

BURTLE PARISH COUNCIL

An additional meeting of Burtle Parish Council was held on Wednesday 9th December 2020 at 8.00pm to discuss grant application. This was a virtual meeting held via zoom.

53 PRESENT

Councillor R Dallimore (chairman)
Councillor A Duval (vice chairman)
Councillor S Bull
Councillor N Ponsillo
District Councillor Stuart Kingham

54 APOLOGIES

Councillor J Porter
County Councillor David Huxtable

55 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None made.

56 DISPENSATIONS

None were sought

57 MATTERS ARISING

Catcott Broad Drove Enforcement Officer has visited site now known as The Stables and advised that a planning application needs to be made for work carried out on the site. No replies from Natural England or Environment Agency re SSSI aspect.

58 SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL CLIMATE EMERGENCY COMMUNITY FUND 2020 – 2021 -PROPOSED GRANT APPLICATION BY BURTLE VILLAGE HALL

After much discussion it was unanimously agreed that, although councillors commend the idea in principle, they are unable to support making the application.

Proposed Cllr R Dallimore

Seconded Cllr S Bull

It was further agreed that a letter be sent to the Burtle Village Hall Committee outlining the reasons for this decision. *Attached*

59 CORRESPONDENCE

Email has been received from a resident of the parish about the dangerous state of the road by the Peatworks. Clerk to remind Highways etc about emails sent earlier highlighting the problem. Reply to resident letting him know actions taken.

60 ITEMS OF INTEREST

Councillors noted with sadness that two long standing residents of the village had recently passed away Mr Alan Parr and Mr Derek Cox. Clerk was asked to write letters of condolence to their families.

Defibrillator has been used and replacement pads are needed. Clerk has ordered the pads and Defib Guardian, Mr N Chard, has notified Ambulance service, that it is withdrawn from service until they arrive.

61 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 6th January 2021 at 7.30pm via zoom.

There being no further business the chairman closed the meeting at 8.50pm.

SignedDate.....

BURTLE PARISH COUNCIL

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Richard Dallimore
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Somerset
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12 December 2020

Lyn Goodliffe
Chairman
Burtle Village Hall Management Committee

Dear Lyn,

Firstly, thank you for your communication to the Burtle Parish Council (BPC) regarding the Burtle Village Hall (BVH) investigation into securing a grant from the Somerset Climate Emergency Community Fund. I would also like to thank you and your colleagues for the considerable effort you have put into the request.

Whilst the BPC applauds and supports green initiatives, unfortunately, at their meeting on 9th December 2020, the BPC unanimously voted they could not support the application progressing any further for the reasons outlined below.

- BPC would have to be the recipient and controller of the grant funding. This would place the BPC into a higher level of audit and complication and incur increased costs for at least one and possibly two financial years – for which BPC has not budgeted. Whilst the BPC could pay the monies directly to BVH, the BPC would remain accountable for the monies as the BPC are effectively only ‘outsourcing’ the installation work to a third party - in this case it would be the BVH.

- The Somerset Climate Emergency Community Fund Scheme, Guidance for Applicants document makes it quite clear that the amount of grant agreed is final and there can be no top ups. As the applicant, BPC would, therefore, be responsible for covering any unforeseen costs that might arise during installation. BPC has not budgeted for any expenditure of this nature and does not hold sufficient reserves to cover any additional costs that might arise.

- There will inevitably be ongoing costs for maintenance to ensure optimum efficiency of the panels and the inverter to allow feed back into the National grid. Battery maintenance and replacement must also be considered as the majority of the Hall’s energy consumption is during evening events whereas the energy will be produced during the day. Given their very small operating budget it is unlikely that BPC would be in a position to give any financial help with these costs.

- Having spoken with other parishes who are also considering approaching the grant, BPC understands that some have agreed to support the grant with a contribution financially and in at least one case the beneficiary will make a contribution which will be price matched by their Parish Council. The BPC have not made any provision for supporting such a venture, and as you can appreciate the amount of income and amount of reserves held by a small community of approximately 300 adults is not comparable with some of our neighbours who may have the funds to do this.
- In addition to the above point, I note that in 2019 BVH made a small profit of around £2,000 for the year. 2020 is going to eat into the BVH reserves and 2021 is also going to be another tough year at least for the first 2 quarters, if not the 3rd. I do not believe the BVH could make a suitable contribution to the fund in order to support the application.
- The potential installation of a EV charging point outside of the Village Hall also raises a number of concerns, primarily the charging of money for a service and the knock-on impact of this service on insurance, ongoing running and maintenance costs and the tax implications to the BVH. BPC understands that whilst the BVH is a registered charity – they are still liable to taxation but do enjoy certain exemptions subject to prescribed income limits.
- And lastly the sum of approximately £28,000 in order to offset a running cost of approximately £1,500 electricity per annum does not feel like a good use of public funds. I appreciate there is proposed income from the panels – but this is not guaranteed, and they will degrade over time lowering this income.

I realise that this is not the response you hoped for, but the BPC spent a great deal of time discussing the matter before concluding that they would be unable to support the application.

Kind Regards

Richard Dallimore
Chairman Burtle Parish Council