

Abbots Langley Parish Council

Council Offices
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Abbots Langley
Herts
WD5 0EJ
info@abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk

9th November 2023.

To Members of the Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held at Council Chambers, Abbots Langley Parish Council, Council Office, Langley Road, Abbots Langley, WD5 0EJ on Wednesday 15th November 2023 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. Individuals wishing to speak at a Parish Council meeting must sign in prior to the meeting. For further details on public speaking arrangements at a Parish Council meeting, please visit <https://www.abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk/parish-council/public-speaking-arrangements/>.

Isabel Montesdeoca
Chief Officer & Clerk to the Council

The new curate of St. Lawrence Church, Helen Neville, has been invited to attend this meeting of the Parish Council. Please plan to arrive early to have an opportunity to meet and welcome her to Abbots Langley Parish.

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
13th Sep 2023.
5. Minutes for adoption
To adopt the following minutes and approve publication on the Parish Council's website.
 - i. *Planning & Highways Committee* - 4th Oct and 1st Nov 2023
 - ii. *Leisure Committee* - 18th Oct 2023
 - iii. *Finance & Administration Committee* - 25th Oct 2023
6. Chairman's Report
To consider the Chairman's report.
7. Hertfordshire Police
To receive a report from the Police.
8. Budget 2024-2025
To consider the latest revision of the above. (Chief Officer & Clerk's report item 1 and Budget book V1.8 enclosed)

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9. External Audit Report 2022-2023

(Finance & Administration Committee 25th Oct 2023 min 197)

Members are asked to formally note the above and that no items were raised by the external auditors. (Report and certificate sec. 3 of the annual return enclosed)

10. Calendar of Meetings 2024-2025

To consider the draft calendar of Abbots Langley Parish Council meetings for 2024-2025 (2024-2025 Calendar Draft enclosed)

11. Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

To note the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Report from the Chairman of the Steering Group. (ALNP Progress Report Forty-Six November 2023 enclosed)

12. District and County Council Member's Reports

To consider any reports submitted by members of the above authorities.

13. Chief Officer & Clerk's Report

To consider items on the Chief Officer & Clerk's report not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

- i. Formal Complaint (Chief Officer & Clerk's report item 2)
- ii. Office Hours over Christmas Period (Chief Officer & Clerk's report item 3)
- iii. Members' Attendance - Six Month Rule (Chief Officer & Clerk's report item 4)

14. Monthly Statement of Accounts and Bank Reconciliation

- i. To consider the monthly statement of accounts for August and September 2023 and approve their publication on the Parish Council's website. (Enclosed)
- ii. To approve the signature of month end bank reconciliations by the Chairman.

15. Exclusion of the Press and Public (Part II)

As the following item will consider early stages of a contractual matters into which the Parish Council may be entering 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.

16. Bedmond Sports Pavilion

(Parish Council Sep 2023 min 163; Finance & Administration Committee Oct 2023 min 202)

To note updates on expressions of interest in leasing the above, contracting out of the required building works for the above, and to approve the draft General Service Agreement to be used for the works. (Chief Officer & Clerk's Report PII item 1, General Service Agreement draft enclosed)

[https://alpcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/alpcbudgetsmeetingsplanning/shared documents/alpc meetings/alpc meetings 2023-2024/parish council/alpc-parish-council-agenda-2023-11-draft.docx](https://alpcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/alpcbudgetsmeetingsplanning/shared%20documents/alpc%20meetings/alpc%20meetings%202023-2024/parish%20council/alpc-parish-council-agenda-2023-11-draft.docx)

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1. Budget 2024-2025

Reminder as always at this stage of the budget process, this is a work in progress.

a. Inflation

In September, the ONS reported CPI at 6.7% and RPI at 8.9% (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices>). Based on this, the following assumptions have been built into the current budget draft:

- Utilities (Gas, Electricity, Water, Telephone, Fuel)- 6.7%
- TRDC Rates - 10%
- Repairs & Maintenance - 10-15%, except play areas where the increase is 25%
- Professional Services - 10-15%
- Insurance and all other costs - 0%

b. Income Assumptions

This budget assumes the following increases in income:

- *Fees & Charges 2024-2025* - ~5.8% increase on sports related fees and rental income; ~5% increase on allotment rent. Venue charges remain the same.
- *Venue Income* - 36% increase from bookings at Manor House and a 47% decrease from bookings at Tanners Wood Hall based on current trends. Tanners Wood Hall forecast may increase if ongoing discussions with a potential new regular hirer go ahead.
- *Interest Income* - Interest earned on the Council's deposit accounts increased in line with forecast interest rates. While interest rates cannot be guaranteed, assumptions are prudent.

c. Wages

The salary scales for 2023-2024, effective from 1st April 2023, were agreed on 1st Nov 2023 and are now factored into the salary model. The overall impact is minimal given the 5.0% increase in the salary model that had already been built into the budget. The salary model and Works Team cost allocations have also been reconciled to year-to-date salary payments and updated where necessary. For salary scales in 2024-2025, a further 5% salary and allowance increase has been assumed.

d. Earmarked Reserves

Savings for longer term priority projects have been deferred as some priorities have changed. Savings have been included for run-rate expenses such as tree removal / replacement, play equipment and wetpour replacement, equipment and property repairs, car park repairs, and bi-election costs as these are costly items that can occur at any time.

e. General Reserve

The General Reserve level is 4.3x monthly expenditure, within the 3x to 12x guidance range.

f. General Fund

The General Fund balance is within the £40,000 and £100,000 guidance range.

g. Precept

The Band D Base is draft in the latest revision of the budget. The 2024-2025 number is expected to be made available by Three Rivers District Council mid-December. The precept model has been updated to show members the break-even point for the current draft of the budget.

2. Formal Complaint

In accordance with the ALPC Complaints Policy, I am required to inform the Council that a formal written complaint was submitted to the Council on 4th October 2023. The complaint was investigated and a written response with a proposed resolution provided to the complainant on 12th October 2023. On the 3rd November 2023, the complainant stated he

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was unhappy with the proposed resolution and requested the matter be referred to the ALPC Review Panel. A suitable date for a meeting of the Review Panel is being sought. As per the ALPC Complaints Policy, the Review Panel will make every effort to meet within 21 working days.

3. Christmas & New Year Working

I am proposing the following working schedule over the holiday period:

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|--|---------------------------------------|
| • 22 nd December (Fri) | Office open 9:30am-12pm; Close @ 12pm |
| • 25 th /26 th December (Mon/Tues) | Office closed (Public Holidays) |
| • 27 th /28 th December (Wed/Thur) | Office closed (Council Days) |
| • 29 th December (Fri) | Phone lines only covered 9am-12pm |
| • 1 st January 2022 (Mon) | Office closed (Public Holiday) |
| • 2 nd January (Tue) | Back to normal |

All of the above is dependent on weather and staff availability.

The Works Team and Community Warden will carry out two litter runs and basic ground checks as usual, dates and times to be decided.

4. Members' Attendance - Six Month Rule

No members are at risk of the Six Month Rule. The next check will take place prior to the January 2024 Parish Council meeting.

Isabel Montesdeoca

Chief Officer & Clerk to the Council
9th November 2023

<https://alpcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/ALPCBudgetsMeetingsPlanning/Shared Documents/ALPC Meetings/ALPC Meetings 2023-2024/Clerks Report/Parish Council/ALPC-Clerks-Report-PC-2023-11.docx>