

## Abbots Langley Parish Council

Council Offices  
Langley Road  
Abbots Langley  
Herts  
WD5 0EJ

21st October 2016.

To Members of the Finance and Administration Committee

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

The next meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee will be held at the above address on Monday 24th October 2016 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 July 2016 (previously circulated).**
5. **Election Expenses**  
To consider the legacy invoices and also the costs for the Leavesden Ward By-Election (May 2016). (See Clerk's report item 1, enclosed invoice and analysis.)
6. **External Audit 2015-2016**  
To consider the report from the above and approve the publishing of the Annual Return on the Parish Council's website. (See Clerk's report item 2 and enclosed report.)
7. **Internal Audit 2016-2017**  
To consider the first interim report from the Internal Auditors. (See Clerk's report item 3 and enclosed report.)
8. **Budget Monitoring**  
To consider spend to end Q2 2015-2016. (See budget book and tracking report enclosed.)
9. **Budget 2017-2018**  
To consider the current revision of the budget. (v2 post Leisure Comm. to follow.)
10. **Financial Grants 2016-2017**  
To consider the grant application from DEMAND. (See Clerk's report item 4 and enclosed grant application.)

## Abbots Langley Parish Council

### **11. Financial Grant 2017-2018 to the Henderson Hall Trustees and/or Henderson Hub**

To receive an update from the Committee Chairman and Chairman of the Parish Council following their discussions with the above. (refer F&A 07/2016 - min 121.)

### **12. Parish Council Office Refurbishment**

To consider the report from the Clerk. (See Clerk's report item 5.)

### **13. Depot Refurbishment Project**

To consider if the above should be initiated. (See Clerk's report item 6.)

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**Abbots Langley Parish Council**  
**Clerk's Report - F&A - October 2016**

**1. Election Expenses**

Much has been written and discussed about the legacy election costs invoice. Originally raised for £36,074, this has been reduced by the Returning Officer to £23,393. Members have to decide if they now wish to pay this invoice. The alternative is to write to Three Rivers District Council refusing to pay.

Bob Watson, Head of Finance - Shared Services, will be present at the meeting to answer any questions members may have.

Three Rivers District Council have submitted their invoice (£3,525) for the by-election held in Leavesden Ward in May 2016. Although I would normally process this under delegated authority I thought given the interest there has been in the subject I should seek member's views prior to authorising payment. Copies of the invoice and supporting analysis are enclosed.

My recommendation is that this invoice is passed for payment.

**2. External Audit 2015-2016**

The above has been signed off "unqualified".

The auditors raised three points "to assist the council". See the enclosed issues arising report.

**Asset Register**

Officers are very surprised at this comment as a photographic asset register is held, showing purchase price, location of asset, original purchase price, supplier and asset tag code. All recorded assets have a non-removable numbered asset tag.

This information was not provided to BDO as it was not requested.

**Precept**

Fair cop. The precept value entered in the return was the originally approved amount that was reduced at a subsequent meeting by £35. This was not picked up by me or the Internal Auditor.

**Risk Assessment**

This committee reviews the Business and Financial Risk Assessment every July. As with the internal audit reports this will now be reviewed at a PC meeting.

I am sure members will be satisfied that the above represents good value for the BDO's fee of £1,600.

There is a view amongst Internal Auditors and colleague Clerks that BDO have been incredibly "nit-picking" this year, we certainly got multiple follow up questions, some of which added little, or no value, to the process.

**3. Internal Audit 2016-2017 (1st Interim Visit 2 days)**

An exemplary report, for which significant credit is due to Gail Kiely for her professional management on the finances.

I would like to draw F&A and Staffing Committee members' attention to the review of Salaries & Wages (p.6). This is a detailed review which checks actual salaries paid to contracts, hours worked, National Salary Scales and minutes that vary rates of pay.

This year the review was extended to cover annual leave entitlement. Checking that entitlements were correctly calculated, particularly for part time staff and records of approval and leave taken properly managed.

No issues were found.

