

ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL



CLERK'S BRIEFING NOTES

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON 1 June 2023

<i>Page</i>	<i>Contents</i>
2	Correspondence (Agenda Item 9)
3	Electronic Speed Signs (Agenda Item 11a)
4	Standing Orders Review – Summary of amendments (Agenda Item 12)
4	Financial Regulations Review – Summary of Amendments (Agenda Item 12)
5-6	Unity Trust Debit Card Information (Agenda Item 15c)
7	Account Balances – for information (Agenda Item 15a)
8-9	Budget Review for 23-24 (Agenda Item 15d)

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Agenda Item 9

Correspondence

All correspondence by email

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Agenda Item 11a – *Electronic Speed Signs*

There is over £9k in the traffic calming reserve which includes some S106 funding left from the £10k received from the Marsh Furlong development. The OCC councillor has also indicated that there may be funding from his allowance in 23-24.

The clerk has canvassed Oxfordshire SLCC branch clerks to identify a recommended supplier, and this is Elan City ([Elan City - Traffic management and urban communication solutions](#)). They offer electronic signage, and this can incorporate recording traffic usage statistics.

The clerk has also asked OCC who their recommended supplier is. They normally use Westcotec signs ([Westcotec | Speed Indicator Device - Westcotec](#)) as they appear to be the best signs and excellent after-sales service.

Other suppliers that they use are:

<https://www.morelock.co.uk/speed-signs/>

<https://www.elancity.co.uk/evolis-radar-speed-sign/>

<https://solagen.com/products/>

<https://www.westcotec.co.uk/products/speed-indicator-device/>

Officers confirmed that the County Council has agreed in principle to replace all existing VAS signs which are no longer operable due to the reduced speed limit. They are currently trying to identify staff resources to undertake this extensive task around the county so unfortunately, cannot provide a likely date.

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Agenda Item 12 – Standing Orders Review for 2023

The following amendments have been made to the Standing Orders for 2023:

1. Page numbers added.
2. Meeting General – Point 2i added *'After each one hour of a meeting, or at the end of the agenda item just after the hour, the council will take a 5-minute pause to allow councillors and clerk to leave the room and have a break.'*
3. Ordinary Council Meeting – Point 4c added *'The meeting time for the Annual Parish Council Meeting is at the normal monthly meeting time of 7.30 pm.'*
4. Proper Officer – Point 14 I – underlined paragraph to remind councillors that about papers being delivered by email. Councillors to confirm if they are content to just have papers by email or if they want physical copies.

Agenda Item 12 – Financial Regulations Review for 2023

The following amendments have been made to the Financial Regulations for 2023:

1. All references to RFO amended to include clerk = Clerk/RFO as the parish only has a clerk and they do the RFO role.
2. Point 1.10 (P3) removed – *'as the case may be, or management information prepared for the council from time to time'*.
3. Point 1.11 (P3) removed *'the income and expenditure or'* and leaving in *'receipts and payments as is the reporting system for finances for the council.'*
4. Point 1.13 (P4) – made bold as this is law and unalterable. Brings the format of the Financial Regulations in line with Standing Orders where everything bold is unalterable.
5. Point 3.1 (P6) – deleted *'relevant committee and the'* and left *'the council'* as this is the correct practice for the parish Council.
6. Point 4.1 (P6) – corrected *'chairman'* to *'chair'* and suggested that the amount that the clerk and chair can authorise be up to £500.
7. Point 5.6 (P8) – removed *'or duly authorised committee'*.
8. Point 5.7 (P8) – amended paragraph to read *'A record of regular payments made under 5.6 above shall be approved at the first meeting of the financial year and bank standing orders reviewed/authorised by two members thus controlling risk of duplicated payments being authorised and/or made.'*
9. Point 5.8 (P8) – removed *'a duly appointed committee'*.
10. Point 6.3 (P9) – removed *'other instructions to the council's bankers, or otherwise,'*
11. Point 6.4 (P9) – inserted *'passed by a'* and removed *'signed by two members of council in accordance with a'*.
12. Point 6.5 (P9) - removed *'or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation,'*.
13. Point 6.6 (P9) – removed *'for signature'* and *'signatures'*, added in *'authorisation'*.
14. Point 6.18 (P11) – added back in from the NALC Model Financial Regulations paragraph for debit card. *'Any debit card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk/RFO and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £500 unless authorised by council in writing before any order is placed.'*
15. Point 11 g) (P15) – added in the relevant section from Standing Orders.

