

# ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL

## CLERK'S BRIEFING NOTES

### PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON 2 FEBRUARY 2017

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**Correspondence sent since 5 January 2017**

- a) Emails to WODC Planning with responses to planning applications for Chimney Farmhouse, Marsh Cottage Back Lane, Westfield House and proposed dwellings on land north of Back Lane
- b) Letter to Volunteer Link-Up enclosing donation
- c) Letter to Robert Courts MP responding to his letter of 14 December

## **ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REVIEW OF PARISH COUNCIL'S RISK ASSESSMENT**

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 As part of its Annual Governance Statement which is submitted to the external auditor the Parish Council is required to confirm that “we have carried out an assessment of the risks facing the council and taken appropriate steps to manage those risks.”
- 1.2 The Practitioner's Guide to Governance and Accountability for Local Councils, produced by NALC states that “risk management is the process whereby local councils methodically address the risks associated with what they do and the services which they provide. The focus of good risk management is to identify what can go wrong and take proportionate steps to avoid this or successfully manage the consequences. Risk management is not just about financial management; it is about ensuring the achievement of objectives set by the council to deliver high quality public services.”
- 1.3 The council is expected to keep the risks it faces under review and to formally review the risk assessment at least once per year.
- 1.4 Aston, Cote, Shifford & Chimney Parish Council last carried out a review of its risk assessment in February 2016.

### **2.0 Risk Assessment Review 2017**

- 2.1 The Clerk has reviewed the risk assessment.
- 2.2 The Clerk is not proposing any amendments, although it is for the Council to make the final decision on whether the risk assessment is complete and whether any amendments need to be made.

### **3.0 Recommendation**

- 3.1 That the Parish Council considers the risk assessment, proposing any amendments considered necessary. If there are no amendments to be made, that the Parish Council approves and adopts the risk assessment as attached.

Prepared by Helen Sandhu, Clerk & RFO  
22 January 2017

## ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT

Originally adopted at a meeting of the Parish Council on 6 March 2008

Last reviewed and reapproved at a meeting of the Parish Council on 4 February 2016

Business Area	Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Control Measures
Clerk	Misappropriation of funds	L	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment procedures – interview/references</li> <li>Maintain appropriate level of fidelity guarantee insurance</li> <li>Bank reconciliation checked to original documentation on a quarterly basis by Chairman</li> </ul>
	Poor performance/incompetence	L	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment procedures – interview/references</li> <li>Membership of SLCC</li> <li>Training courses</li> <li>Oversight by experienced councillors</li> </ul>
	Health & safety issues – lone working at home	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require Clerk to keep up to date on Health &amp; Safety issues</li> <li>Employers' liability insurance</li> </ul>
	Loss of trained and experienced Clerk through resignation	M	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment procedures – ensuring Clerk is committed</li> <li>Training</li> <li>Support</li> </ul>

Clerk's Briefing Notes – Meeting on 2 February 2017

Business Area	Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Control Measures
<b>Councillors</b>	Bringing Parish Council into disrepute	) L	) H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain training on Code of Conduct and other regulations/procedures as appropriate</li> <li>• Ensure Councillors have up to date documentation on Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Clear procedural Standing Orders</li> <li>• Libel and slander insurance</li> <li>• All official correspondence to be sent by the Clerk</li> <li>• Official media contact to be conducted through Chair, with statements to be agreed by Parish Council</li> </ul>
	Not declaring an interest as necessary			
	Misrepresenting Parish Council; acting in isolation but claiming to represent Council			
	Health and Safety	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal Accident insurance</li> </ul>
<b>Legal/Statutory Powers</b>	Acting outside of legal powers	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of reference books</li> <li>• Membership of NALC – referring new and unclear matters to them</li> <li>• Identify legal power for new activities before commit to them</li> <li>• Legal powers used for expenditure noted on agendas and minutes</li> </ul>
	Not maximising use of legal powers – missing out on things the Parish Council are permitted to do	M	L	

