**BPC TRUSTS AND GRANTS AGAR 2022**

**TRUSTS**

I am concerned that the February 2022 Internal Audit report only states one BPC Trustee role, with one associated charity, i.e. “*The Council is the sole managing trustee of Bleadon Children's Playground*”.”

In various BPC documents and website entries BPC has stated that it is the Custodial Trustee of the Halls (£1.1 million on the Asset Register), sole Managing Trustee of Bleadon Children's Playground, is directly responsible for the Youth Centre Land as Custodial Trustees and Car Park. The latter three assets are not on the Asset Register although some Playground assets are noted. [AGAR Form 3 'O'](https://www.bleadon.org.uk/media/other/24400/AGAR2022-Final.pdf) Trustee Responsibilities statement was changed to ‘YES’ in 2021 from ‘NO’ in 2020? Please explain to me which Trust responsibilities should and should not be included in the Internal Auditor’s report and associated AGAR, and why.

Also, Sep 22 Agenda 345.10.(13) “*Chariity Commission Proposed change of process – Bleadon Children Playground*” No papers published and minutes will not be published until October. Please advise what this entails.

On 15 May 22 BPC responded in regards to the **Halls** in Trust query, “*The Parish Council as the Corporate Body is the* ***Sole Custodial Trustee*** *and is held in Trust for the resident of Bleadon*.” Please explain why this is not mentioned in the Internal Audit report? Please explain why there is not a charity Commission submission. BPC have stated on a number of occasions that it is responsible for the payments for the **exterior of the halls** including building insurance (but not contents insurance) and the car park. "*The Coronation Hall is a registered Charity* [[Charity No: 1042602](https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/1042602/financial-history)]*, with the Committee as Management Trustees, and****operates under the rules and objects of our 1938 trust deed*"** ([BVN80](https://www.bleadon.org.uk/media/other/24400/bvn80.pdf)) The Halls Management Committee is also publicly stated to be responsible for the **interior of the Halls**. The related [2010 Protocol](https://www.bleadon.org.uk/media/other/24400/Protocol_HallsandParishCouncil.pdf) states to hold quarterly public meetings. As Custodial Trustee of the Halls, please can you tell where it is minuted that BPC receives the related quarterly minutes, and where these minutes are publicly published. (Jun 22 354.9.(i) “Coronation Halls Management Committee. Noted that the AGM took place on 19/05/22”)

On 15 July 22 I asked, “please can someone tell me why the [current BPC online June 2020 Asset Register](https://www.bleadonparishcouncil.co.uk/content/large/documents/policies_%26_terms_of_reference/asset-register-june-2020.pdf) has the Coronation Hall listed as a BPC asset, not indicated as in Custodial Trusteeship, and for a value of £1million not 'nil' as residents were previously informed. Also, why BPC assets value is listed at June 2020 as £1.1 million on the register, a different value of £860K in Section 2. BPC response, “*Because that was how it was listed  at the time”.* Please explain how a £1.1 million asset held in Trust now appears as a BPC asset, seemingly not in Trust? (See July 2008 [Min 205.10.5](https://www.bleadon.org.uk/media/other/24400/200807minutes-july2008.pdf))

The **Youth Club** is managed and financed independently by the Bleadon Youth Club ([Charity No: 304492](https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/304492/financial-history)) and has a [Lease](https://www.bleadon.org.uk/media/other/24400/youth_club_lease21694.pdf) with BPC, see [Notes](https://www.bleadon.org.uk/media/other/24400/YouthClubLeaseNotesAUG22.pdf). BPC’s website doesn’t state that it is Sole Managing Trustee of the Playground but it does state, “**Youth Centre land as Custodial Trustees**”. Please explain why this is not mentioned in the Internal Auditor’s report? Why is there no Charity Commission submission?

Considering the above Trust assets, please tell me the ownership status is the car park

**Playground** - In Dec21 ([Min 347.10](https://www.bleadonparishcouncil.co.uk/content/large/documents/minutes/2021/council-meeting-minutes-347-131221.pdf)) it was minuted "*Correspondence (1) Charity Commission Bleadon Children’s Playground BP. The Clerk advised the meeting that the required formal****annual meeting of the Playground Charity****would be held immediately prior to the January Council Meeting*". I can find no update in subsequent full council minutes. The Playground is managed by BPC as a Playground Charity ([Charity No: 304491](https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/304491/financial-history)) that appears to have recorded/spent nothing on the park in the last 5 years. *BPC response 25 July 22 stated, “The Children’s Play Area has consistently over many years declared in its Annual Charity Report that there is no income or expenditure. The Parish Council undertakes this responsibility. All of the income and expenditure is therefore reflected in the accounts*.”

