

Abbots Langley Parish Council

Council Offices
Langley Road
Abbots Langley
Herts
WD5 0EJ

18th November 2015.

To Members of the Finance and Administration Committee

Councillors Sara Bedford, Lyn Ferguson, Brenda Kersey (Chairman), Jane Lay & Hitesh Tailor.

The next meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee will be held at the above address on Monday 23rd November 2015 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**
26th October 2015 (previously circulated).
5. **Internet Banking - Payment Authorisations**
To consider the report on the above. (See Clerk's report item 1.)
6. **Budget 2016-2017**
To consider the current revision of the budget. (See Clerk's report item 2 and budget v4 enclosed)
7. **Clerks Report**
To consider items on the Clerk's report not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

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Abbots Langley Parish Council
Clerk's Report - F&A - November 2015

1. Internet Banking

It was agreed at a previous meeting that we would review the arrangements for the above.

Currently the Clerk and FO have internet banking access to the Parish Council's accounts with Lloyds. This is useful, as an increasing number of customers are paying for bookings via internet banking. Having access to the accounts allows payment checks to be carried out prior to the receipt of paper statements.

Some banks offer a "two authoriser" facility on their commercial accounts. This would allow supplier payments to be set up in the office, two members advised that they are ready and the members would then log on and authorise the payments.

At this stage Lloyds do not offer this "two authoriser" service.

Given the only option would be to allow members to have full internet banking access to the Parish Council accounts and only one approver would be necessary to initiate payments we have concluded that that it is not practical at this time, as it would not comply with the two authoriser requirements of our Financial Regulations and would also introduce a number of significant security concerns.

Access to internet banking for supplier payments and member authorisations will be investigated further when Lloyds upgrade their systems to include "two authoriser" arrangements.

Until they do we will maintain the current cheque signing arrangements.

Breaking News

Since writing the above a few days ago Lloyds have today confirmed they now do offer a "two authoriser" service. Lloyds refer to this process as "Online Payment Control".

In practical terms members would have to register for Lloyds on-line banking to allow them access to authorise payments, but would still have to come into the office to review the payment supporting papers.

If members are happy to proceed on this basis we will draft a procedure for review by this committee, but this will require Parish Council approval.

2. Budget 2016-2017

Multiple refinements and updates to content.

Administration (p5, code 4110 Interest earned.)

Interest from bank deposits updated based on GJK projections. Interest reduces in 2016-2017 as assumed £135k withdrawal from deposits to fund play area projects.

Bowling Green (p12, all codes.)

Needs further review based on termination of green maintenance in September 2016.

Reserves (p3, various.)

Following proposed for 2016-2017

IT Equipment & Website, rounded up to £25,000 to cover website costs and IT hardware refresh.

Play Area Projects, increased by £16,400, transfer of proposed TRDC Supporting Grant for 2016-2017 (rounded).

Staff Absence Contingency, £2,000 added, now £10,000. Intention was to build this earmarked reserve to £10,000 and leave at that level until required.

Parish Election Fund. £4,000 added. Reserve will need to fund election costs for May & June 2015 and any by elections. No cost estimates or invoices have been received for the 2015 elections.

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Just for member's information. Target has always been to budget a minimum General Fund balance at the end of each FY in the range of £25-30k. This gives some cushion in the event of unforeseen expenditure. In practice when expenditure has run over budget then savings elsewhere usually offset.

The one key number still missing is the "Band D" base (p2. Summary), expecting some pick up here as the new properties on particularly the Abbotswood development come on stream. Final number will be available 7th December when approved by Three Rivers District Council, but I often get advance notice of the draft number a week or so in advance.

Members may want to give consideration to increasing the General Reserve ahead of any possible capital project that may be in their strategic plans.

An increase in the precept could also be considered to support strategic plans or revised staffing levels.

3. F&A Committee Meeting - 21st December

Members asked for this to be reintroduced to the calendar, it having been removed a few years ago.

The primary purpose of the meeting will be for the committee to "sign off" the budget so members are in a position to recommend it to the Parish Council for approval in January.

I would expect there to be minimal final "tweaks" to the budget. Having been through multiple committee reviews by this meeting the budget should be close to being final.

4. Office Refurbishment

Further quotes are being sought. Getting contractors to come in to quote or requote is proving incredibly difficult. The quote from Envoplan that members reviewed last month is still pending update.

I understand members will be considering the office refurbishment as part of a strategic review. Based on what we have discussed before and the quote received, members should consider around £35k the likely cost of the office refurbishment.

Two members have said to me in the past few weeks why we not use the Manor House or TWH for Parish Council and committee meetings. My response is always the same.

Next year's calendar has forty one evening meetings in the calendar, those evenings would be lost to revenue bookings and cost the Parish Council a significant amount of lost revenue both in hire costs and in the case of Manor House bar revenue.

5. Office Car Park

Members gave approval for the resurfacing of the above.

Orders are being placed for the barrier, which is the time sensitive part of the installation.

The barrier needs to be installed at the same time the car park is resurfaced, so the heavy Transit type vans that routinely use the car park do not ruin the newly laid surface due to their limited turning circle.

6. Tipper Refurbishment

At the July meeting of this committee members agreed to the refurbishment of the Works Team tipper. The vehicle refurbishment is now complete (£2,420) and a new cage is pending installation in January (£3,300).

We have ordered an aluminium cage to replace the previous steel one. The steel one rusted and was also heavy, restricting the gross carrying weight of the vehicle. The aluminium cage is 50% lighter than the steel, so significantly improves the vehicle carrying weight and it will not rust.

Given the low mileage of the tipper and the scarcity of good quality second hand replacements this was a practical, cost effective way of extending the life of a vehicle that was otherwise in good condition.

We have also had a reversing alarm, sensors and camera installed, as the drivers have commented on how difficult the vehicle is to reverse when loaded (£650).



[Sample images from Tipmaster the cage supplier]

Tim Perkins
Clerk to the Council
17th November 2015