Clerk's Briefing Notes – Meeting on 2 February 2017

<b>Business Area</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Control Measures</b>
<b>Public Involvement</b>	Acting without a mandate from the public represented by the Parish Council	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage local residents to register as candidates for elections</li> <li>• Support local Parish magazine, enter an article providing updates from the Parish Council in each edition of the magazine</li> <li>• Parish Council pages on Parish website – includes recent Minutes</li> <li>• Parish Council Twitter account</li> <li>• Actively promote Annual Parish Meeting</li> <li>• Keep Parish Noticeboards up to date with Parish Council news</li> <li>• Update Parish Plan as considered necessary</li> </ul>
<b>Procedures</b>	Not following correct procedures for meetings – exposing decisions taken to challenge	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of reference books</li> <li>• Membership of NALC – referring new and unclear matters to them</li> <li>• Training of Clerk</li> <li>• Experience of Councillors</li> <li>• Ensure Councillors are aware of procedure for calling Extraordinary Meetings</li> <li>• Clear procedural Standing Orders</li> </ul>

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<b>Business Area</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Control Measures</b>
	Not dealing effectively with major local emergencies	L	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic emergency plan developed. Consider further development of emergency procedures</li> <li>• Ensure Councillors are aware of procedure for calling Extraordinary Meetings in event of emergency</li> </ul>
<b>Records</b>	Loss by fire/flood/computer failure	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Records kept in secure premises</li> <li>• Back-ups of computerised records maintained</li> </ul>
	Destruction by error	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clerk to refer to legal time period for document retention before destroying records</li> <li>• Clerk to consider historical significance of records before destroying them, and if in any doubt to seek advice from Parish Council/third party expert</li> </ul>
<b>Financial</b>	Poor cashflow management	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment procedures – appointment of suitably qualified/experienced Clerk, and identification of training needs</li> </ul>
	Poor record keeping	L	H	
	Failure to comply with VAT/Inland Revenue regulations	L	M	

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	Failure to comply with audit regulations	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training for Clerk</li> <li>• Training for Councillors</li> <li>• Reference books</li> <li>• Financial Procedure Manual maintained; changes to procedures to be agreed at Parish Council meeting</li> <li>• Retention of suitable internal auditor to check accounts and records on an annual basis</li> <li>• Quarterly accounts circulated to Councillors and included on meeting agendas</li> <li>• Actual cash balance notified to Councillors on a monthly basis</li> <li>• Expenditure checked against budget before it is committed to</li> <li>• Bank reconciliation checked to original documentation on a quarterly basis by Chairman</li> </ul>
	Inadequate precept	L	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget prepared by Clerk following input from Councillors</li> <li>• Precept set on basis of draft budget</li> </ul>



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<b>Business Area</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Control Measures</b>
	Incorrect salary payments made	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to salaries decided at Parish Council meetings and minuted</li> <li>• Salary payments made are signed (cheque or online) by 2 Councillors</li> </ul>
	Payments made to incorrect suppliers/for wrong amount	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Payments to be made included on agenda of full Parish Council meetings for review/approval</li> <li>• Payments signed (cheque or online) by 2 Councillors</li> <li>• Original invoices provided to Councillors signing cheques</li> <li>• Direct Debit payments to be limited and mandates signed in accordance with cheque signature procedures</li> </ul>
	Not maximising interest	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximise funds kept in interest bearing account</li> <li>• Review banking arrangements from time to time</li> </ul>
	Not maximising grant income	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider availability of grants when undertaking new projects and apply for any that are appropriate</li> </ul>
<b>Suppliers/Contractors</b>	Poor reputation of supplier/contractor impacting on Parish Council	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain references before trading with new supplier/contractor as appropriate</li> </ul>
	Supplier/contractor not properly insured	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain copy of current insurance as appropriate</li> </ul>

