

Abbots Langley Parish Council

Council Offices
Langley Road
Abbots Langley
Herts
WD5 0EJ

21st January 2014.

To Members of the Finance and Administration Committee

The next meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee will be held at the above address on Monday 27th January 2014 at 6:00 pm, when your presence is summoned for the purpose of transacting the business outlined below.

The press and public are welcome to attend the meeting.

Tim Perkins
Clerk to the Council

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**
To receive and accept apologies for absence.
2. **Declarations of Interest**
To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda.
3. **Public Participation**
To note if any members of the public have requested to speak at this meeting, in accordance with the Parish Council's Public Speaking Arrangements.
4. **To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 25th November 2013 (previously circulated).**
5. **Internal Audit**
To consider the interim update report from the internal auditor. (See Clerk's report item 1 and enclosed report.)
6. **Budget Monitoring Report**
To consider the budget monitoring report for Q3 2013-2014. (See Clerk's report item 2, monitoring and tracking report enclosed.)
7. **Financial Grants 2014-2015**
To note the applications received. (See Clerk's report item 3 and enclosed report.)
8. **EU VAT Rules for Public Sector**
To note the enclosed NALC Financial Briefing. (See enclosed briefing and the Clerk's report item 4.)
9. **Clerk's Report**
To consider items on the Clerk's report not covered elsewhere on the agenda.
 - Closed Churchyards
 - Small Grant

Abbots Langley Parish Council
Clerk's Report - F&A - January 2014

1. Internal Audit

A good report with a few recommendations on the final page of which I have commented.

One point I do want to bring to member's attention, under "Review of Income", (p6, bullet 3.), the auditor spent almost four hours checking cash, balances, floats and stock at Manor House. The positive outcome was not unexpected but credit is due to David Abbott for the work he puts in to financial controls.

Credit is also due to Gail who has come up to speed quickly and has established herself as a valuable member of the team. The continuing robustness of the internal audit reports are in no short order due to the hard work that Gail has put in since July last year.

Bit of a mea culpa. I should have arranged for the auditor to meet with the committee chairman. This can be arranged for the final 2013-2014 visit which will take place after the year end.

2. Budget Monitoring Report

The numbers have been done to death through the budget process, a couple of updates added to the tracking report, but all other differences have been covered at previous meetings, so nothing significant to add.

Tanners Wood Hall hire continues to impress, one week in the autumn I counted twenty one separate events in the hall Monday to Sunday.

Those of us (me!), in the early days, who were concerned that we would have trouble in hiring the hall have been proved comprehensively wrong.

3. Financial Grants 2014-2015

The above will be considered at the April meeting of this committee, a report showing applications received so far is enclosed. As the budget has not been approved it is not possible to award grants at this meeting.

All grant applicants have been written to advising of the delay, in practice successful applicants will receive grant cheques only a couple of weeks later than they would have done previously.

Hopefully, next year we will be able to return to approving grants in January, as whilst the delay in applicants receiving their cheques is not significant, the delay does not help their financial planning.

If members want to review the full application packs prior to the April meeting then please let me know.

4. EU VAT Rules for Public Sector

The enclosed NALC Financial Briefing refers to an ongoing European Commission review into VAT, which may have a significant impact on our sector. The final paragraph on page one is probably the most significant.

I will keep members updated on developments.

5. Closed Churchyards

The subject of the above has been raised occasionally. The enclosed extract from "The Clerk" magazine is one of the better plain language explanations that I have read.

The interesting point is that if maintenance responsibility is passed on to a District Council they can still effectively "charge" parish residents via special expenses, which form an element of the council tax calculations.

I am not aware that either of the churches in the parish are planning on closing their churchyards, but the subject often comes up around grants time when the churches submit their usual applications.

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6. Small Grant

A small grant of £250 was awarded to the Hillside Residents Assoc. to cover the costs of upgrading their PC and purchasing a replacement printer/scanner. £906 from an allocated budget of £2000 for small grants in this FY has now been spent.

Tim Perkins
Clerk to the Council
21st January 2014

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