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Agenda Item 15c – Unity Trust Debit Card

Your socially responsible bank

We make banking easy for Councils



Castle Bromwich Parish Council



“

I wholeheartedly recommend Unity as being helpful, patient, responsive, understanding – all the things that many banks fail to deliver.

It is a delight to have established a proper relationship with a bank and still be dealing with the same person I initially made contact with, who is exceptionally knowledgeable about the parish and town Council sector.

It is exciting to have a bank that is committed to the communities of its customers.”

Cathy Tibbles
Clerk to the Parish Council
Castle Bromwich Parish Council

We make banking easy for Councils because:

- ✓ We offer bank accounts tailored for your needs
- ✓ Our expert team understand your sector
- ✓ Changing signatories is straightforward
- ✓ Depositing your money is local and convenient
- ✓ Making payments is simple and secure

We are socially focussed and financially sustainable too. This is why hundreds of parish, community and town Councils choose to work with Unity.

We offer bank accounts tailored for your needs

A current account exclusively for Councils and an instant access deposit account are available. Interest is paid on all balances and fees are negotiable based on account activity.

Our current account comes with a cheque book, regular online or paper statements and access to our governance friendly Internet Banking service.

Find out more about Internet Banking overleaf.

Our expert team understand your sector

Our team of relationship managers have experience of opening bank accounts for hundreds of parish, community and town Councils. They work with your Council throughout the application process and can help you complete the application and answer any queries about banking with Unity.

Our UK based customer services team are on hand Monday to Friday between 8.30am and 5pm to answer all your queries. You can speak directly to a person without having to go through 'push button' options and we are proud that 90% of queries are resolved by the person who answers the call.

Changing signatories is straightforward

We recognise that you will have a number of councillors as signatories on your bank account and that these may need to be changed regularly.

To speed up this process, we conduct electronic searches to verify the identity of signatories and other parties involved with the account.

Only in the event that a signatory or key account party does not pass this search would we then ask for further proof of identity.

Depositing your money is local and convenient

Unity is a branchless bank but we provide convenient solutions to ensure you can access your funds quickly and locally.

- If you need to pay in cash, we can arrange for you to do so at your local Post Office or at the counter of a local NatWest bank. Additional costs may be involved for the use of this service.
- Cheques can be paid in though the post using Freepost envelopes addressed directly to our clearing centre. We will supply you with a stock of these.

Making payments is simple and secure

We offer a number of convenient options to manage the funds going out of your account.

- Unity e-Payments is a Bacs service for making and receiving bulk payments such as salaries and recurring supplier payments. It is time-saving, cost-effective and easy to manage.

For more detail on e-Payments visit www.unity.co.uk/epayments

- We offer a prepaid card and Unity Corporate MultiPay card so that you have convenient ways to manage the spending of your Council. To find the most suitable option for your Council, speak to your Relationship Manager.
- Cheque books are available with all current accounts.

The bank for social impact

We share your social and community values

Unity was set up more than 30 years ago as a different type of bank - a bank which was committed to the creation of the common good, and a bank which was not driven by a pure profit motive.

