

Acton Burnell, Frodesley, Pitchford, Ruckley & Langley Parish Council

CLERK'S REPORT

Annual Parish Council Meeting

10 May 2022

25.5.11 Staff Recruitment Committee

I am pregnant and will be due to go on maternity leave around mid-August. SALC advises that it is best to try to appoint a temporary clerk to cover my maternity leave rather than using a locum clerk during that period. Therefore it is necessary to reform a staffing recruitment committee to recruit cover. I have drafted terms of reference for this committee. In addition, I have circulated a draft clerk's contract and job advert adapted for maternity cover.

In addition, I have also circulated NALC's advice on what the Council needs to do when employing a pregnant women, which includes undertaking a risk assessment and completing a form to confirm I am ineligible for any maternity pay. The Council should approve Cllr Harrison to undertake these tasks so that they do not need to wait until the July meeting to be signed.

22.5.13 Delegation to the Clerk

My CiLCA trainer suggested that, in order to help deal with planning applications received with too short a consultation period to be discussed at the next scheduled full Council meeting, it would be a good idea for the Parish Council to formally delegate the response to "basic planning applications" to the Clerk. To do this, the Council would need to add a paragraph to this effect to its Standing Orders. Suggested wording below:

The Clerk has delegated responsibility to respond to planning application consultations which meet the following criteria:

1. *The consultation deadline falls before the next scheduled full Parish Council meeting;*
2. *The application falls into **one** of the following criteria:*
 - a. *Variation or removal of conditions application where the Council has had the opportunity to discuss the original full application at a previous full Council meeting*
 - b. *Listed building consent application*
 - c. *Consent under tree preservation order application*
 - d. *Approval (discharge) of conditions application*
 - e. *Lawful Development Certificate application*
 - f. *Full planning application which does not include the building of any new properties.*

Before using this delegated responsibility, the Clerk must consult all members of the Council by email to ensure there is a consensus within the Council to the proposed response; the Council does not consider the application likely to be controversial or divisive; and no Councillor objects to the Clerk using their delegated responsibility to respond to the application. This delegation does not take priority over any individual Councillor's right to request an extraordinary meeting in order to discuss a planning application.

Acton Burnell, Frodesley, Pitchford, Ruckley & Langley Parish Council

Any delegated responses to planning applications must be reported and ratified by Council at the next full Council meeting. A list of any delegated responses to planning applications should be made available on the Council's website until they are ratified at the next meeting.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021/22

22.5.17 Internal Audit Report

We received a positive report from the internal auditor, which I have circulated. There were no recommendations for any improvements to be made to our internal controls.

22.5.22 Dates for exercise of public rights

We must advertise dates when the public may come to view our books. This period must be at least 30 working days including first 10 days of July. I am on leave from 18 July, so suggest the dates 1 June-15 July 2022.

Finance

22.5.26 Preauthorise payments

I'm requesting that the PC preauthorise the following regular payments to be paid until the next APCM:

1. O2 – Clerk's mobile phone bill, direct debit currently £10.49 per month (note this is a 76p increase on previous year's rate).
2. Clerk's basic salary and home-working allowance, as stipulated by payroll documents, paid by BACS monthly.
3. ICO – data protection registration fee, direct debit £35 annually.

22.5.27 Clerk's additional hours

I am requesting the Council pay for 27 additional hours incurred due to the increased workload at this time of year with end of year and audit preparation, the two annual meetings and jubilee event risk assessments. I am also requesting the Council pay for 28 hours towards my CiLCA training hours.

22.5.29 Tablets for Councillors

Both Cllr Faulkner and Cllr Davies have requested devices on which to carry out their Council work. So I am asking the Council to approve expenditure on these items which would be above what the Council budgeted for office supplies and equipment this year. The equivalent tablet to the one purchased for Cllr Ball is currently available for £99 (per device) from Argos or Amazon or £145 from Frankwell Computers.

