

SALISBURY CITY COUNCIL

Report

Subject: Annual report to the Annual General Meeting
Committee: Lower Bemerton Trust
Date: 14 July 2025
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 2024/25 and seeks authorisation to reimburse Salisbury City Council an annual revenue grant.

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 24 June 2024 AGM the Managing Trustees Committee agreed to provide a revenue grant of up to £15,000 for 2024/25 to reimburse Salisbury City Council for expenditure incurred in maintaining the recreation ground.
- 3.2. The Council expended £16,517.97 in maintaining the recreation ground in 2024/25 and seeks a revenue grant for £15,000 as that is the maximum grant that was approved. This means that £1,517.97 of the cost was subsidised by the Council.
- 3.3. Attached at Appendix A is the Statement of Account for 2024/25, which the Trust is asked to approve. Two columns are provided: on the left in grey is the 2023/24 comparative; on the right is the 2024/25 Statement for the Trust to approve. All costs are recharged without any form of on-cost or Council commission/profit.
- 3.4. The costs of repairs, health & safety, water/sewerage and cleaning were much higher than in 2023/24, as predicted in last year's report, as this was a catch-up year. In particular the Council's new cleaning contract from July 2024 results in much higher recharges to the Trust. For these reasons the annual £15,000 limit referred to in para 3.2 above will possibly be insufficient to cover all Council costs, however as it was increased from £12,000 last year, officers recommend keeping it as is for at least one more year.

4 2025/26 Recreation Ground Activity

- 4.1 Throughout 2025/26 the Environmental Services Team will continue to provide ongoing routine maintenance, cleaning and general repairs to the Lower Bemerton Recreation

Ground. The Council is not seeking to undertake additional works or developments during 2025/26.

- 4.2 While no major developments are currently scheduled, the Council is beginning to consider future upgrades to improve accessibility and inclusivity at the site. This includes the potential modernisation of the public toilets, which are increasingly dated and may not meet the needs of all users. In addition, the Council has recently been approached by Disability Interest Group Salisbury (DIGS), who have expressed interest in installing an accessible path, inclusive play equipment, and other accessibility improvements in the space. These suggestions would require further investigation and funding considerations, including whether the Trust's funds might be used to support such initiatives.
- 4.3 The Council is therefore requesting the Managing Trustees to approve an annual grant of up to £15,000 for general maintenance, cleaning and repair. Trustees are asked to note the possibility that the Council may have to subsidise an element of the cost should total recharges exceed the £15,000.

5 Administrative Arrangements

- 5.1 Further to the Trust's resolutions at last year's AGM, the bank mandate has been updated and the Trust can once again access its bank account funds. Two officers are also discharging the Trust's Charity Commission obligations, submitting annual returns and accounts, etc.

6 Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Managing Trustees:

- 6.1 Approve the Statement of Account for 2024/25 attached at Appendix A and authorise the payment of a grant to the Council for £15,000.
- 6.2 Approve an annual revenue grant for 2025/26 to Salisbury City Council of up to £15,000 from the Lower Bemerton Recreation Ground and Endowment Fund Trust.
- 6.3 Note the emerging considerations regarding potential future improvements to site accessibility and facilities, including a possible upgrade of the toilets and the installation of accessible paths and inclusive play equipment. Trustees are asked to consider whether Trust funds could, in principle, be used to support such enhancements, subject to further proposals and costings being brought forward.

7 Ward Affected: Fisherton and Bemerton Village

8 Background Papers:

- 8.1 The RFO's 2024/25 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

Lower Bemerton Recreation Ground and Endowment Fund Trust**Statement of Account 2024/25**

Charity Commission Number 1081377

	2023/24 expenditure	2024/25 expenditure	Notes
	£	£	
<u>SCC Revenue Account 2024/25</u>			
Electricity	390.63	419.77	
Repairs & Maintenance	785.71	2,613.46	
Health & Safety	0.00	499.71	
Grounds Maintenance	1,541.00	1,547.24	
Waste Disposal	3,120.00	3,120.00	
Water & Sewerage	672.77	1,617.30	1
Cleaning charges	2,487.00	6,462.10	2
Insurance Premiums	206.08	238.39	
Total	9,203.19	16,517.97	
Adjustment to cap costs at pre-agreed limit	-	(1,517.97)	3
Total to be reimbursed	9,203.19	15,000.00	
<u>Natwest Bank Account</u>			
Opening balance 1st April	25,224.14	39,092.71	
M&G dividends received in year	13,868.57	14,594.24	
Compensation paid by bank		300.00	
Less SCC previous year reimbursement	0.00		
Closing balance 31st March	39,092.71	53,986.95	
Less accrued for previous year(s)	(19,793.57)	(34,793.57)	4
Adjusted balance at year end	19,299.14	19,193.39	
<u>Investments and Savings</u>			
M&G Securities Ltd (16,126.237 units)	234,810.91	244,844.66	
Natwest Account (adjusted)	19,299.14	19,193.39	
Total at year end	254,110.05	264,038.05	

Notes

1 2023/24 includes only part year due to invoice delays; 2024/25 catch-up & full year

2 Cleaning contract renewed in July 2024, with much higher costs.

3 Annual revenue grant limit set at £15k in June 2024 (minute 60.3)

4 No payment to SCC in 2023 due to mandate error causing rejected cheque; consequently, three years' payments required in 2025.