Unity puts financial sustainability and positive social impact first. Here are some of the ways we continue to live by these principles:

- **First Living Wage accredited bank and Living Wage Champion** in the West Midlands
- **Pioneer of the Fair Tax Mark**
- Staff offered **five paid volunteering days a year**
- Staff own shares in the Bank through our **Employee Share Ownership Plan**
- Our apprentices **earn 64% above the national apprentice wage**
- Customer deposits are used to fund lending only **where there are clear social impacts**
- Since 2013, we have created and protected over 5,500 jobs and housed over 1000 people

Financial sustainability

Unity is financially sustainable. We have never traded in subprime investments or the complex financial instruments that have resulted in difficulties for many banks. Unity funds its banking business entirely from shareholder capital and customers' deposits and, importantly, all our loans are covered almost four times by customer deposits.

Unity does not borrow money from other banks; therefore we do not hold a credit rating as this is only required to facilitate inter-bank borrowing. Our investments are made in UK Government backed Bonds and other UK financial institutions. We have a strict policy of not investing outside the UK.

Unity has a full banking licence, is regulated by both the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority and is a member of the British Bankers Association. Our business is conducted according to regulatory codes and subject to due supervision.



We joined Unity in December 2013 after we'd had some issues with our high street bank.

We'd heard that Unity was set up to work closely with Councils and thought they'd look after us better.

Our Councillors voted to switch and we are very happy with the decision. The customer service is great and really helpful and we'd definitely recommend them to other councils."

Sharon Clayton
Town Clerk
Much Wenlock Town Council



Your socially responsible bank

Internet Banking is designed to meet your needs

Our Internet Banking service has been designed to be governance friendly. It is free to set up and use. Through Internet Banking you can manage your cash flow, amend and stop standing orders and Direct Debits, make payments and stop cheques. Each of the following features can be tailored to meet the needs of your Council.

Access level – Our Internet Banking service was developed with feedback from clerks to recognise the segregation of duties between Councillors and clerks. You can tailor the access rights of each Internet Banking user with varying combinations of view, submit and authorise access available.

Authority level – Single, dual and triple authority level available. This can be used to replicate a cheque payment signed by two or more Councillors and is a secure way of making payments.

Payment limits – Make online payments with added approval including specifying the number of users required to make a payment according to the value of the transaction being submitted, and naming the users that need to be involved in payments according to the value of the transaction.

Internet Banking Administrator – Your Council can appoint an Internet Banking user to become an 'administrator' who can keep control of your online account activity. They will be able to set a maximum daily payment limit and an individual transaction limit on all external payments made via our Internet Banking service. These limits can be set per user or organisation.

Explore the features and see how it works using our Guide to Internet Banking. Visit www.unity.co.uk/ibdemo

0345 155 3355

us@unity.co.uk

www.unity.co.uk

[@unitytrustbank](https://twitter.com/unitytrustbank)



Unity Trust Bank plc is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority. Unity Trust Bank is entered in the Financial Conduct Authority's register under number 204570. Registered office: Nine Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2HB. Registered in England and Wales no. 1713124. Calls are recorded and may be monitored for security, quality and monitoring purposes. UTB 447 / March 2015

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**Agenda Item 15a*****Financial Matters*****Cash Balances**

£

UNITY TRUST CURRENT ACCOUNT

Balance at 31 March 2023	32,821.45
Payments April	(6,125.91)
Payments May	(1,104.83)
Receipts April	21,750.60
Receipts May	1,670.00
Balance at 24 May 2023	<u>£49,011.31</u>

CCLA INVESTMENT ACCOUNT

Balance at 31 March 2023	49,644.09
Transactions in month of April	167.96
Balance at 30 April 2023	<u>49,812.05</u>

TOTAL CASH HOLDING AT 24 May 2023	<u>£98,823.36</u>
--	--------------------------

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**Agenda Item 15 – Revised budget for 23-24**

ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL		
FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/24		
Revised Budget June 2023		
	ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL	
	Budget 2023-24	
2022-23		2023-24
Actual Spend		Budget
	EXPENDITURE	
	Staff Costs	
£ 5,468.88	Clerk's Salary - includes potential 3% payrise if PC resolves to follow the NALC/JPAG guidance.	£ 4,872.86
£ 216.00	Working from home allowance. Currently being £18 per month = £216. Maximum that can be claimed is £312. For discussion and resolution if PC wish to update.	£ 312.00
£ 1,440.89	HMRC	£ 1,218.27
£ -	<i>Clerk sickness/Overtime contingency</i>	£ 500.00
£ 552.00	Travel and Training (Review for Clerk and Councillor training - industry standard 2.5% budget (£742.87))	£ 742.87
	Office and General Expenses	
£ -	APM and meeting Hall Hire	£ 100.00
£ 189.79	Website Costs including domain registration and renewal	£ 190.00
£ 200.00	External Audit	£ 200.00
£ 341.40	Insurance	£ 369.00
£ 72.00	Bank Charges	£ 72.00
£ 782.92	Office running costs	£ 650.00
£ -	Office Equipment (transfer to reserve if unspent at year end	£ 150.00
£ -	<i>Professional Fees</i>	£ 1,000.00
£ 35.00	ICO Fee (DD)	£ 35.00
£ 70.00	Subscriptions (CPRE, CFO, SLCC, OALC)	£ 515.00
£ -	Election Expenses (estimated until WODC issue tax base.	£ 80.00
	General and Ground Maintenance	
£ 2,332.27	Grass Cutting - verges & weed killing	£ 5,000.00
£ 1,747.70	Grass Cutting - playing field and WM	£ 1,500.00
£ 345.67	Dog & Litter Bin Emptying	£ 2,171.00
£ 462.00	Clock Maintenance	£ 229.00
£ 443.44	Bus Shelter Cleaning	£ 600.00
£ 165.00	Defibrillator pads/batteries	£ 200.00
£ 1,127.43	Village maintenance	£ 1,500.00
	GRANTS	
£ 750.00	Small Grants	£ 1,115.00
£ 3,309.00	General Grants	£ 5,435.00
£ 1,946.63	VAT Paid	£ 2,551.00
£ 21,998.02	TOTAL	£ 31,308.00

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

	INCOME	
£ 29,715.00	Precept	£ 30,166.00
£ 1,049.00	OCC Grass cutting Grant	£ 1,049.00
£ 769.81	Interest on CCLA Investment account	£ 350.00
£ 2,053.65	VAT reclaimed	£ 2,551.00
£ -	TERRA Planning Appeal	£ -
£ 33,587.46	TOTAL	£ 34,116.00
	RESERVED FUNDS	
	General Contingency fund (For example: 3 months running costs/insurance excess)	£ 5,000.00
	Working Day to Day Balance	£ 1,122.54
	Traffic Calming	£ 9,679.00
£ 910.00	Cote Noticeboard	£ -
	TERRA Appeal Funding	£ 5,000.00
	Aston History Boards (£1,000 per board)	£ 3,500.00
	North Farm	£ 3,800.00
	Office Equipment (Colour Printer/Laptop replacement 2024)	£ 1,000.00
£ 2,959.95	Defibrillator Maintenance	£ 3,145.00
	Recreation Reserve	£ 33,476.00
	War Memorial	£ 2,000.00
	<i>Community Trust (50% match funding pot)</i>	£ 10,000.00
	<i>Coronation (St James Church Tower Gate/Celebrations/Footpath)</i>	£ 5,000.00
£ 3,869.95	TOTAL	£ 82,722.54
£ 32,821.45	Forecast Current Account Balance as at 31 March	£ 32,821.45
£ 49,644.09	Forecast CCLA Investment account balance as at 31 March	£ 49,644.09
£ 82,465.54	Forecast Total in bank accounts at year end 31 March	£ 82,465.54
£ 78,595.59	Forecast Total left after Reserves are taken into account	-£ 257.00
	Total expected income (not Precept)	£ 1,399.00
	Total left including expected income	£ 1,142.00
	Total in proposed budget	£ 31,308.00
	Total Precept needed	£ 30,166.00