

## Minutes of the Finance and Staff Committee of Aston Clinton Parish Council - held on 31st October 2016 at 7.15pm, at Aston Clinton Parish Meeting Room

### **Present:**

Councillors: -

P Hughes (chairman)

L Ronson

L Tubb

R Stewart

Clerk: G Merry

No Members of the public

### **16.079 Apologies:**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Osborn.

### **16.080 To Approve the Minutes of the last Meeting held on 27th September 2016**

The minutes were agreed and signed.

### **16.081 Declarations of Interest:**

There were no declarations of interest

### **16.082 Public Participation**

There were no items

### **16.083 Financial Situation Reports**

- i **Accounts:** The Clerk presented the month-end accounts for October. These showed a total income for the year to-date as £275,781 and the total expenditure as £153,557. The second instalment of the precept had been received. The clerk confirmed that there had been no payments against the budget for 'dog bins', as no invoice had yet been received for the year.
- ii **Status of budgets:** Budgets were broadly on target with 138% of income received with 87% of expenditure spent, although the receipts figure was skewed by \$106 money received and currently held in reserve. The clerk had refined the new accounting reports which had been showing some duplicated budgetary areas. All budgetary areas were approximately the correct % of expenditure/income for the 7<sup>th</sup> month. She was asked to find out what constituted 'Miscellaneous Income'. The clerk was currently working on the budget for next year and was reminded to include an amount for possible renovation of the drains, under 'Grounds Maintenance'.
- iii **Payments to be agreed:** The clerk had circulated the list of outstanding invoices. The outstanding balance to Gravity skateparks would continue to be withheld until completion of the remedial work. There was a query over who would be liable to pay the invoice for the repair of a hand-drier on the café. It was felt that according to the terms of the Tenancy Agreement, the Café was responsible for all internal fixtures. On this basis, it was recommended a discussion take place with the Café, with a view to them paying the invoice.

**MOTION:** It was agreed that all other invoices were approved for payment, PROPOSED by Cllr Ronson, SECONDED by Councillor Tubb and AGREED.

### **16.084 Unitary Authority Status**

A presentation had been given that day by Bucks County Council officers and Cllr Bill Chapple, at the parish council, to explain the county council's case. This would involve dissolving both the county council and the 4 district councils and re-designing a whole new council for Bucks. 19 Community Boards would be established – similar to the current Local Area Forums and would have decision-making capacity, and including parish councillor representation. Additionally there would be 19

community 'hubs' for interaction with councillors. Planning would go into 5 areas i.e. the current 4 districts plus Buckingham. Savings would be made through economies of scale (e.g. legal, I.T. payroll etc. departments) and council tax would be equalised to the lowest current level.

The 4 Bucks District Councils had also joined together to prepare a case to operate a unitary authority. The report on this had been commissioned from Deloitte and had been received. Cllr Tubb would analyse it and present a summary at the P.C. meeting. A decision on unitary status was due to be made by the DCLG by the end of January 2017 with the start of implementation scheduled for April 2017.

**16.085 Local Government Finance Settlement**

The Local Government Finance Settlement was being proposed by the Government, with implications for parish councils. Cllr Osborn had prepared a summary which he would circulate. Cllr Hughes explained there was a plan to cap parish council precept increases to 2%. NALC and the county associations had asked parish councils to write to their MPs to oppose this measure and had provided a template letter. The clerk had submitted an objection in time for the deadline of 28<sup>th</sup> October.

**16.086 Moliq Aubrey Charity**

The allocated sum of S106 money for refurbishing the village Fountain and Trough was not yet available. As such the project was currently on the back-burner but Cllr Stewart would be looking into the release of funds from the CCLA account and Cllr Hughes agreed to pass on what he had found out. A quote of £4694 had been received from a specialist heritage refurbishment company, to refurbish both monuments, including replacing the missing top section from the Rothschild fountain.

**16.087 Staffing Sub-Committee**

Cllrs Tubb and Stewart had now held a meeting with the 2 clerks. The clerks had felt that councillors not responding to emails and not responding quickly enough with availability for meetings was holding up their work. Cllr Tubb had emailed all Cllrs on this matter. It was agreed that Staffing sub-committee meetings would be held quarterly from now on and formally scheduled with agendas.

**16.088 Date of next meeting:**

Tuesday 29th November 2016 at 7pm

Signed ..... Date .....