must therefore be presented to councillors every quarter, with a narrative report showing explanations of all variances from budget.

The Clerk has identified additional costs arising from Covid, this was reported to members in November, and costs are not considered material. The pandemic has had minimal impact on Council income, as hall hire income is included in the accounts of Billingshurst Centre, not covered by this audit.

Final Audit

Reserves at 31 March 2021 were £377,312 (2019-20 £394,288 RESTATED).

General reserves at year end were £82K, which represents 22% of precept. This is a little low, the NALC Practitioners Guide suggests general reserves should not fall below 25 % of net revenue expenditure. Whilst the Council has well developed earmarked reserves, these are in the main held to support assets and capital expenditure, The Council should look to increase general reserves in the medium term.

I have confirmed by review of minutes that the Council approved the budget for 21-22 at the January meeting of Full Council. The precept for the next financial year was also approved at this meeting.

I am content this control objective has been met.

E - Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.

Final Audit

Precept per box 2 to the accounts was £373,525 (2019-20 £352,463). This has been agreed to third party documentation provided by external audit.

Income per box 3 to the accounts was £194,270 (2019-20 £545,826). The decrease is due to PWLB loan receipt in previous financial year.

I tested a sample of income transactions from the grants nominal ledger code amounting to £94K. For all credit entries to the cashbook I was able to confirm valued of credit back to remittance advice note from the District or County Council

I am content that this control objective has been met.

F - Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.

Petty cash balance is £100, Clerk confirms this is counted on a periodic basis and reconciled to receipts.

G- Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with council approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.

Interim Audit

Payroll is processed by West Sussex County Council. I selected a sample of payroll transactions for August 2020 payroll recorded in the General ledger. For 3 staff members I tested that:

- general ledger could be agreed back to payroll documentation from WSCC
- rate of pay for staff correct – Gross pay per the WSCC payroll report was checked back to salaries approved by staffing committee,.

I am satisfied that this control objective has been met .

Final Audit

Staff costs per box 4 to the accounts were £215,051 (2019-20 £201,484 RESTATED).

I reviewed transactions posted to the relevant nominal account for staff costs for 20-21, and noted that this included an entry for payment of £17044 relating to the January 2020 payroll. This accrual was missed from the 19-20 accounts. Given the value of the accrual, I recommended that the Clerk should amend the accounts to ensure this transaction is posted to the correct year of account. This requires box 4 and 7 of the comparative 19-20 accounts to be restated, and reduced staff costs in box 4 for 20-21 to be reduced to the correct level. The Clerk arranged for this to be processed by RBS.

19-20 Comparative balances for box 4 and 7 on the accounts must be marked as "RESTATED" when the AGAR is filled in.

H - Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.

Final Audit

Fixed assets per box 9 to the accounts were £ 1,779,179 (2019-20 £1,778,620) I have agreed the balance in the accounts back to the asset register. The asset register appears complete and to record assets at cost or proxy cost, as required by regulations.

Changes in asset register value year on year are supported by schedules of assets added. No detailed testing carried out this year due to the small change year on year. My review of the cashbook has not identified any asset purchases in 2020-21.

I am satisfied that the asset register can be reconciled to the fixed asset balance recorded in the accounts.

I – Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.

Interim Audit

The Council holds 3 bank accounts. I confirmed that reconciliations are completed monthly for all accounts. My review of minutes confirmed that bank reconciliations are reported in full to each meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. I reperformed the bank reconciliations for September 2020 for all 3 bank accounts and in all cases I found that the bank reconciliations had been properly prepared and were supported by bank statements and cashbooks. I agreed a sample of unrepresented cheques to subsequent presentation at bank. Evidence of councillor review on both bank statement and bank reconciliation was visible.

There are 2 balancing accounting entries on the bank reconciliation for the Bonus Saver Account – these should be cleared before year end.

I wish to re raise one recommendation from last audit. All Council cash is currently held with one bank. I understand this is under review at present, but the Council should consider diversifying risk by holding monies in more than one financial institution. I understand from the Clerk that this is currently under review.

I am satisfied that this control objective has been met .

