

# **ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL**

## **CLERK'S BRIEFING NOTES**

### **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON 2 MARCH 2017**

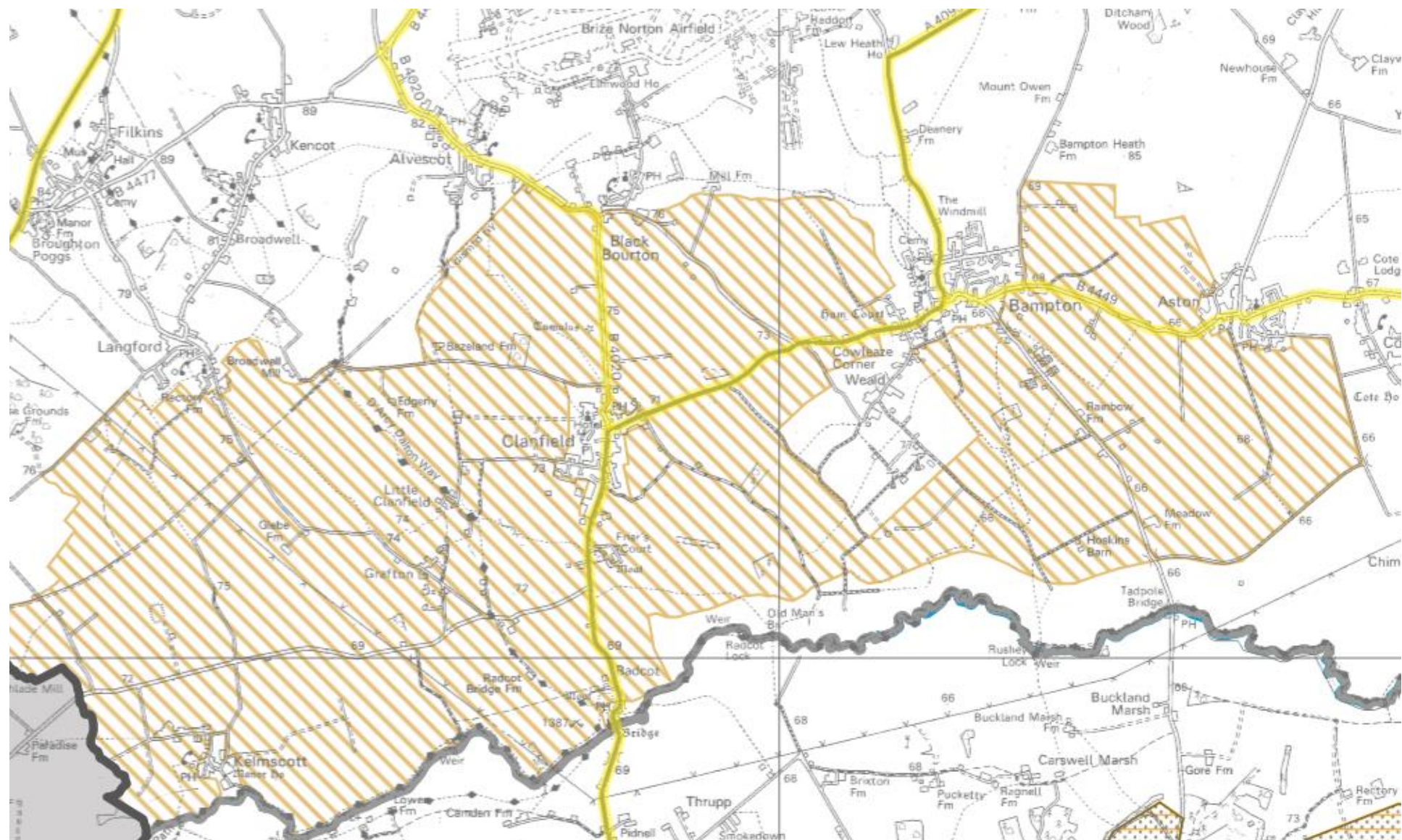
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Prepared by Helen Sandhu  
25 February 2017

**Correspondence sent since 2 February 2017**


- a) Letter to Oxfordshire County Council with response to unitary authority consultation
- b) Email to WODC Planning with responses to planning applications for Land adjacent to Paradise Farm, Bull Lane
- c) Letter to Aston Community Minibus enclosing donation



