

Abbots Langley Parish Council

Council Offices
Langley Road
Abbots Langley
Herts
WD5 0EJ

20th April 2022.

To Members of the Finance and Administration Committee

Councillors Sara Bedford, Liz Burns (Chairman), Jane Lay, Robin Powell, Owen Roe & John Swallow.

The next meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee will be held at the above address on Monday 25th April 2022 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.

Isabel Montesdeoca
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 31st January (previously circulated).
5. Budget 2021-2022
To consider the budget monitoring report for Q4 2021-2022. (Monitoring and tracking reports enclosed^[1]).
6. Final Internal Audit 2021-2022
To consider the report from the Internal Auditors. (Chief Officer & Clerk's report item 1.)
7. Council Savings Deposit Accounts
To consider the report from the Clerk. (Chief Officer & Clerk's report item 2.)
8. 2022-2023 Small Grant Application
To consider an update to the Small Grant Application for new fiscal year. (v1.11 enclosed^[1].)
9. CAB Donation - Final Expenditure Report
To consider the expenditure report from the CAB. (Chief Officer & Clerk's report item 3.)
10. IT Equipment
To consider the report from the Clerk. (Chief Officer & Clerk's report item 4.)
11. ALPC Office Refurbishment - Phase 2
To consider the report from the Clerk. (Chief Officer & Clerk's report item 5.)
12. Electric Vehicle Purchase
To consider the report from the Clerk. (Chief Officer & Clerk's report item 6.)

[1] *Committee members only, other members on request*

[https://alpcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/alpcbudgetsmeetingsplanning/shared documents/alpc meetings/alpc meetings 2021-2022/finance and admin committee/alpc-finance-&-admin-agenda-2022-04.docx](https://alpcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/alpcbudgetsmeetingsplanning/shared%20documents/alpc%20meetings/alpc%20meetings%202021-2022/finance%20and%20admin%20committee/alpc-finance-&-admin-agenda-2022-04.docx)

1. Final Internal Audit 2021-2022

Auditing Solutions are scheduled to carry out the above on 24th May 2022.
Assuming there are no major problems the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) will be available for approval at the brief Parish Council meeting on 22nd June at 7:00 pm prior to the Leisure Committee meeting at 7:30 pm.

2. Council Savings Deposit Accounts

The Finance Officer & Deputy Clerk has undertaken a review of the interest rates the Council is currently earning on its savings deposit accounts. From this analysis, she has identified short-term and long-term recommendations for the Council to consider in order to help the Council maximise the interest it earns and being mindful of the £85,000 insurance limit per institution that is currently in place.

Short-Term

The Parish Council holds a deposit account with CCLA. It is useful as it is a "call" account, with funds returned same day if CCLA are instructed by 11:30am. The Finance Officer & Deputy Clerk is recommending the Council consider increasing the amount held in this deposit account. Given the speed with which these funds can be accessed, there is very little risk to the Council in doing so and it earns a better interest rate than the Council's accounts with Lloyds.

Long-Term

The Finance Officer & Deputy Clerk recommends the Council draft a Treasury Policy that would lay out the goals and guidelines used to determine the selection of longer term savings deposit accounts. A Treasury Policy would also help outline how and when funds could be moved from one savings deposit account to another offering a better rate of return. If the committee is in agreement, the Finance Officer & Deputy Clerk would draft a copy of the policy for review at the next Finance & Administration committee meeting.

3. CAB Donation - Final Expenditure Report

At the Parish Council meeting on 9 November 2022 (min 189), the Council agreed that a hardship fund of £2,000 be made available to the Abbots Langley Citizens Advice Bureau for distribution to local families. The CEO of the Citizens Advice Service in Three Rivers has now advised the Parish Council that these funds have now been fully spent. Herein follows how the full amount was spent:

Reported previously

- £50 for energy for a single man with young child affected by COVID
- £13.69 for dictaphone to record family court directions for access to child for a client who cannot read
- £120 for energy for a victim of domestic violence, benefit income only, single with three young children
- £399.99 cooker for a vulnerable client on benefits downsizing to a smaller social housing property, previous property had inbuilt cooker, new property no cooker (or any white goods)
- £201.90 for a cot and mattress for a new baby, vulnerable single parent on benefits
- £100 for energy for a vulnerable disabled resident at risk of having a prepayment meter installed by order of the court due to unpaid energy bills
- £117.73 for educational toys for a family with children with learning and developmental delay

New spend

- £383.92 for bedroom furniture for 4 children of the same family

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- £289.99 double bed and mattress for family as above, parents sleeping on floor
- £275.99 for bed and mattress for disabled teenager, single parent, victim of domestic violence
- balance of £46.79 given to large family, this was put towards a £100 grant for the family to buy food when food banks were closed on a Friday and their Household Support Fund grant was delayed.

Total spend £2,000.

The CEO of the Citizens Advice Service in Three Rivers asked me to thank the Council once again for the help the Parish Council enabled them to give their clients in hardship.

4. IT Equipment

New Equipment

We have purchased a new Lenovo Thinkpad for use by the new Leisure & Council Administration Officer. This laptop has now been loaded up with the full suite of MS Office 365 programs at no additional cost as the licenses are covered by our subscription. It also has the remote phone system and access to the personal and shared cloud drives to facilitate remote and group working.

Equipment Disposal

We currently have two old laptops (HP & Dell) at the Council Office. The operating systems on these two laptops can no longer be update and therefore they are not viable for use by Council Staff. Given GDPR and information governance requirements we cannot just donate or resell this equipment. In the past we have asked Nixuss to come up with cost for the secure disposal and recycling of the equipment. I have spoken to Nixuss and they are happy to help us with this. The disposal to be evidenced with a Certificate of Destruction. This is still the most expedient manner for us to dispose of these laptops safely and securely.

5. ALPC Office Refurbishment - Phase 2

At the last meeting of the committee, members suggested to Officers that phase 2 of the ALPC Office Refurbishment plan should be revisited with a view to improving disabled access. The original scope of Phase 2 included refurbishment of the toilet, kitchen, and chambers (F&A 19 Dec 2016 min 291). This was later downsized to focus solely on the toilet and kitchen refurbishment (F&A 23 Apr 2018, min 424).

Initial investigations by the Facilities manager indicate that to assess the cost of this project Officers would first need to engage professionals to draw up new plans that meet current disabled access requirements. Given the narrow doorway and stairs at the entrance to Chambers, it is likely that structural changes would be required to meet these requirements.

Due to the costs of having new plans drawn-up, Officers recommend the Committee hold off revisiting this project until after the eco-audit update currently scheduled for July 2022 as this report may identify additional Council Office changes the Council would wish to consider.

6. Electric Vehicle Purchase

On 29 Nov 2021, the Finance & Administration Committee (min 243) approved the installation of charging points and the replacement of the Volkswagen Caddy with an Electric Vehicle equivalent.

A £1000 deposit has now been placed on an e-NV200 Nissan Visia Van (total value: £22,995 + VAT) with delivery scheduled for 27 April 2022 pending inspection by the Facilities manager. The EV charging point has also been installed at the Council Offices which is where the car will be kept and charged overnight.

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