

SALISBURY CITY COUNCIL

Report

Subject: Annual report to the Annual General Meeting
Committee: Lower Bemerton Trust
Date: 24 June 2024
Author: Steve Bishop, Responsible Finance Officer

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. It is customary for the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) of Salisbury City Council to submit an annual report to the annual general meeting (AGM) of the Lower Bemerton Managing Trustees Committee.
- 1.2. Salisbury City Councillors serve as managing trustees for the Trust. This report seeks trustee approval of the Trust's Statement of Account for 2023/24, seeks authorisation to reimburse Salisbury City Council an annual revenue grant and seeks approval of some administrative arrangements.
- 1.3. This report should be read in conjunction with the associated 'Review of Lower Bemerton Trust banking arrangements' report submitted to the Full Council meeting which follows after this AGM.

2. Policy Considerations

- 2.1. Trust law and recommended best practice requires councillors as trustees to discharge their Trust obligations diligently. This report helps discharge this duty.

3. Approval of Annual Statements of Account

- 3.1. At its 27 June 2022 AGM the Managing Trustees Committee agreed to provide a revenue grant of up to £12,000 to reimburse Salisbury City Council for expenditure incurred in maintaining the recreation ground.
- 3.2. Usually this annual report from the RFO presents the Statement of Account for the preceding financial year. Due to the Trust's banking mandate becoming out of date and unusable (which is explained more fully in the report to the Full Council), the previously submitted 2022/23 Statement of Account is incorrect. This report will therefore present a re-stated 2022/23 Statement and the new 2023/24 Statement of Account.

2022/23

- 3.3. The 2022/23 Statement of Account was received by the Managing Trustees Committee at their AGM on 26 June 2023. It demonstrated Council expenditure of £10,590.38 on Trust activities in 2022/23 and the Committee approved a revenue grant in this sum. This has not changed. The only error in the Statement is that it assumed immediate payment of the grant and the resulting reduction in the Trust's balances.
- 3.4. Due to the bank rejecting the Trust's cheque, the grant for 2022/23 has not been paid and the Trust's bank balance has remained higher than as stated in the 2022/23 Statement.

- 3.5. Attached at Appendix A is a re-stated Statement for 2022/23, which the Committee is asked to approve. Two columns are provided: on the left is the original (erroneous) statement as approved by the Committee at last year's AGM; on the right is the re-stated (correct) statement for the Committee to approve.

2023/24

- 3.6. The Council expended £9,203.19 in maintaining the recreation ground in 2023/24 and seeks a revenue grant in this amount.
- 3.7. Attached at Appendix B is the Statement of Account for 2023/24, which the Committee is asked to approve. Two columns are provided: on the left in grey is the re-stated 2022/23 comparative; on the right is the 2023/24 Statement for the Committee to approve.
- 3.8. The costs of repairs and water/sewerage were unusually low in 2023/24 and will be higher next year. The Council's new cleaning contract from July 2024 will also result in much higher recharges to the Trust. For these reasons the annual £12,000 limit referred to in para 3.1 above will probably be insufficient to cover all Council costs. Trustees are asked to increase this limit to £15,000.

4 2024/25 Recreation Ground Activity

- 4.1 Throughout 2024/25 the Environmental Services Team will continue to provide ongoing routine maintenance, cleaning and general repairs to the Lower Bemerton Recreation Ground, albeit at higher costs than previously. The Council is not seeking to undertake additional works or developments during 2024/25.
- 4.2 The Council is therefore requesting the Managing Trustees to approve an annual grant of up to £15,000 for general maintenance, cleaning and repair.

5 Administrative Arrangements

- 5.1 The Trust is a registered charity and must submit annual returns and accounts to the Charity Commission by online submission. In order for the RFO or another SCC officer (for resilience) to do so, they need to be 'charity contacts', approved by resolution of the Managing Trustees. The Trustees are therefore requested to approve this designation.

6 Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Managing Trustees:

- 6.1 Approve the re-stated Statement of Account for 2022/23 attached at Appendix A and re-authorise the payment of a grant to the Council for £10,590.38.
- 6.2 Approve the Statement of Account for 2023/24 attached at Appendix B and authorise the payment of a grant to the Council for £9,203.19.
- 6.3 Approve an annual revenue grant for 2024/25 to Salisbury City Council of up to £15,000 from the Lower Bemerton Recreation Ground and Endowment Fund Trust.

6.4 Approve that Steve Bishop, the RFO, and Marc Read, the Head of Environmental Services, are the designated 'charity contacts' for the Trust and make all necessary submissions as required by the Charity Commission.

7 **Ward Affected:** Fisherton and Bemerton Village

8 **Background Papers:**

RFO's 2022/23 and 2023/24 annual accounts working papers.

9 **Implications:**

9.1 . **Financial:** As shown in this report

9.2 . **Legal:** Generally – UK trust law; no specific implications

9.3 . **Personnel:** Nil in relation to this report

9.4 . **Environmental Impact:** Nil in relation to this report

9.5 . **Equalities Impact Statement:** Nil in relation to this report