

**MINUTES OF ASTON CLINTON PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCE AND STAFFING COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY 16th SEPTEMBER 2014 AT 7.00pm
AT ASTON CLINTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ROOM**

Present:

Councillors:

G Plowman (Chairman)

M Watson

D Wallis

R Maskell

Nine members of the public

Locum Clerk

Mrs C Jensen

14.140 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Hoinville.

14.141 .Approval of minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 2nd July and 22nd July 2014 were unanimously **APPROVED**. A copy of each will be signed at the next parish council meeting.

14.142 Declaration of interests

No interests were declared, and no requests for dispensation have been received.

14.143 Open Forum

A member of the public asked why no background papers were published prior to the meeting. The locum clerk explained that background documents were only delivered to parish councillors.

A further question was raised by another member of the public, relating to the parish website being out of date. It was noted that updating the website is in hand.

14.144 Clerk's Report

There was no report from the Clerk

14.145 Release of employee's pension

This matter was deferred to the end of the meeting.

14.146 Locum Clerk

Terms and conditions will be deferred to the end of the meeting. The locum clerk confirmed that the role she is able to undertake is that of taking minutes of the meeting and preparation of the minutes of those meetings.

14.147 New Clerk

Cllr Maskell confirmed that an advertisement has been placed in the Bucks Herald; eleven applications have been received to date. It was noted that the closing date for applications is 24th September 2014. The locum clerk will ask the Bucks and Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils if they would put the advert on their website.

It was **AGREED** that a maximum of 4 candidates should be selected for interview. It was unanimously **AGREED** that a sub-committee should deal with the interview process. The sub-committee will consist of Cllrs R Maskell, Mrs Savigar and M Watson. Mrs Jensen agreed to sit in on the interview process as an observer and an adviser, but will take no part in the final decision.

14.148 The current financial position

It was unanimously **AGREED** that, following a proposal by Cllr Plowman, he will prepare a spreadsheet for the current financial year. The locum clerk offered to assist if required. Once the spreadsheet is up to date, a copy will be circulated to all members.

14.149 External Audit

The locum clerk reported that following discussions with the external auditor, the figures carried forward for 2014/2015 have been adjusted to include petty cash transactions in the future. Cllr Plowman confirmed that he and the locum clerk have now agreed the figures for submission to the external auditor. These figures were reported to the Members of the Committee; copies of the annual return showing the amended figures will be forwarded to all Members of the full council.

Members requested a new form for completion, since the original may be confusing when published for the residents. The locum clerk will make enquiries with the external auditor.

14.150 Internal Auditor

It was unanimously **AGREED** that a letter should be sent to the appointed internal auditor for 2013/2014, expressing disquiet that their lack of diligence has resulted in additional work and costs for the parish council. A refund of their fees should also be considered.

It was unanimously **AGREED** that a new internal auditor be sought for the 2014/2015 accounts, agreed terms of reference will be implemented.

Enquiries will be made to ascertain whether there is any professional body to which the matter can be reported.

Concern was expressed that, in the absence of an accurate report on the council's actions for 2013/2014, an internal audit should be carried out for 2013/2014. It was unanimously **AGREED** that the locum clerk could fulfil this function, to ensure the parish council has correct procedures in place for the 2014/2015 year. The locum clerk will liaise with Cllr Plowman on the timescale.

14.151 Budget and precept

It was unanimously **AGREED** that the budget for 2015/2016 should be prepared for the November meeting, together with a proposal for the precept request.

14.152 Local Government Pension Scheme

In view of the costs of leaving the scheme, and the advantages to future staff of staying, it was proposed by Cllr Maskell, seconded by Cllr Wallis, and unanimously **AGREED** to remain within the LGPS.

14.153 Matters of Report

Cllr Plowman expressed concern that there is no clarity on what processes and procedures are in place, whether there are any that need updating and whether there are any that still need to be put in place. This will be placed on the next agenda for the full parish council meeting in October.

14.154 Release of employee's pension

It was proposed by Cllr Watson, seconded by Cllr Wallis and unanimously **AGREED** that an early release of pension is acceptable, provided that no financial penalty is attached to Aston Clinton Parish Council.

14.155 Future meeting

The date of the next Finance and Staffing Committee meeting is yet to be arranged; the next meeting of the full council will be held on Wednesday 7th October 2014.

The meeting closed at 8.21pm

Signed _____

Date _____