## Key


 - Boundary of Local Plan Area


 - District Boundaries


 - Mineral Strategic Resource Area (Policy M3)

1. Burford – South of A40
2. East/South East of Faringdon
3. North West of Bicester
4. Thames Valley – Caversham to Shiplake
5. Thames & Lower Thame Valleys –  
Oxford to Cholsey
6. Thames, Lower Windrush & Evenlode Valleys –  
Standlake to Yarnton
7. Corallian Ridge – Oxford to Faringdon
8. Duns Tew Area

## Mineral Safeguarding Areas (Policy M8)

 - Soft Sand

 - Crushed Rock

 - Sharp Sand and Gravel

 - Fuller's Earth

Definition of “Mineral Safeguarding Area” from the submitted Plan: “Mineral resources in these areas are safeguarded for possible future use. Development that would prevent or otherwise hinder the possible future working of the mineral will not be permitted unless it can be shown that: ☐ The site has been allocated for development in an adopted local plan or neighbourhood plan; or ☐ The need for the development outweighs the economic and sustainability considerations relating to the mineral resource; or ☐ The mineral will be extracted prior to the development taking place.”

Note also the updated wording of paragraph 4.33 in the Plan (on the agenda) which acknowledges the potential operational issues of the Mineral Safeguarding Areas in our parish, which should reduce the likelihood of these areas being worked.



Received 2/2/2017  
(forwarded from 36A Cote  
Road to which had been  
hand-delivered).

Ms Mr C Livingstone  
Birchwood Cottage  
Ham Lane  
Aston  
OX18 2DE

30 January, 2017

Dear Sir

We are writing in respect of the excrement disposal bin that is currently situated outside of our property.

We have raised this issue with the parish council prior to moving in (Sep 16) which we understand was declined as there was a fence and hedge being erected.

As we now own the property (freehold) there will be no fence for the foreseeable future and if this is erected this would only be an open ranch style fence as per adjacent garden. There is also no hedge or trees being erected to the front of the property.

The bin is unsightly and visible to every window, at front elevation of the property which includes our dining room and our breakfast bar area.

To have this in full view is awful when you are eating and preparing food watching various bags (including see-through bags) of dog's excrement into a bin.

We fully understand why the bin was put where it was originally as the properties that it faces were derelict. However, as you are fully aware these properties are now fully occupied.

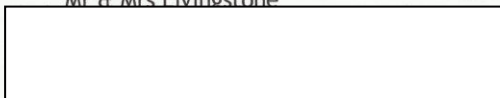
There are several different positions where this bin could be re sighted down Ham lane that would not affect people view from their property and we do consider that the bin should be moved.

As the excrement is removed by van then where this bin is re sighted should not affect anything.

Please can the council strongly consider the re sighting of this bin as a matter of urgency.

I would like to offer that I can re sight for you if that is acceptable so there would be no cost to the parish council.

Yours Sincerely,  
Mr & Mrs Livingstone



Received 2/2/2017

ROSEDALE COTTAGE  
HAM LANE  
ASTON  
OXFORDSHIRE  
OX18 2DE

Dear Sir

I have recently moved into a property in Ham Lane and I am writing to request that the dog bin that is situated outside of my property is removed.

Whilst the cottage is lovely the fact that I have the dog bin in full sight from all of my front windows is awful.

When I am preparing my food, the bin is in full sight and people are constantly filling this whilst I am eating. It is both off putting and unpleasant. Also, when I sit in my lounge I can also see this.

Please can the parish council look into this for me and see if the bin could be re sighted to an area that is less conspicuous as I think it will be awful once the summer comes and I have my windows open.

Yours Sincerely



Ms Mr C Livingstone  
Birchwood Cottage  
Ham Lane  
Aston  
OX18 2DE

26 February, 2017

Dear Sir

We are writing as advised by West Oxfordshire County Council in respect of the stretch of highways land opposite our property. This is the piece of land from where the dog bin is to be removed.

We did ask the County Council if there was anything we could do to make this more attractive and they did refer to a couple of options that we could discuss with yourselves ref improving the look of this.

**Option one**

The parish council could put bollards along this grass verge to avoid cars parking on it. However, this would be additional costs from a small budget so not a cost-effective option.

**Option two**

We could ask permission from the parish council to plant this up with some shrubs (which we would fund totally)

We consider the planting option would make the verge more attractive as this is becoming a mud bath, it would be no cost to the parish council but would enhance the look of the parish.