Final Audit

Cash per box 8 to the accounts was £355,127 (2019-20 £269,275)

I reperformed the year end bank reconciliation. For all bank accounts I was able to agree the balance on the bank reconciliation back to bank statements and cashbook balances recorded on RBS.

There were £111K unpresented cheques on the main account. I could not test these to presentation at bank at the time of my audit as the bank statements for April had not been produced.

The Council is still using cheques. I understand that plans to move to online banking have stalled this year due to the pandemic and lack of assistance from the bank. However, this must be moved forward in 21-22, cheques are increasingly outdated, and many suppliers will no longer accept payment by cheque.

Loans outstanding at year end per box 10 to the accounts were £432,056 (2019-20 £458,553). This has been agreed to the year end loans statement supplied by Public Works Loans Board.

I am satisfied that the Council is meeting this control objective.

J - Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and

Billingshurst has produced accounts on an accruals basis, this is required as income / expenditure is above £200k. A reconciliation between Box 7-8 of the accounts has been prepared - this needs to be converted to the format required by the external auditors.

An explanation of year on year variances has been prepared at the time of my audit. This needs to provide detailed explanations for review by external audit, there are significant changes within the year on year analysis that will be reviewed by external audit.

I am satisfied this control objective has been met.

M – Inspection Periods

Interim Audit

Inspection periods for 2019-20 accounts were set as follows

Inspection - Key date	2019-20 Actual
Accounts approved at Full Council	17 June 2020 Full Council
Date Inspection Notice Issued and how published	24 June
Inspection period begins	25 June
Inspection period ends	6 August
Correct length	Yes

N – Compliance with Publishing Requirements 19-20 Accounts

The Council has now received the 19-20 external audit report. A clear opinion was reported, with 2 matters raised in the matters arising section of the report:

- Reference to a prior year adjustment correctly posted
- Omission of council website on the AGAR

There are no matters to take into consideration in the 20-21 accounts.

However, I should note that the external audit certificate was not signed off until 2 February 2021, so the statutory deadline for publishing the audited accounts was missed. I must therefore report that the Council has not met control objective N – compliance with publication requirements 2019-20 accounts. Late external audit signature we believe was due to a resident query that the external auditors were obliged to examine.

The external audit report was reviewed at the March 2021 Full Council and an appropriate minute recorded.

O- Trust funds (including charitable) The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.

The Billingshurst Community and Conference Centre is a charitable trust of which the Parish Council is the sole managing trustee. The accounts were uploaded to the Charity Commission website on 3 December 2020, before the regulatory deadline.

Yours sincerely



Mike Platten CPFA

Points Forward – Action Plan - Interim Audit

Matter Arising	Recommendation	Council Response – Final Audit
<p>The grants page on the financial information had not been updated since last financial year</p> <p>Contract summary has not been updated since July 2019</p>	<p>Transparency code information should be brought up to date</p>	<p>Implemented for final audit</p>
<p>There are 2 balancing accounting entries on the bank reconciliation for the Bonus Saver Account</p>	<p>These should be cleared before year end.</p>	<p>Not yet done, internal audit have asked the clerk to clear this before the accounts are submitted to external audit</p>
<p>All Council cash is currently held with one bank.</p>	<p>consider diversifying risk by holding monies in more than one financial institution. I understand from the Clerk that this is currently under review.</p>	<p>Not Actioned – re raised at final audit</p>
<p>The F&GP Committee are due to receive a budget monitoring report at their meeting on 16 December. This is the first time a budget monitoring report has been presented to councillors this financial year. This is not in line with the requirements of the Financial Regulations</p>	<p>Budget monitoring reports must therefore be presented to councillors every quarter, with a narrative report showing explanations of all variances from budget.</p>	<p>Noted and actioned</p>