BPC Financial Regulations 14.1 states, “*Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Clerk and RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Clerk and RFO shall arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.”* BPC has not provided an itemised breakdown for each budget line item as previously requested, so that I can see the income and expenditure for each responsibility. Please send me a copy. Where appropriate, please also send me the accounts for each BPC Trust responsibilities, e.g. Custodial Trustee of the Halls, sole managing trustee of Bleadon Children's Playground”, Youth Centre land as Custodial Trustees, and Car Park.

The [Bleadon Children’s Play Area AGM 14FEB22](https://www.bleadon.org.uk/media/other/24400/PlaygroundCharityMinutes14FEB22.pdf) minutes were received via the 25 July22 AGAR response. The minutes stated that the meeting was held 14 Feb 2020? There is no acceptance of the previous year’s minutes? There is no reference to any assets, income or expenditure undertaken by BPC, e.g. as paid for by public funds? No mention of BPC’s plans to grant match fund additional equipment, with a potential future unminuted expenditure of £10K (see below)? Please can you indicate where the last 5 years’ meetings are noted in Full council minutes, and please send me copies of the associated minutes.

**GRANTS**

Along with [BPC allocated representatives](https://www.bleadonparishcouncil.co.uk/content/large/documents/councillors/cllr-responsibilities-22-23.pdf), in my email 15 July 22 I wrote, “The [Halls Committee](https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/1042602/trustees) (3 former Cllr trustees), [Youth Club](https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/304492/trustees) (2 former Cllr trustees) and [Playground](https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/304491/trustees) (all current Cllrs) are all independent charities, with BPC also a Custodial Trustee of the Halls, car park, land, etc. Each of these entities have current and former councillors involved in their associated committees. It has become increasingly difficult to understand who is requesting money/grants/finance and how these subsequently get tabled and awarded. Any other organisation or group requesting money, donations, etc. would be asked to fill in a BPC Grant application form that states, "*Only registered charities, voluntary groups or community organisations are eligible to apply for a grant. National or regional charities are not eligible, nor are individuals.*" BPC 25 July 22 response, “The Parish Council leaves by arrangement the day to day management to the Hall Committee. Currently the Parish Council pays the Annual Insurance and makes a contribution to the electricity used by the PC. The PC does not pay any rent as such.  The youth club also receives an annual contribution towards the electricity costs. I am not aware of any Grants be directly paid to either village organisations.” In the past BPC clearly minuted these types of ‘contribution’ as grants (May 2011 [Min 233.22](https://www.bleadon.org.uk/media/other/24400/201105Minutes-AnnualParishCouncilMeeting2011.pdf)), please explain why the formerly transparent practice changed? As stated, these are village organisations, not BPC projects. BPC appears to be giving public money to organisations without any clear visible process such as the grant process. Please send me a list of all grants, donations, gifts, contributions given by BPC in 2021/22 as per [BPC Publication Scheme.](https://www.bleadonparishcouncil.co.uk/content/large/documents/policies_%26_terms_of_reference/publication_scheme_adopted_-_july_2020.pdf) Please explain the purpose of the grant budget line item, as this implies this is the only budget available for charities/village organisations/ non-BPC projects was £500 last year with £0 spent, yet there was expenditure on the halls, park and youth club (see below)? Please explain how this ‘contribution’ approach fits with any BPC General Power of Competence and transparency.

On 15 July 22 I wrote, “The [BPC Grants policy](https://www.bleadonparishcouncil.co.uk/content/large/documents/policies_%26_terms_of_reference/grant_request_policy_-_amended_may_2018.pdf) states, "*The Parish Council requires that any individual or group requesting funding from the Parish Council should if possible be represented at the meeting where their application is to be considered in order to give background and information at the request of the Chairman*" If this process was undertaken, with any involved councillors declaring a financial interest for their project, then the request and expenditure would be more transparent, with the associated grant form becoming part of the legal minutes and documentation.