In addition, whilst the dog bin is to be relocated (thank you very much for this) we also have neighbours who live in [redacted] and have in the last week decided to putting their rubbish bins in the garden directly adjacent to our property in full view of all of our windows and the cottage next door. These bins have previously always been at the back of the garden and were not really visible) whilst we know there is nothing that can be done, as the bins are on their land. If we could plant some shrubs it would make the outlook of both ours and Rosedale cottage much more pleasant to view from our windows and make the lane look nicer for people walking past.

We have made great efforts to try and improve the look of our property and will continue to do so once we have erected the garage and planted that side of the property up, so would very much appreciate consideration from the parish council for us to improve the look of the piece of land opposite.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this matter.

Your Sincerely

Mr & Mrs Livingstone







**From: Sent:** 24 February 2017 09:29

**Subject:** Barrier Woodbridge/ Cote Road

Dear Helen,

I wish the Parish Council to reconsider its decision to replace the barrier at the end of the alley way between Woodbridge Close and Cote Road.

As it is laudable that the PC is taking into consideration the needs of the SMALL minority of wheelchair users in the parish. Did they not consider the needs of the MAJORITY of school children, who use the alley way on a DAILY basis, when they were doing their deliberations?

Did they not do a full Risk Assessment taking into consideration the needs of ALL village users?

That barrier has served as a deterrent to children running straight on to Cote Road for at least the last 30 years. Now with an absence of both barrier and lollipop person, I fear the worst will happen.

Perhaps when a tragedy does happen the PC will be moved to put a permanent crossing on the road which it has sorely needed for years.

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth P Maher

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

	£
<i>SANTANDER CURRENT ACCOUNT</i>	
Balance at 31 January 2017	NIL
<b>Balance at 28 February 2017</b>	<b><u>NIL</u></b>
 <i>UNITY TRUST CURRENT ACCOUNT</i>	
Balance at 31 January 2017	9,672.61
VAT reclaim to 31/12/2016	1,006.40
February payments	(661.42)
<b>Balance at 28 February 2017</b>	<b><u>10,017.59</u></b>
 <i>NATIONWIDE DEPOSIT ACCOUNT</i>	
Balance at 31 January 2017	39,106.79
Transactions in month	NIL
<b>Balance at 28 February 2017</b>	<b><u>£39,106.79</u></b>
 <i>SANTANDER BUSINESS DEPOSIT ACCOUNT</i>	
Balance at 31 January 2017	534.74
Transactions in month: interest received	0.05
<b>Balance at 28 February 2017</b>	<b><u>£534.79</u></b>
 <b>TOTAL CASH HOLDING AT 28 FEBRUARY 2017</b>	<b><u>£49,659.17</u></b>

## **ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROLS**

### **1.0 Overview**

- 1.1 The Parish Council is required to confirm in its Annual Return to the External Auditor that it has “maintained an adequate system of internal control... and reviewed its effectiveness.”
- 1.2 The Parish Council has two documents covering the management of its financial affairs – a set of Financial Regulations and a Statement of Internal Control. The Parish Council's Financial Regulations were comprehensively reviewed and updated in October 2015.
- 1.3 The Parish Council now needs to review the system of internal control again so that it can properly sign the Annual Return for 2016/17 when it is due.

### **2.0 Financial Regulations**

- 2.1 The Financial Regulations document which was adopted by the Parish Council at the meeting on 1 October 2015 was circulated in that month's papers. It can be recirculated to Councillors if requested.

### **3.0 Statement of Internal Control**

- 3.1 This statement, originally prepared by the Clerk in 2009 and last circulated to Councillors in March 2016, follows this report.
- 3.2 The Clerk has reviewed the statement and confirms that it continues to reflect actual practice. No amendments have been made to the Statement since it was last circulated in March 2016.

### **4.0 Recommendation**

- 4.1 That the Parish Council reviews the Statement of Internal Control to consider whether the controls currently in place are effective.

