

Abbots Langley Parish Council

Council Offices
Langley Road
Abbots Langley
Herts
WD5 0EJ

23rd April 2019.

To Members of the Finance and Administration Committee

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

The next meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee will be held at the above address on Monday 29th April 2019 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 21st January 2019 (previously circulated).**
Members are referred to the Clerk's report item 1ii prior to approving the minutes.
5. **Internal Audit - Second Interim 2018-2019**
To consider the report from the Internal Auditors. (Clerk's report item 2 and enclosed report.)
6. **Small Grant - Bedmond Residents Association**
To consider the above. (Clerk's report item 3 and application enclosed.)
7. **Financial Grants 2019-2020**
To consider applications from:
 - i. Abbots Langley Local History Society.
 - ii. Langleybury Cricket Club.

(Note: Applications copied for committee members only, further supporting papers are available for review.)
8. **General Insurance Renewal 2019**
To consider the above. (Clerk's report item 4.)
9. **Budget Monitoring Report**
To consider the budget monitoring report for Q4 2018-2019. (See monitoring and tracking reports enclosed).

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- 10. Replacement of the Heavy Duty Triple (Grass Cutter)**
To agree the purchase of a new Triple. (Clerk's report item 5.)
- 11. General Data Protection Regulations**
To consider the report from the Clerk. (Clerk's report item 6.)
- 12. Clerk's Report**
To note 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 - April 2019

1. Financial Grants 2019-2020

Following up items from the January 2019 meeting of this committee.

i. Abbots Langley Cricket Club (min. 324i)

The club have been advised in writing, in the grant award letters for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, that the club will only be awarded a grant two years in every four.

This addresses the point raised in the minutes.

ii. St Lawrence Church (min. 324iv)

Members awarded a grant of £2,000, this should have been £2,500 under the four-year Service Level Agreement.

An amendment prior to the approval of the minutes is requested.

2. Internal Audit - Second Interim 2018-2019

No significant points raised.

The auditor noticed that the costs for the office temp, who was with us over last summer, had been coded to Administration Wages (5010), where all office staff salaries are coded.

It was suggested that 5010 should only be used for permanent staff salaries, so temp costs have been broken out to Administration Agency Costs (5014). Although this will be an unbudgeted code, due to lower staffing levels through the financial year, the combined codes are well below budget.

3. Small Grant - Bedmond Residents Association

The above is the first small grant that the committee Chairman, Vice-Chairman and me have been unable to get "close enough" on a decision, so it is referred to the committee for consideration.

I have a copy of the association's constitution.

4. Insurance Renewal 2019

For the last three years we have been in a long-term agreement with Aviva, the policy came up for renewal on 31st March 2019. The previous three years were also with Aviva, Zurich having been dumped for appalling claims handling performance.

The initial premium with Aviva for 2018-2019 was £15,538. There were three mid-term adjustments to add cover for the MuGA surface, Manor House toilets and the Tennis Clubhouse, these added a total additional annual premium of £299, although only a part year was paid.

Our broker is no longer supporting Aviva as they have lost focus on the Parish & Town Council sector.

Quotes were sought from Ecclesiastical, AXA/Inspire and Hiscox.

We had to carry out a significant amount of work with the brokers to put together the information required for the quotes.

A summary of the quotes is as follows.

Insurer	Cost 1 Year	Cost 3 Year	Notes/Exclusions
Ecclesiastical (Option 1)	15,308	14,547	£10,000 flood excess on Primrose Hill changing rooms
Ecclesiastical (Option 2)	13,785	13,099	Excludes flood cover on Primrose Hill changing rooms
AXA/Inspire	16,405	15,588	Fidelity guarantee excess increased to £2,500 on £1.5m cover
Hiscox			Excluded - limit of cover on fidelity guarantee to £1.0m

Hiscox were excluded as they would only offer a maximum fidelity cover of £1.0m, we were asking for £1.5m.

As the cover needed to be in place by 1st April, the committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman came into the office and we reviewed the quotes.

It was agreed to place the cover with AXA/Inspire, on a three-year long-term agreement as they offered the best levels and breadth of cover, their cost was less than the premium in 2018-2019.

5. Replacement of the Heavy Duty Triple (Grass Cutter)

The current triple (Hayter) is close to ten years old and it starting to have maintenance issues. There are two practical replacements.



Toro (ex-Hayter) LT3340 Heavy Duty Triple



Ransome Parkway 3 Triple Mower

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Both units have been operationally tested by the Works Team and the Toro is the preferred unit.

Reasons:

- Toro is the new Hayter, just in a different colour. All Works Team staff are trained in the use of this machine.
- The power of the Toro is (35.5hp) compared to the Parkway (33.5hp). We cannot afford to lose the power as the machine is our only heavy-duty work horse to maintain playing fields, as we do not use a tractor towed gang machine.
- The cylinders are totally different, the Ransome is a ten inch with eight blades compared to eight inch six blades on the Toro. The Toro will give a finer cut which is required for cricket outfields. It will also provide a better finishing cut for our football pitches.
- We have compatible parts that will fit the new Toro.
- No extra training will be required, eliminating training down time.
- We have had two Hayters over 19 years, they have served us well proving to be robust and reliable.
- Servicing and support will be provided locally by the companies that have maintained our current Hayter. The Ransome is supported out of Stevenage by a company we have not worked with previously.

The suppliers have put together their prices slightly differently in terms of trade in offered, but the final pricing, nett of trade is:

Toro LT3340 - £30,995

Ransome Parkway - £26,995

Members approved this expenditure in principle at the July 2018 meeting of this committee, when the replacement cost was estimated at £30,000. (F&A 23/07/2018 min. 124iii.)

Recommendation is that we proceed to purchase the Toro, with delegated authority granted to me to finalise pricing, as there may be some minor adjustment to the final specification.

6. General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

The report from the DP Office has been received.

I have scanned the report and spoken to the consultant that carried out the assessment. There are no "red" items that require immediate attention, there are though a number of items that will need addressing.

I have simply not had the chance to review the report in detail. I will get this done over the coming weeks and will report to the next meeting of this committee.

7. Payments Post Elections

Two cheque signatories are not standing at the elections (BK & HT) and others may fall at the ballot box.

Members are reminded that there is an emergency resolution in place that permits the Clerk and the Finance Officer to sign cheques if there are not sufficient approved members available. The last time this was used was after the 2015 election.

More signatories will be required when the new council is in place, ideally from those that will be serving on F&A, but even when new signatories are agreed it takes a while to work through Lloyds approval process.

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8. Payment Methods

We are increasingly finding suppliers that no longer want to receive payments by cheque.

The current system of members reviewing payments, then signing physical cheques is both outdated and time consuming for both members and staff.

We need to agree a system whereby online payments are routine and possibly small payments for consumable items are paid by council credit card, rather than staff using their own cards.

The controls need to be agreed by this committee and possibly our Internal Auditors.

Officers will look at possible solutions and this will be a key piece of work for the newly formed committee post the May elections.

9. Website Accessibility

'The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018' have come into force, which means that from the 23rd September 2019, every new public sector website and app will need to meet certain accessibility standards and publish a statement saying they have been met.

Existing websites will have until the 22nd September 2020 to comply.

The aim of these regulations is to ensure public sector websites and mobile apps are accessible to all users, especially those with disabilities.

By the time our website has to comply it is hoped all of the requirements of the legislation will form part of the WordPress platform our website is based on. We will still need to produce an accessibility statement.

I am not taking any action at this stage but minor website updates may be required in 2020.

Tim Perkins
Clerk to the Council
23rd April 2019

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