

Burton Bradstock Parish Council

Reports for the Council meeting on 19 October 2022

Agenda Item 6a

Financial Regulations

The F&GP Group met to discuss further the Council's Financial Regulation with a view to clarifying and simplifying them. The Group had the benefit of advice from the Chief Executive of DAPTC to aid their considerations. There has not been time to draft fully a revised set of Financial Regulations, but the Group proposes the following changes (in ***bold italics***), which are recommended to the Council for adoption:

4.5. In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, ***council property or to any person as a result of defects in council services or property***, the clerk ~~and a councillor~~ may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which in the clerk's ~~and councillor's~~ judgement, it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £500. The Clerk shall report such action to the ~~chairman~~ ***councillors*** as soon as possible and to the ***next council meeting, as soon as practicable thereafter.***

10.4. ***Unless duly authorised no*** A-member may ~~not~~ issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council. [To align with Standing Order 26a].

11.

k) Where the need for the repair or maintenance of a Council asset

- i. has been identified, and***
- ii. the estimated cost is within the limits of Financial Regulation 11 h) iv. (acceptance of single quotations), and***
- iii. there is provision for the estimated cost in the appropriate budget,***

the Clerk/ RFO may issue an order for the work or, if required, its specification, in consultation with two Councillors to include the Lead Member for the asset (if any) and the Chair. The Clerk/RFO shall report any work so instructed to the next available meeting of the Council for information.

Agenda Item 6c

Maintenance of Corncrake

The Corncrake Management Plan 2021-2026, adopted by the Council in February 2021, contains a number of maintenance items that should be undertaken during this year, some of the deadlines for which have passed. These include:

Scything the wildflower area: cutting the area should be carried out after seeds have formed, to provide the opportunity for them to self-sow but has not been undertaken to date. The Plan also

specifies that the cuttings should be spread around the trees elsewhere on Corncrake to provide a green manure. The dry summer and lack of scything to date has left dried out plant stems that are unsuitable for distribution as manure without being composted first. Time has not permitted organising traditional scything as has been previous practice. I propose that the Plan is altered to:

1. have the plant stems cut by strimming or scything.
2. use a part of Corncrake for a composting area for the cuttings from this area and elsewhere. The composting area I suggest is between the Bredy Road footpath entrance and either just to the south east or south west of the nearby gate into the western part of Corncrake.
3. If the above are approved I intend to discuss whether the cutting, composting and subsequent distribution of compost could be carried out by the Volunteers, and propose that these be added to their task list.

Common Lane Hedge: this is due for side trimming, which I shall endeavour to arrange soon.

Tree pruning: the fruit trees should be pruned over winter. I intend to discuss whether this could be carried out by the Volunteers, and propose that it be added to their task list.

Grassland areas: the Plan includes re-introducing cattle grazing to the main meadow area, and to distribute wildflower seed (collected from nearby meadows in year 1-3 of this management plan). There has been no success in finding a grazier with a suitable family group of cattle to graze the grassland as specified, without which extending the wildflower area are unlikely to succeed.

During consultation on the current Plan there was considerable disagreement about grazing the grassland. Additionally, the tree planting undertaken to date complicates grazing by the need to fence off the tree-planted area. There have also been suggestions that further tree planting should be undertaken.

Given the difficulties encountered in fulfilling the current Management Plan I suggest that a review should be commenced in the near future, and I propose that a working group be established to undertake a review of the Plan, consulting widely on proposals arising.

I recommend that:

1. **The Council agrees changes to the Management Plan and additions to the Volunteers task list as set out above**
2. **That a Working Group be established to undertake and consult widely on a review of the Management Plan.**

Reading Room: The Men's Toilets

As reported to the last Parish Council meeting, the urinals in the men's toilets are proving difficult to clean and are little used. Following an inspection and discussion with Councillor Hawes we propose that they are closed, and the current women's toilet used by both sexes. This can be easily achieved by:

1. Closing the stopcock serving the urinals;
2. Pouring disinfectant or bleach down each urinal (to avoid any odours);
3. Providing a hasp and staple lock with padlock to the door to the urinals; and
4. Removing the "Men" sign from the door and placing it beneath the "Women" sign on the current women's toilet door.

We recommend that the Repair and Maintenance Contractor be requested to undertake this work under the established arrangements.

Relocation of the Play Area Gate and Southern Fence

Discussions with the Repair & Maintenance Contractor have clarified the differences between the work suggested (and quoted for) by the Play Area Inspector. Re-using the gate would involve excavating concrete surrounding the gate posts and removing it from the posts themselves. The Repair & Maintenance Contractor has told me that he considered purchasing a new gate and posts, but this would cost in the order of £1,100. Additionally, the Repair & Maintenance Contractor's earlier quote did not include realigning the southern fence.

The Repair & Maintenance Contractor's quote (non-binding) for the full specification is now £760 plus materials / equipment of up to £80 plus VAT.

In view of the difficulty in obtaining alternative quotes I **recommend that as an exception to Financial Regulations the Repair & Maintenance Contractor be instructed to carry out this work.**

Councillor Graham Moody

13 October 2022