

Botus Fleming Parish Council

www.botusfleming.org.uk

Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

BACKGROUND

The Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities was issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government in December 2014. It sets out ways in which town and parish councils can present more information to its residents to help them understand how their council is working and increase its democratic accountability. The code comes from the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

WHAT THIS MEANS

Botus Fleming Parish Council has always published its agendas and minutes, and each year gives residents the opportunity to examine its annual accounts. Now, you can see this information published on our website. There are seven items that we are obliged to make available to you which are described below. Although the time within which you have a legal right to examine the council's accounts is limited by law, you can ask questions about the way that money is spent at any time. Contact the Parish Clerk by email with any questions you might have.

1 All Expenditure

You can view our cash book which shows what payments we have made throughout the year. Expenses are divided into 10 categories. We do this so that we can keep track of what our expenses are, and how we are performing against the budget we have set. Your councillors receive a regular summary of this information. The regulations state that we should publish all expenses that are above £100. However, in order to be completely transparent, this parish council publishes every item from 2016 onwards.

2 End of Year Accounts

We prepare a simple summary of our accounts at the end of the tax year that is submitted to government auditors for checking. This shows our income in from the precept you pay (the local council tax); other income (for example, from grants or subsidies); staff costs (the council employs one person), and a total figure for all other expenses. You can see the detail of this in the 'All Expenditure' sheet. These accounts also show what our cash holdings are, and the value of other fixed assets we own. These figures may appear high, but we need to keep a level of cash in reserve in order to maintain our services and pay our bills as they are presented. Cornwall Council is making proposals to pass down (devolve) some of its services to us but without additional funding. For this reason, we need to be ready to use some of our own reserves to pay for them.

3 Annual Governance Statement

The council manages itself according to a list of procedures and processes to ensure that what we do is legal, ethical and proportionate. These controls are set down by government, and councillors are in process of reviewing their governance statements throughout 2017

4 Internal Audit Report

We employ an independent auditor to examine our governance statements and procedures each year as part of our Annual Return. You can see what she was checking for and her sign-off in this document.

5 Councillors & Responsibilities

Your councillors are elected every four years by ballot of eligible residents in the parish. Every year, at its annual meeting, the councillors will elect a chair, vice-chair and volunteers to take responsibility for specific areas of council work. This list shows who has taken responsibility for what. If you need to contact a councillor personally, you can write to them via the parish clerk. Contact details are attached to this note.

6 Asset Register

The council does not own or hold in trust land and buildings in the parish. We do have a responsibility to insure, maintain and repair these assets listed.

7 Minutes, agendas of formal meetings

The parish council meets on the third Wednesday of every month. You can see a full list of the dates on this website. We publish an agenda for our monthly council meetings at least four days before they take place, and post the minutes of our meetings within 10 working days of the meeting itself. You can always find this information on the website or on the public noticeboards at Hatt and Botus Fleming.

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