Financial Forward Planning

22.5.31 Savings bond

The Council agreed at its meeting in March 2022 to invest £50k in a savings bond. I recommend the Council opens a 1 year fixed bond with Cambridge and Counties Bank with a fixed interest rate of 1.3%. Conditions of this account prevent any withdrawals for 1 year and after that fixed period the account will have accrued £650 interest. At maturity The Council may decide to reinvest or transfer

Acton Burnell, Frodesley, Pitchford, Ruckley & Langley Parish Council

the money back to the Council's account. I will bring the required paperwork to be signed at the meeting should the Council agree to this recommendation.

22.5.32 Earmarking

The Council agreed at its meeting in March 2022 to earmark £50k for future projects identified by the Community plan and the Council's financial forward planning task and finish group. I suggest the following sentence be approved for inclusion in the minutes to define the Council's earmarked funds.

"The Council agreed to earmark £50k to be used to fund future projects, which have been identified as priorities by the Community Plan or the financial forward planning task and finish group. The earmarked funds comprise £20k CIL Neighbourhood Fund monies and £30k Lightsource Community Benefit Fund monies. These projects are: new playground; support for a village shop/café; Acton Burnell-Pitchford footpath; village gateway signs and traffic calming; defibrillator upkeep/replacement; phone box and bus shelter maintenance, upgrades or replacement; and allotments. These funds shall be earmarked for 5 years and no expenditure may be made from the earmarked funds on any projects not listed above without a Council resolution".

22.5.34-5 Subscriptions to Other Bodies

I recommend the Council maintains its subscriptions to the following bodies:

- SALC - £304.35
- SLCC - £98

PC Working Documents

22.5.39 Provisions of Insurance

The Council's current insurance policy and five year agreement with Zurich Municipal runs out on 31 May 2022. I have approached three insurance companies for quotes and recommend entering a new 5 year agreement with Zurich Municipal for insurance cover at a cost of £289.81 per year. This is only a £1.04 increase on the premium we paid in 2021/22. I will circulate the insurance documents separately so that Council may check this policy offer adequate levels of cover.

22.5.42 Highways matters

I have received notification from Shropshire Council that two of the issues reported following recent meetings have been fixed:

- Turned sign on entrance to Frodesley
- Ditch on the side of road on approach to Cantlop crossroads

In addition, the 2 holes at the edge of the road between Frodesley and Longnor are in SC's work programme to be fixed.

Cllr Dan Morris requested that the issue of the water erupting over the pavement in Acton Burnell be investigated. A site visit with Shropshire Council took place on 24 March. Various options were discussed and Jonathan Ingoldby reported that the problem should hopefully be dealt with this summer.

Acton Burnell, Frodesley, Pitchford, Ruckley & Langley Parish Council

22.5.43 NALC consultation for smaller authorities

NALC has contacted parish councils with an electorate under 6,000 to ask us to let them know our main concerns/priorities. I will circulate their request with the agenda.

Jubilee celebrations

22.5.52.4 Jubilee picnic expenditure

I'm asking the Council to preapprove the following anticipated expenditure from the Lightsource account, so that invoices under £500 may be paid before the July meeting.

Payee	Item	Estimated amount	Notes
Cllr Tracy Johnson	Reimbursement for sundry items	£200	Items including decorations, competition prizes, gifts for performers/hosts, stationery
The Upbeats	Band	£240	May need to reimburse Cllr Johnson if cash payment is required on day
Glitter Tattoos	Face painting	£70	May need to reimburse Cllr Johnson if cash payment is required on day
Spacemobiles/Russell Davies	Portaloos	Up to £194.40	

In addition to the above items, the following invoices will need to be approved by full Council at the July meeting because they are over £500 or to be paid to the Clerk:

Payee	Item	Estimated amount	Notes
Clerk	Reimbursement for any sundry items	£50	Items including: competition prizes, bottled water, bin bags.
Polly's Parlour	Ice creams	Up to £1,325	Final amount depends on number of attendees. £150 deposit already paid. (The cost of ice creams will be covered by ticket sales).
	Theatre provider	£570	

22.5.53 Time, Date & Place of Next Meeting

Suggested dates of meetings for next 12 months:

- 12 July 2022
- 13 September 2022
- 8 November 2022
- 17 January 2023
- 14 March 2023
- 9 May 2023