

ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL

CLERK'S BRIEFING NOTES

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON 1 October 2020

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Prepared by Elaine Anstee
31st October 2020

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Agenda Item 9

Correspondence

All correspondence by email.

Clerk's Briefing Notes – 5 November 2020
Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Agenda Item 11d – Voices Grant Application 2020/21



The Newsletter of Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney

Aston Newsletter
11 Southlands
Aston
Oxon
OX18 2DA
8th October 2020

For the Attention of Mrs E. Anstee , Clerk to the Parish Council

**Application for a Grant of £1,000 from the Parish Council of
Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney**

Dear Mrs Anstee,

The Aston Newsletter 'Voices' submits application for consideration by the Parish Council of Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney for a grant of £1,000 (one thousand pounds) to assist in the publication costs of 'Voices' for the year 2020/21.

'Voices' mission 'to reflect village news, views and events' continues to be fulfilled, delivering six editions per year to every home in the Parish, free of charge with all editions in full colour.

Our fundraising efforts in last financial year included a one off grant from Bampton Village Community Shop which covered the cost of a 24 page edition. Additionally, the donation appeal figure includes very generous donations from two benefactors, from outside of the parish, accounting for half the total of the donations received.

This assisted in producing an operating profit which effectively replenishes the previous three year consecutive operating deficits, which had led to a decline in available funds of £1000 over that three year period.

From March this year the edition print run size has been increased to accommodate the increased distribution numbers in Marsh Furlong. As the additional new homes in both the large and small developments in Aston become occupied the print run with the associated costs will require to be increased by an estimated 20%.

The 'Voices' editorial team continue to enthusiastically raise funds and to maintain the level of advertising in each edition at an appropriate level. Financial support from the Parish Council is however an important element to help cover printing costs and we trust it will look favourably upon this year's grant application

Enclosed are the accounts for year 2019/20 which have been independently audited by Mr Tony Harris. Should you require any further information to support our application, I will be pleased to provide it for you.

Yours Sincerely,

R. V. Haines
Treasurer & Joint Editor
'Voices' – Aston Newsletter
Encl.

CONSTITUTION OF THE ASTON VILLAGE NEWSLETTER
Name Voices

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Voices is the newsletter of Aston, Cote, Chimney and Shifford

Aims

1. To inform, entertain and provoke interest in local matters.
2. To publish bimonthly: January March May July September and November being the preferred months of publication.
3. To deliver free of charge a copy to every household in the parish.

The Annual General Meeting

1. This will be held in April or May.
2. Annual audited accounts will be presented.
3. The meeting will elect an editorial team of six members.
4. From the team the meeting will elect an editor, chairman, and treasurer.
5. Changes to the constitution can only be made at the A.G.M. and must be carried by two thirds of those present.

The Editorial Team

The Team will meet after publication of each issue to review the issue and plan the next edition. The Team will appoint members to be responsible for distribution, advertising and a minute secretary. The team may co-opt extra members as required.

Editorial Policy

The Voices is a non- political publication. Letters to be published must be signed
The editor reserves the right to refuse to publish articles or letters that make defamatory comments. The editor reserves the right not to publish any material which is felt to go against the ethos of the Voices. The editor reserves the right to shorten or clarify material submitted for publication.

Voices will not be responsible for researching and writing obituaries.

Finance.

Voices is a non-profit making organization.

Voices is funded by:

Advertising . Advertising rates will be decided upon by the editorial team.

Donations. An annual donation appeal will be made with envelopes inserted in the chosen edition.

Fundraising. Fundraising may be undertaken.

Parish Council Grant A grant from the Parish Council should be applied for annually. Grants should be applied for as and when necessary.

The treasurer will also pay any agreed expenses incurred in pursuit of the stated aims. Money raised for the Voices cannot be spent on purposes other than those set out in the aims.

In the event of Voices ceasing to function any monies remaining, after all outstanding obligations have been settled, should be paid to the Parish Council.

Amended May 2018

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Voices Accounts – Insert.

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Agenda Item 13c – *Grounds Maintenance Draft Specification*

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Specification and Requirements for Grounds Maintenance in the parish of Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney.

1.0 General

1.1 Scope

The parish of Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney lies some 20 miles West of Oxford on the B4449. The specification relates to the 4 areas of grounds maintenance in the parish

- a) grass-cutting of various areas of land specified in the schedules under Schedule 1 in Appendix A.
- b) grass-cutting of the playing field adjacent to the village hall. The village hall is situated on the outskirts of the village on the B4449 Aston to Standlake road under Schedule 2 in Appendix B.
- c) the maintenance of the war memorial garden in The Square, Aston, under Schedule under Appendix C.
- d) weed spraying to be carried out on the roads and footpaths through the village of Aston and at the crossroads in Cote on the B4449 (post code OX18) Schedule 4 under Appendix D.

1.2 Definitions

The terms used in these regulations shall have the following meanings:

“Parish Council” means the Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council.

“The Contractor” means the person, firm or Company carrying out the Works to the order or instruction of the Parish Council.

“The Site” is any part or whole of the areas identified and designated in the location schedule.

1.3 Responsibilities

The Contractor is responsible for the overall safety of his work force in all matters relating to safety. The Contractor shall ensure that they are complied with by his employees, sub-contractors and others under his control.

2.0 Statutory Requirements

The Contractor shall comply in all respects with all Statutory Acts of Parliament and local regulations.

3.0 Operating Working Areas

During the work all operating areas shall be kept free of obstruction and if necessary to ensure the safety of the public shall be securely fenced.

