

**Minutes of the Finance and Staff Committee of Aston Clinton Parish Council - held on
Tuesday 7th May 2019 at 6.30pm
at Aston Clinton Parish Meeting Room**

Present:

Councillors: -

L Tubb (Chair)

A Duffield

A Watton

L Ronson

C Judge

Clerk: G Merry (recording), E Barry

Members of the public: 0

19.038 Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Stewart.

19.039 To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 26th March 2019

The minutes were PROPOSED by Cllr Ronson agreed and signed.

19.040 Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest

19.041 Public Participation

There were no items

19.042 Financial Situation Reports

i. Reconciliations:

Cllr Duffield carried out the reconciliations and all balanced. It was agreed that Cllr Tubb would no longer carry this out, as she is now the 2nd authoriser for online payments.

ii. Month-End Accounts and Budget Status:

The clerk/RFO circulated the accounts to April. These showed a total income for the year to-date as £143,137 (52% of budget), as the 1st half of the precept had been received. Total expenditure was £13,933, (5% of budget). Cllr Ronson requested clarification on the Grounds Maintenance ad hoc budget and the clerk confirmed that a tree care payment had gone out, to address dangerous fallen trees.

iii. Transfer to Tracker:

The clerk explained that the balance sheet at year-end showed that over 4-5 years, the council had built reserves totalling £162,656. An amount needed to be earmarked to pay for the temporary accommodation, during the community centre build, which could not be met by S106 money. The clerk suggested earmarking £60,000 to ensure 6-months' worth of fixed costs could be met, plus £15,000 to cover likely VAT liabilities. With £72,181 of reserves already in the Tracker, Cllr Tubb recommended transferring the remaining £90,475, so that all £162,656 would be in the Tracker. The council could adequately pay bills out of precept and other income for the majority of the year. This was discussed and agreed.

iv. Community Centre Review of Invoices:

The clerk–projects/planning presented 3 community centre invoices for approval: -

- £16,000 to Hayward-Smart Architects
- £3,822 to CBG Consultants (mechanical/electrical engineers)
- £1,195 to Chase Ecology

All 3 had been checked and approved by the community centre committee. All were discussed and approved. Cllr Duffield asked for clarification on the payment of S106 monies and the clerk–projects/planning explained that that these are paid in phases, retrospectively against paid invoices. It was agreed to put the total received against CC spend, on the next F&S agenda for discussion.

v. Payments to be agreed: the clerk circulated the list of payments to be agreed (below) and all were approved for payment, the subscription to ‘Planning Resource’ was discussed and agreed this was a useful source of advice and information, which would be renewed at £250 for the year.

<u>Invoices to April 30th 2019</u>					
Date	Company	For	Amount £	Vat £	Total £
08/04/2019	Sign Wizzard	Park Sign	£ 52.53	£ 10.51	£ 63.04
09/04/2019	Npower	Streetlighting - March	£ 690.18	£ 138.04	£ 828.22
12/04/2019	E Sharp Electrical	Long Plough and Rosebery Road	£ 130.13	£ 26.02	£ 156.15
25/04/2019	R Wright and Son Waste Services	Removal of effluent from tank	£ 135.00		£ 135.00
26/04/2019	RBS software Ltd	Annual Alpha Support	£ 121.00	£ 24.20	£ 145.20
30/04/2019	G McEnergy	Office Cleaning	£ 40.00		£ 40.00
30/04/2019	G Cook	Bowls Club Cleaning	£ 60.00		£ 60.00
<u>Community Centre Invoices - APPROVED by committee</u>					£ -
27/03/2019	Hayward Smart Architects	Work and drawing Feb-Mar	£ 16,000.00	£ 3,200.00	£ 19,200.00
29/03/2019	CBG Consultants	Assessment 3 - mechanical/electrical	£ 3,821.60	£ 764.32	£ 4,585.92
16/04/2019	Chase Ecology Consultants	Phase 2 Bat Survey	£ 1,195.00		£ 1,195.00
<u>Direct Debits:</u>					
14/04/2019	BAS Associates	Payroll - April-June	£ 108.00	£ 21.60	£ 129.60
15/04/2019	AVDC	Bin rental and empties March	£ 170.10		£ 170.10

15/04/2019	Tanswell technology	Office 360 and support	£ 24.00	£ 4.80	£ 28.80	
21/05/2019	ICO	ICO annual registration	£ 40.00		£ 40.00	
23/04/2018	British Telecom	Quarterly phone and broadband	£ 260.82	£ 52.16	£ 312.98	

MOTION: to recommend the list of payments to full council, PROPOSED by Cllr Ronson SECONDED by Cllr Judge and AGREED.