<b>Business Area</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Control Measures</b>
	Competitive Pricing/Best Value	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quotation/tender procedures specified in Standing Orders and followed for new contracts</li> </ul>
	Management of relationship with major supplier/contractor	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider need for dealings with contractor/supplier to be carried out by more than one member of the Parish Council, particularly for initial meeting and signing off work</li> <li>• All paperwork to be routed through Clerk</li> </ul>
<b>Benches</b>	Health and Safety – risk of injury to public	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public liability insurance</li> <li>• Inspect every 6 months</li> <li>• Carry out maintenance where necessary</li> </ul>
	Loss/Damage	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual confirmation of existence at least every 6 months</li> <li>• Ensure properly secured</li> <li>• Theft/accidental damage insurance</li> </ul>
<b>War Memorial</b>	Health and Safety – risk of injury to public	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public liability insurance</li> <li>• Inspect every 6 months</li> <li>• Carry out maintenance where necessary</li> </ul>
	Loss/Damage	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theft/accidental damage insurance</li> </ul>
<b>Bus Shelters</b>	Health and Safety – risk of injury to public	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public liability insurance</li> <li>• Inspect every 6 months</li> <li>• Carry out maintenance where necessary</li> </ul>
	Loss/Damage	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theft/accidental damage insurance</li> </ul>

<b>Business Area</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Control Measures</b>
<b>Notice Boards</b>	Health and Safety – risk of injury to public	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public liability insurance</li> <li>• Inspect every 6 months</li> <li>• Carry out maintenance where necessary</li> </ul>
	Loss/Damage	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual confirmation of existence at least every 6 months</li> <li>• Ensure properly secured</li> <li>• Theft/accidental damage insurance</li> </ul>
<b>Dog Bins/Litter Bins provided by Parish Council</b>	Health and Safety – risk of injury to public	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public liability insurance</li> <li>• Inspect every 6 months</li> <li>• Carry out maintenance where necessary</li> </ul>
	Loss/Damage	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual confirmation of existence at least every 6 months</li> <li>• Ensure properly secured</li> </ul>
<b>Electrical Equipment</b>	Health and Safety – risk of injury to user/fire risk	L	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only purchase electrical equipment that complies with current safety standards</li> <li>• Keep equipment properly maintained</li> <li>• Users to do a visual check on flexes for wear and tear every six months and remove damaged equipment</li> <li>• Test electrical equipment as appropriate</li> </ul>

**Financial Matters****1. Cash Balances**

	£
<i>SANTANDER CURRENT ACCOUNT</i>	
Balance at 31 December 2016	NIL
<b>Balance at 31 January 2017</b>	<b><u>NIL</u></b>
 <i>UNITY TRUST CURRENT ACCOUNT</i>	
Balance at 31 December 2016	11,019.87
Service charges 3 months to 31 December	(18.00)
January payments	(1,329.26)
<b>Balance at 31 January 2017</b>	<b><u>9,672.61</u></b>
 <i>NATIONWIDE DEPOSIT ACCOUNT</i>	
Balance at 31 December 2016	39,106.79
Transactions in month	NIL
<b>Balance at 31 January 2017</b>	<b><u>£39,106.79</u></b>
 <i>SANTANDER BUSINESS DEPOSIT ACCOUNT</i>	
Balance at 31 December 2016	534.70
Transactions in month: interest received	0.04
<b>Balance at 31 January 2017</b>	<b><u>£534.74</u></b>
 <b>TOTAL CASH HOLDING AT 31 JANUARY 2017</b>	 <b><u>£49,314.14</u></b>

**Financial Matters****2. Bank Reconciliations at 31 December 2016**SANTANDER CURRENT ACCOUNT

	£
Bank Statement Balance at 31 December	NIL
Reconciling items NONE	NIL
Cash Book Balance at 31 December	<u>NIL</u>

UNITY TRUST CURRENT ACCOUNT

	£
Bank Statement Balance at 31 December	11,001.87
Reconciling items NONE	NIL
Cash Book Balance at 31 December	<u>11,001.87</u>

SANTANDER DEPOSIT ACCOUNT

	£
Bank Statement Balance at 31 December	534.70
Reconciling items NONE	NIL
Cash Book Balance at 31 December	<u>534.46</u>

NATIONWIDE DEPOSIT ACCOUNT

	£
Bank Statement Balance at 31 December	39,106.79
Reconciling Items NONE	NIL
Cash Book Balance at 31 December	<u>39,106.79</u>