Prepared by: Helen Sandhu, Clerk and RFO  
25 February 2017



## **ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL**

### **STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL**

Prepared by H. Sandhu, RFO

Last reviewed and reapproved at a meeting of the Parish Council on 3 March 2016

Cash Book/Bank reconciliations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cash book is kept up to date from original documents (paying-in books, invoices, cheque stubs, BACS transactions)</li> <li>• The cash book is reconciled to the bank statement on a quarterly basis</li> <li>• The bank reconciliation is reviewed and approved by a member of the Parish Council (usually the Chairman), with reference to the underlying records (cash book and bank statements)</li> <li>• The bank reconciliation is reported to the full Parish Council and minuted as such</li> <li>• The latest financial position and movements on the Parish Council's cash balances are reported at each council meeting and can be traced back to the expenditure approved in the previous meeting via the minutes</li> </ul>
Financial Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A document listing the Parish Council's financial regulations, based on the model version prepared by NALC/SLCC is maintained. The regulations are reviewed for continued relevance and amended where necessary by the Responsible Financial Officer with any proposed amendments subject to approval by the Parish Council</li> </ul>
Order/Tender controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Financial Regulations list the number of estimates, quotes or full tenders that must be invited depending on the value and nature of the work.</li> <li>• Official orders/letters are sent to suppliers for services which are not regular in nature</li> </ul>
Legal Powers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A proper legal power is identified in advance of any expenditure. The legal power for expenditure is shown on the agenda and minutes for payments made</li> </ul>
Payment controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depending on the nature of the supply, the RFO signs the purchase invoice to indicate that the supply has been received, that the supply has not previously been paid and that the invoice calculations are correct.</li> <li>• Purchase orders/letters ordering the work are matched to purchase invoices where applicable</li> <li>• All invoices for payment are listed on the meeting agenda where the cheques are to be signed/BACS payments approved</li> <li>• Payments made are listed in the minutes of the meeting</li> <li>• Original invoices are provided to the Councillors signing the cheques/authorising the BACS payments</li> <li>• Invoices paid are numbered and the same number entered on the cheque counterfoil and in the cashbook for cross reference purposes</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The cheque number used to settle an invoice and the date it was signed are entered on the invoice for cross reference purposes. For BACS payments, the BACS payment date is entered on the invoice for cross reference purposes.</li> </ul>
s137	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A separate s137 account is maintained</li> <li>The RFO calculates the maximum amount of s137 expenditure able to be made each year and ensures that it is not exceeded – confirmed to the Parish Council when expenditure is considered either by reference to a specific budget for that payment or to the amount of unspent s137 money available</li> <li>Where requests for expenditure from s137 are made this is made clear on the meeting agendas where the payment is to be approved</li> <li>The proper minute authorising expenditure from s137 is prepared on each occasion</li> </ul>
VAT repayment claims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RFO ensures that all invoices are addressed to the Parish Council.</li> <li>RFO ensures that proper VAT invoices are received where VAT is payable</li> <li>RFO maintains a VAT account to show that the correct amount of VAT is reclaimed in the year</li> </ul>
Income controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RFO ensures that amount of the precept received is correct in accordance with the precept request sent to the District Council</li> <li>RFO ensures that the precept instalments are received when due</li> <li>RFO ensures that other receipts (deposit interest, grass cutting grant) are received when due and correctly calculated</li> <li>Income is banked promptly</li> </ul>
Financial reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A receipts &amp; payments account, comparing actual expenditure to the budget and the prior year is prepared on a quarterly basis, presented to the Parish Council and minuted as such</li> </ul>
Budgetary controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The budget is prepared in consultation with the Parish Council, as evidenced by reports and minutes in advance of the start of the year</li> <li>The precept is set on the basis of the budget by the deadline set by the District Council</li> </ul>
Payroll controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Clerk is paid under PAYE as an employee</li> <li>The Clerk's salary is set by the Council and a minute is prepared to show the agreed salary</li> <li>The salary is paid by BACS, with the BACS payment authorised by two Councillors</li> <li>The RFO ensures that all the necessary payroll returns are made to HMRC and retains evidence that this has been done</li> </ul>

Asset Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The RFO maintains a full asset register</li><li>• The existence and condition of assets is checked on a six monthly basis by a member of the Parish Council</li><li>• The adequacy of insurance of the Parish Council's assets is considered annually in advance of the insurance renewal</li></ul>
Internal Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A suitably experienced independent internal auditor is appointed by the Parish Council</li><li>• An internal audit of the Council's accounting records and financial and other procedures is carried out once a year</li><li>• The internal auditor prepares a report addressed to the Parish Council which is considered at the next meeting</li><li>• The Parish Council ensures that it is satisfied that the internal audit is effective before making arrangements for the new annual internal audit</li></ul>