19.043 VAT Situation

i. Update and new Option to Tax (OTT) Application:

It had been agreed to submit a new application. to Opt to Tax the entire park. Cllr Tubb confirmed she had received the map from the Land Registry, and it covers the necessary area for the application. Cllr Judge agreed to take the map to be copied and Cllr Watton will finalise the form 1614H, plus a covering letter and meet with the clerk on 9/5/19 for her signature. This could then be submitted.

ii. Repayment of VAT:

The clerk requested clarification on the process and Cllr Watton advised composing a letter to HMRC, referring to the the spend on the All-Weather Pitch and the OTT's assertion that VAT had been erroneously reclaimed. Then invite HMRC's comment on the way forward. Cllr Watton agreed to draft and circulate a letter.

19.044 Audit

i. Year End and Annual Return:

The clerk had updated and circulated the Asset Register, which now showed a total for assets as £1,415,737. This was agreed and would be entered into the Annual Return. Cllr Tubb reminded all that the insurance company would need to be informed of increased assets, at renewal.

ii. Internal Audit Arrangements:

The clerk/RFO advised that she has the checklist of items to be investigated by the internal auditor and she is going through these with the clerk-projects/planning to create a folder. Cllr Watton agreed to be contactable by phone on the day of the audit, to answer any complex questions on VAT.

iii. Period of Elector's Rights:

The clerk/RFO stated that the council should agree the period of elector's rights in advance and publish the dates and these must include the first 10 working days of July.

19.045 Bank Accounts

i. Mandate Changes and Payment Arrangements:

Due to the Clerk/RFOs departure, the clerk-projects/planning would become the RFO and a change to the mandate had been submitted. Cllr Tubb had chased and as yet there was no progress on this. It was agreed the current clerk/RFO would make the

payments before leaving. After this, it may be necessary to pay by cheques which would then be mailed out. It was agreed the new clerk/RFO was approved to make payments up to £250 without authorisation.

ii. Reserves and Temporary Accommodation:

Cllr Tubb outlined that the cost of temporary accommodation for the café, soft play and football club, during the community centre build, could not be met by S106 payments. It was necessary for this to be financed from PC funds. Much time had been spent gathering quotes from suppliers but the cost to adequately accommodate all tenants, would be in the region of £140-145,000. This included contingency in case the build went on beyond 12-months. Cllr Tubb talked through the specification for this. The clerk/RFO advised that out of the reserves available, she recommended £87,656 be put to this project, plus £30,000 from the £50,000 allocated from this year's budget. This would leave adequate reserves to pay general council bills and the clerk advised that some creditors provisions at the end of the last financial year, which had now been paid, would ultimately be reimbursed by S106 payments. Additionally, some of the shortfall would be met by the project spanning into the 2020-21 financial year, with funds allocated from that budget. This way £140-45K should be achievable. There followed a discussion re. the potential amount to be paid up-front, and the clerk-projects/planning agreed to find out what favourable terms could be negotiated. Cllr Duffield expressed concern over the size of the budget to be allocated to this and the clerk-projects/planning clarified the breakdown of costings. A discussion followed re. the level of risk involved, particularly in the event of planning permission being unsuccessful. The clerk-projects/planning read from a recent email from the case officer, indicating a favourable outcome once 2 issues were determined. Cllr Tubb stated the project has a deadline for New Homes Bonus funding, of commencement by end of October 2019. It was important to settle this matter in order to keep to timeframe. If agreement could not be reached, another F&S meeting w/c 13/5/19 would be needed followed by an E.M. of the full council, to approve the decision. Cllr Tubb advised that the contract with the supplier could be structured with terms that minimise up-front payments. The clerk-projects/planning added that no order would be placed unless and until planning permission was approved. After some discussion it was agreed to recommend a budget of £142,000 maximum with caveats as above.

MOTION: to agree the budget of £142,000, as above, for the temporary accommodation **PROPOSED** by Cllr Ronson **SECONDED** by Cllr Duffield and **AGREED**.

19.046 CCLA/COIF Account

Item deferred until next meeting.

19.047 Staffing Sub-Committee

i. New Staffing Structure and Job Spec.:

Following the resignation of the clerk/RFO, discussions had taken place between the clerk-projects/planning and the staffing sub-committee. It had been agreed that she

would take on the clerk/RFO role and assistant clerk would be recruited. Cllr Tubb had circulated a Job description which had been fine-tuned by the clerk-projects/planning and was now recommended by the sub-committee. Cllr Watton suggested slightly more emphasis on financial skills and Cllr Tubb agreed to consider suitable wording, before re-sending.

MOTION: to agree the proposed new structure and job spec. for the new role, PROPOSED by Cllr Ronson SECONDED by Cllr Judge and AGREED.

ii. Recruitment Process:

It was discussed that adverts would be placed with BALC, on LinkedIn and also by word-of-mouth. Shortlisting would likely be carried out by the staffing sub-committee along with the clerk. The details of this were deferred.

19.048 Date of next meeting:

3rd June 2019 at 7.00pm

Signed

Date