I'm aware, and grateful, that the independent Bleadon in Bloom (BIB) transparently post their expenditure on the BPC website. The Grants policy states, "*If an organisation is unable to use all or any part of the award for the stated purpose then all or any monies not used for the stated purpose are be returned to the Council*." BPC Q3 Budget by Centre publicly indicates a 2021-22 BIB budget of £8,466. Yet the [BIB budget](https://www.bleadonparishcouncil.co.uk/content/large/documents/bleadon_in_bloom/bleadon_in_bloom_budget_2021_140121.pdf) publicly states a 2021-22 budget of £10,127.50, with a 2019 '**carry forward**' of £1,411.00, and "***Grant****needed for 2021 BiB £8,466.50*". I believe that the BPC publicly stated BIB budget of £8,466K is misleading as it has actually budgeted a minimum of £9,877 of resident/public money for 2021-22. Please explain how this this independent group is allowed to use BPC accounting, clerk, invoicing, etc. similar to the independent newsletter, and possibly the Platinum Jubilee group, with no overriding BPC financial or project management or documented working group decision making and expenditure. BPC 25 July 22 response, “In simple terms these “projects” that you mention are in my view typical provisions that a council makes for its community. If we did not have BIB the Coronation Hall Management Committee and the Youth Club Management Committee then the council would have to employ maintenance staff to undertake the work. It would also be a poorer community to live in without many hard working people. Frankly whilst you have every right to question these matters the village would be worse off if people didn’t go beyond the call of duty i.e Councillor in this case. I cannot imagine you run your “village website” entirely as a volunteering project.” The question is not necessarily what is being done but how it is done. BPC is accountable for public expenditure. I believe that how that finance is requested, spent, documented, etc. should be in the public domain in a clear, transparent manner.

**EXPENDITURE ON TRUST RESPONSIBILITES / ASSETS**

In the absence of an itemised breakdown of expenditure I’ve listed the following.

**Playground**

Following the last time BPC undertook a major reorganisation of the Play area without public consultation, there is understandably concern within the community that they feel that they have not been properly consulted. BPC plans for the playground have not been published. The amount of the grant and consequently the amount of money that BPC residents will need to pay via precept, reserves, etc. has not been minuted. Please tell me how much grant BPC has requested, how much BPC need to match and where that money will come from. Please send me information on BPC plans for the playground.

14 Feb 22 “350.7. 2. “*To note the Tree quotation received from Ward Tree Surgeons in respect to the Churchyard and Play Area in the sum of £220.00 plus vat. Resolved after some discussion relating to the Council’s responsibility concerning the Churchyard that the quotation received from Ward Tree Surgeons in the sum of £220.00 plus vat be accepted*.” Considering May22 353.14 Invoice #220 for £310 and £62, was the Play Area tree works also undertaken and included in the final invoice?

14 Feb 22 “*Councillor Solomon indicated that he was hopeful in securing match funding for villages like Bleadon where inclusive play area equipment could be funded. Time however was of the essence as the window for such funding was closing on the 31st March 2022*.” Jun 22 354.7. 5. “*To Resolve to apply for match funding from North Somerset’s “Improving Play Spaces Fund”. Resolved to seek match funding from North Somerset’s “Improving Play Spaces Funds” at a level that current ERMs could be made available”* July 22 Min 355.9.(k) *”Neighbourhood Plan Group Clerk waiting to hear whether or not the unused funds can be subsumed into the parish council accounts in order to assist with match funding.”* Sept 22 Agenda 356.4.(19) “*Neighbourhood Plan Group – Return of Grant?”*  Please confirm whether the NDP project has officially finished and when this decision was minuted? (Last BPC published minutes August 2019). Please tell me the response from the NDP Grant Funder, what does ‘*Return of Grant?*’ mean? Can the funds be reallocated for the playground project or do they need to be used and/or returned to the grant funder? No papers are published and the minutes of the September meeting will not be published until October.

Jun 22 354.9 (f) “*Play Area Working Group currently investigating*” This is an unminuted working group, with no reference to full council papers? Please advise who is on this BPC Working Group, and explain why there has been no public awareness or consultation by BPC about any changes to the playground.