Points Forward – Action Plan - Final Audit

Matter Arising	Recommendation	Council Response – Final Audit
VAT due per the balance sheet at 31.3.21 was £19,763. This is due to VAT being owed for quarters 1 and 3.	This should be chased up as a matter of urgency as these VAT refunds should have been processed by HMRC by now.	
All Council cash is currently held with one bank.	consider diversifying risk by holding monies in more than one financial institution. I understand from the Clerk that this is currently under review.	
General reserves at year end were £82K, which represents 22% of precept. This is a little low, the NALC Practitioners Guide suggests general reserves should not fall below 25 % of net revenue expenditure.	Whilst the Council has well developed earmarked reserves, these are in the main held to support assets and capital expenditure, The council should look to increase general reserves in the medium term.	
Missed accrual of £17044 relating to the January 2020 payroll. This accrual was missed from the 19-20 accounts. The clerk arranged for this to be processed by RBS	Given the value of the accrual, I recommended that the clerk should amend the accounts to ensure this transaction is posted to the correct year of account. This requires box 4 and 7 of the comparative 19-20 accounts to be restated, and reduced staff costs in box 4 for 20-21 to be reduced to the correct level.	
The Council is still using cheques. I understand that plans to move to online banking have stalled this year due to the pandemic and lack of assistance from the bank.	However, this must be moved forward in 21-22, cheques are increasingly outdated, and many suppliers will no longer accept payment by cheque.	
the external audit certificate was not signed off until 2 February 2021, so the statutory deadline	Late external audit signature we believe was due to an resident query that the	

<p>for publishing the audited accounts was missed. I must therefore report that the Council has not met control objective N – compliance with publication requirements 2019-20 accounts.</p>	<p>external auditors were obliged to examine.</p>	
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Annual Internal Audit Report 2020/21

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

<http://www.billingshurst.gov.uk/>

During the financial year ended 31 March 2021, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2020/21 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2019/20, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2019/20 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. If the authority has an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000, it publishes information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the Transparency code for smaller authorities.			✓
M. The authority, during the previous year (2019-20) correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (evidenced by the notice published on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2019/20 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).		✓	
O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes ✓	No 	Not applicable

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

04/11/2020 21/04/2021

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

M PLATTEN CPFA

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

M. Platten

Date

21/04/2021

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2020/21

We acknowledge as the members of:

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
	✓		has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

20/04/2021

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

Clerk

www.billingshurst.gov.uk

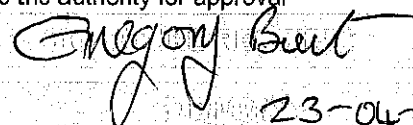
Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2020/21 for

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2020 £	31 March 2021 £	
1. Balances brought forward	409,175	394,208	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	352,463	373,325	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	545,826	194,270	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	RESTATED 201,484	215,051	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	20,257	31,088	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	691,515	338,352	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	394,208	377,312	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	269,275	355,127	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	1,778,620	1,779,179	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	458,553	432,056	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
	✓		N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2021 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval


Date 23-04-2021

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:



as recorded in minute reference:



Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved



Existing Major Projects Overview	
Name	Status
Billingshurst Parish Council	
New Skatepark @ Jubilee Fields	Quote awaited from preferred designer.
New path across r/o SRG	Specification being reviewed, prior to inviting quotes.
Connection of Pavilion @ JPF to mains sewer.	Background work continues: trying to get an idea of overall cost before returning to Members to see if it is something they wish to take forward.
Replace all bollards at Adversane Green with more appropriate design.	Number of replacement bollards confirmed. Design to be agreed and funds identified.
Traditional Village Sign at Adversane Green	Consultation on possible designs held.
East St & High St Traffic calming etc.	Monies secured for design work; consultants appointed.
CCTV	Investigation work continuing.
83a High St.	All funds and permissions in place. Start date TBC
Skatepark @ LSRRG	Insurers being pursued to assist with advice on faults caused by subsidence / defective workmanship.
Billingshurst Centre	
New garage to house Litter Warden Team to r/o Billingshurst Centre.	All permissions and funds in place. Start date and contractors being finalised.
Upgrading - all areas	Toilet refurb. and energy efficiency works to be incorporated into wider program of upgrading works. Report to be taken to Members.
Car Park subsidence	2nd quote awaited for technical investigation + design for repair.