

Abbots Langley Parish Council

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3rd March 2021.

To Members of the Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held virtually ^[1] on Monday 8th March 2021 at 7:30 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

[1] *Permitting legislation - The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.*

AGENDA (Updated)

1. **Apologies for Absence**
To receive and accept apologies for absence.
2. **Leave of Absence**
To agree the above for Councillor Jean Bowman due to her being unable to attend Parish Council or committee meetings.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda.
4. **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.
5. **Hertfordshire Police**
To receive a report from the Police (if present).
6. **To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on**
11th January 2021.
7. **Minutes for adoption**
To adopt the following minutes and approve publication on the Parish Council's website.
 - Planning & Highways Committee - 6th, 27th January and 17th February 2021.
 - Leisure Committee - 24th February 2021.
 - Finance & Administration Committee - 25th January 2021.
8. **Internal Audit Report (Second Interim) 2020-2021**
(Referred from the Finance & Administration Committee min. 320.)
Members are asked to formally note the committee's review of the Second Interim Internal Audit for 2020-2021 and that no significant items were raised by the auditors. (Report circulated for the F&A meeting 25th January 2021.)
9. **Henderson Hub Co. - Service Level Agreement**
To agree by resolution the above agreement. (Clerk's report item 1 and enclosed draft agreement.)

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- 10. Parish Council & Committee Meetings from May 2021**
To consider the arrangements for the above. inc. Annual Parish Meeting (Clerk's report item 2.)
- 11. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Report**
To consider the report from the Chairman of the Steering Group. (enclosed.)
- 12. District and County Council Member's Reports**
To consider any reports submitted by members of the above authorities.
- 13. Chairman's Report**
To consider the Chairman's report.
- 14. Clerk's Report**
To consider items on the Clerk's report not covered elsewhere on the agenda.
- 15. Monthly Statement of Accounts**
To consider the monthly statement of accounts for January & February 2021 and approve their publication on the Parish Council website.
- 16. Exclusion of the Press and Public (Part II)**
As the following items will consider matters related to the employment of staff a resolution to exclude the press and public may be required, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the LGA 1972, s100 & 102.
- 17. Staffing Matters**
To receive a brief update from the Clerk on current staffing matters.
(Staffing Committee will cover this in more detail on 17th March 2021.)

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Abbots Langley Parish Council

Clerk's Report - March 2021

1. Henderson Hub Co. - Service Level Agreement

The enclosed draft agreement has been reviewed by the Hub Co. directors, they raised a couple of minor points which have been included in the draft.

The directors have provided a copy of a board meeting minute dated 4th February confirming they will not be exercising the lease break clause that has to be advised by March 2021.

2. Parish Council & Committee Meetings from May 2021

At the time of writing the emergency coronavirus legislation introduced in May 2020 is due to lapse. The legislation, amongst other things, permitted virtual meetings.

Representations to extend the legislation have been made to HMG by NALC, SLCC, LGA and professional associations that represent officers other tiers of local government ^[1], but so far these have fallen on deaf ears.

It is hoped that this legislation will be extended as certainly Clerks (including this one) have many concerns about an imminent return to attended meetings.

Annual Council Meeting

Whether virtual or attended. the Annual Council Meeting will be held on 10th May 2021 as one was not held last year.

If members want to change committee assignments, they need to advise the Leader of the Council.

Annual Parish Meeting

We did hold an Annual Parish Meeting in March 2020, before the lockdown requirements kicked in.

The emergency legislation then waived the requirement to hold an APM. We have cancelled the APM scheduled for 3rd March 2021 and will need to reconsider in May if we are going to hold a meeting and in what format.

If the emergency legislation is not extended the requirement is that an APM must be held before 1st June.

I will advise members when I have further updates.

^[1] *Association of Democratic services Officers, Lawyers in Local Government.*

Update: 01/03/2021

The latest update from NALC would indicate that the legislation to permit virtual meetings will not be extended. Although it is understood from other sources that the minister is being lobbied.

I think this is hugely negligent of HMG. Forcing councils to hold attended meetings prior to the country coming out of the various pandemic stages does not align with the "cautious progress" message HMG are trying to communicate.

One practical option would be to move the ACM from Mon 10th May to Tue 4th May (Mon 3rd is a public holiday). I appreciate this is an election week but it would permit the meeting to be held virtually, as the permitting legislation is in effect to 6th May.

There does not appear to be any conflicting meetings at Three Rivers District Council on the 4th May. The legislation requires the ACM to be held "on any day in May", except in Parish election years when it should be held within fourteen days following the first Monday after the election.

I suspect there will be further updates and briefings over the coming days and if so I will update members at the meeting.

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Clerk's Report - March 2021

3. Citizens Advice Bureau - Emergency Funds Grant

The Parish Council made a £2,000 grant to CAB to be used for emergency poverty relief funding.

I asked the Chief Exec. of CAB in Three Rivers for an update on the funds. Reply below.

"We have not had to use it at the moment for energy (a big concern for our clients) or fresh food because County asked us at the end of 2020 to distribute £10,000 in Winter Grant Funds for energy and food for people affected financially by the pandemic and we have to spend it all by the end of March 2021.

We have spent almost the whole fund now across Three Rivers so your fund will be much called upon going forward. £10,000 was also given to the local authority from the same fund and they used part of it to buy starter packs for people with no household goods that are placed in temporary accommodation so that will have benefitted some Abbots residents too."

Two grants have been made from the Parish Council funds, one for a resident to avoid having a pre-payment meter installed and one small expenditure to assist a resident comply with civil court orders.

Unless members disagree, I have advised the CAB to hold on to the PC funds and deploy t their discretion.

Update: 01/03/2021

Further funds have been expended on white goods for a resident in crises.

4. Three Rivers District Council - Solicitor and Monitoring Officer

Anne Morgan has held the above post for many years, she is retiring at the beginning of April, but has effectively left the council due to leave outstanding. A new appointment will be made in March.

Anne has always been very supportive of Clerks and a wise advisor on many matters, her successor will have a very hard act to follow.

5. Office Copies

Copies of the following are available in the office for member's reference.

Local Council Review - Issue 1 2021

Herts Building Preservation Trust Newsletter - Spring 2021

Tim Perkins

Clerk to the Council

3rd March 2021