Jul 22 355.4. (14) “*NS Improving Play Spaces Match Funding. Cllrs. S. Garrett & G Williams confirmed that they had completed the match funding grant application in due time with North Somerset.*” When was this submitted to NSC? Did this grant application go via full council approval before submission, and where is this minuted? Please send me a copy of the grant submission? Jul 22 355.9. (e) “*Play Area Cllrs. Sara Garrett and Gill Williams advised the meeting of the equipment they were hoping to secure through the NS match funding and potential location in the Play Area.*” No public information or associated papers as to what location is being considered for what equipment, please send me information.

Sept 22 Agenda 356.7.4 “*To resolve to formally sign North Somerset’s Project Grant Agreement in respect to the Improving Play Spaces Fund*.” No associated papers attached for full council or public?

Q4-Final-20221/22 – dated 31 Aug 22

4470 Children's Playground Budget £2,000 and expenditure £444

4401 Playground Equipment Budget £750 and expenditure £0

4410 Playground Inspections Budget £312 and expenditure £310

TOTAL £754

**HALLS**

Jun 21 343.8 (31) Came & Co Annual Insurance Premium £2,536.76 does this include Halls building and contents insurance?

July 21 344.8.(81) Coronation Hall Contribution towards WiFi £?? amount not stated?

Dec 21 347.8 (137) Barrett Corp Harrington Insurance Re-Instatement Fee £600.00 and £120.00 related to above?

Feb 22 350.7 “*To note a quote received for the proposed external painting of the Coronation Hall in the sum £2,450 excluding materials. Resolved that due to the absence of any further quotes and the time restrictions imposed by the Platinum Jubilee dates that the quotation of £2,450 be accepted once the cost of materials is known and deemed acceptable”*

Feb 22 350.8 (197) KC Construction Disabled Ramp £2,625.00

Q4-2021/22 4170 Hall Hirings Budget £250 and Expenditure £121

May 22 Min 354.14. (8) KC Construction \*\* Coronation Hall External Painting £2,280.00 \*\* “*After a full explanation of the background was given by the Parish Clerk to the members the Council recommended immediate payment. The Clerk suggested that when future works were required by the Hall Management Committee that it provides the Parish Council (Custodial Trustee) with a proposed works schedule prior to the Council seeking quotations*”. Please tell me who is responsible for the external works to the Halls, BPC as Custodial Trustee or Halls Management Committee? (See above quote and stated responsibilities)

May 22 354.14. (23) AV Partsmaster Hall Replacement Projector £557.00 and £111.40. Please tell me whether this is this an internal Halls facility to be used by people renting the Halls via the Halls Management Committee, or is it for BPC’s sole use? If the latter, BPC has not used a projector for its full council meetings for many years, which I believe compounds the issue of BPC not releasing its agenda papers/appendices/reports to the public as they can’t follow the meetings when they refer to papers.

**CAR PARK**

May 21 342.14.1 (187) BYC Donation Car Park Lighting £120.00

Sep 345.8. (92) North Somerset Dropped Kerb Application £186.50

Dec 21 347.8. (161) M Babbage & Son Dropped Kerb Works £530.00 and £106.00

May 22 353.15. (o) “Parish Clerk …(ii) *He had received a request from the Jubilee Organising Committee that the Car Park be closed to parking on the 5th June - Agreed ”* Please tell me who was on this undocumented Jubilee Organising Committee

**YOUTH CLUB**

May 21 342.13.12. “*To resolve to remove the current two round picnic tables that are in a poor condition and replace them with two from Fountain Forestry at £375.37 each the cost of which to be shared equally between the Parish Council and Bleadon Youth Club. Resolved to undertake the stated action”* July 21 Min 344.8.1.74 “*Mr A Leonard Constructing Picnic Tables 100.00*“. July 22 Invoice #62A to the Youth Club for £208.79 on 14 July 21, paid 15 July 21? (see Financial AGAR Queries 2022) Income is not documented in the monthly minutes so xxxxx cant check

May 21 342.14.2 (24) BYC Lighting Donation £175.00

May 22 353.13. 13. “*To agree the 2021-22 level of financial support to be given to Bleadon Youth Club in respect to the annual contribution towards their lighting costs. Resolved to provide the sum of £200.00*” Jun 22 354.8. (30) Bleadon Youth Club Lighting Contribution 2021-22 £200.00