**Abbots Langley Parish Council**  
**Clerk's Report - F&A - October 2016**

**4. Financial Grant Application 2016-2017 - DEMAND**

Members reviewed an application from the above at the April meeting of this committee (min. 426.). Further information was requested and I wrote to DEMAND on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2016. A copy of the letter is at the back of the enclosed copy grant application.

The revised application was received two days after the July meeting of this committee, hence the delay in it coming forward for review.

**5. Parish Council Office Refurbishment**

This committee approved an expenditure of £29,695 for the above project (min. 04/2016 min. 424.) plus a contingency of £3,000.

The final project expenditure was £32,793.

There were two significant contingency items:

- i. When the window next to the Finance Officer's desk and the door from the old reception area to the Clerk's office were removed it was found these had been installed in a load bearing wall without lintels. This explains the cracking to plaster in this area. These works were not identified until the plaster was hacked back. (£1,383)
- ii. Additional works to the flooring in the photocopier area which was badly deteriorated and needed ply and additional screed. Also plastering to the old reception area wall where tiles had been stuck on the wall as a noticeboard, wall had to be hacked back to brick and re-plastered. (£904)

Considerable credit is due to David Abbott for bringing this project to fruition, also to the rest of the staff who "mucked in" when working conditions were not ideal in the chambers.

It has to be said as well that the contractor was excellent. He was very customer friendly and the outcome in the end was worth all of the effort.

**6. Depot Refurbishment Project**

The committee Chairman asked that this item be added to the agenda.

In view of the positive response to the refurbishment of the offices, members are asked to consider if a similar refurbishment project be undertaken at the works depot.

The Staffing Committee had asked (03/2016 - min. 362.) that this committee make financial provision for a review of the site and possible rebuilding and refurbishment options.

**7. Insurance Claims**

Two small building policy insurance claims have been made recently. Both for the pavilion at Langleybury Cricket Club.

Remedial works following break - £1,225

Remedial works following flooding after a drains blockage -£1,150.

In both cases the club paid the policy excess of £250.

These were the first claims for over two years. The last was in February 2014 for a minor motor claim.

**Tim Perkins**  
Clerk to the Council  
21st October 2016

**Abbots Langley Parish Council**  
**Clerk's Report - F&A - October 2016 - Addendum**

**1. Budget 2017-2018**

The enclosed budget book includes revisions made after the pages were prepared for the Leisure Committee, which met on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November.

Main points:

- Precept increase is still at 0%. No news yet on the Band D number, but there should be some pick up on this as the later stages of the Abbotswood development have been occupied.
- A number of significant spends have been included in the estimated year end for 2016-2017.

Admin (p4.)	5170	R&M Council Offices	£35,000
Admin (p4.)	5265	Election Expenses	£19,918
Allotments (p8.)	6040	R&M Allotments (MH wall)	£15,000
Vehicles (p13.)	8105	Vehicle & Plant (WM vehicle)	£14,000
Manor House (p17.)	7760	R&M Manor House (Patio)	£17,100

Some of the above numbers do not equate exactly to the spend as there are accruals from prior years which will offset some of the full costs.

- To achieve a General Fund balance of around £40,000-£50,000 at 31/03/2018, which has always been this committee's target range (this revision £35,050), it will be necessary to release earmarked reserves to cover some of the above expenditure. My suggestions are on p3.

Members may want to consider using some of the Capital Reserve to fund the office refurbishments and/or the Manor House patio, these would be appropriate projects as they enhance the built infrastructure of the PC.

- Still a lot of work to do. Salary and wage allocations needs work, currently numbers in the salary model have been checked but NI and pension contributions for 2017-2018 need clarifying.
- All significant items from the Leisure Committee's "Key Projects" reviews have been included.
- Checks of sports pitch and building leases still to be finalised.
- Officers review of all open spaces spend, accruals and budgets scheduled for 27th October which will feed into the next main budget revision for PC in November.

**Tim Perkins**  
Clerk to the Council  
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