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

4.0 Engine Driven Equipment

All engine driven equipment shall be equipped with an efficient silencer system on the exhaust to limit noise to the acceptable decibel limit.

5.0 Tools and Equipment

The Contractor shall be responsible for providing all tools and equipment necessary to carry out the Works efficiently and shall possess all safety certificates necessary for those items of equipment requiring them.

6.0 Health and Safety

The Contractor shall be responsible for providing all tools and equipment necessary to carry out the Works efficiently and shall possess all safety certificates necessary for those items of equipment requiring them.

7.0 First Aid

The Contractor shall comply with any statutory requirements that require the provision of first aid boxes if his work force numbers require such to be provided.

8.0 Advertising

The Contractor shall not display any advertising notices during the programme of Works unless permission is obtained from the Parish Council.

9.0 Clearance of Site

The Contractor shall ensure that any equipment which is not in use is kept clear of the work area as the Works proceed. The Contractor shall clear away and remove from site all surplus material and rubbish as the work proceeds and on completion of the Works.

10.0 Working Hours

The Contractor shall carry out the work during his normal working day. Working within non-daylight hours will not be undertaken.

11.0 Workmanship and Equipment

11.1 The workmanship must be of the highest standard and shall conform to all relevant British Standards, Specifications and Codes of Practice.

11.2 Prior to cutting any area, the Contractor will ensure that it is free of significantly large stones, paper, tins, bottles and other debris.

11.3 The Contractor will at all times during the period of the Contract ensure that all machines engaged in grass cutting operations are sharp and properly set, so as to produce a true and even cut. Any damage or areas of grass not cut to the approval of the Council from such lack of maintenance will be made good by the Contractor at his own expense and to the satisfaction of the Council.

11.4 All grass will be cut cleanly and evenly and without damaging the existing surface.

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

- 11.5** Mowing around obstructions including seats, trees, fence lines, posts, and in the proximity of margins, will be undertaken using methods, tools and machines as appropriate.
- 11.6** Areas not cut to the satisfaction of the Council will be re-cut by the Contractor at the Contractor's own expense.
- 11.7** Should the Contractor cause damage to the surface or levels of the ground, or create divots during grass cutting operations, the Contractor will at his own expense reinstate such damage forthwith to the satisfaction of the Council.
- 11.8** All persons operating grass cutting machinery must be satisfactorily trained, and the Council reserves the right to ask the Contractor to provide adequate proof that his operators are well trained, conversant with Health and Safety legislation and competent in their operating methods.
- 12.0** **Labour Relations – Payments**
The Contractor shall include in his tender any extra payments he may consider necessary such as: condition money, incentive and bonus payments. No claim for such extra payments will be considered after the contract has been awarded.
- 13.0** **Sub-Contracting**
The Contractor shall not sub-let any part of the contract without the prior approval of the Parish Council and any such consent shall not relieve the Contractor of his obligations under the Contract.
- 14.0** **Liability of Contractor**
The Contractor shall be liable for any loss damage or injury caused by the Contractor or any sub-contractor, employee servant or agent of the Contractor to third parties or property of such third parties. The Contractor shall also be responsible for any loss, damage or injury to his own plant, equipment and employees howsoever caused. The Contractor agrees to indemnify the Parish Council in respect of any such loss, damage or injury in respect of any claims, proceedings, damages, loss or cost arising therefrom or in relation thereto to the extent detailed in the clause.
- 15.0** **Insurance**
Without prejudice to the liabilities of the Contractor under this contract during the period of the contract, the Contractor will maintain full public liability insurance cover for his liabilities under clause 14.0 above. A current certificate of insurance must be produced to the Parish Clerk prior to commencement of the Contract.
- 16.0** **Default or Bankruptcy of Contractor**
If either:
a) the Contractor contravenes or makes default in the performance of any of the provisions hereof and the contraventions or default continues for 7 days after the Parish Council has given notice in writing to the Contractor specifying the contravention or default, or

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

b) the Contractor becomes bankrupt or insolvent or has a receiving order made against him or presents his petition in bankruptcy, or makes an arrangement or assignment in favour of his creditors, or agrees to carry out the Works forming the subject of this Contract under a committee of inspection, or has a Receiver appointed or is the subject of a petition to wind it up or goes in to liquidation (other than voluntary liquidation for the purpose of amalgamation or reconstruction) or has execution levied on his goods (the same not being paid out in 7 days)
the Parish Council may (without prejudice to any other remedy available to it) by notice in writing to the Contractor forthwith determine the Contract, and may retain all monies then due or thereafter falling due under the Contract and apply them towards making good any loss or damage arising from the contravention or default in the performance of this Contract.

17.0 Variations

No variations shall be made nor work involving an extra charge be put in hand without either an instruction in writing from the Parish Council or a verbal instruction from the Parish Council which the contractor confirms in writing to the Parish Council within 7 days and any Works not so authorised shall not be payable.

18.0 Invoicing and Payments

Invoices shall be submitted to the Parish Council monthly in arrears, **by the last working Thursday of the month**. Invoices presented for payment must include a schedule of the works completed, including the dates of the work.

Payments shall be made to the Contractor the month following presentation when they will be approved by the Parish Council at its monthly meeting.

19.0 Termination of Contract

Either party may, without reason, terminate the Contract in writing, giving three months' notice.

20.0 Tender

20.1 The activities covered by this specification have been set out under 4 separate schedules to allow for contractors to tender either for the whole or for different aspects of the required work. If tendering for the whole specification it is required that the different aspects are clearly defined in the tender document and only one questionnaire will be required to be completed. All tenders will require the completion of the questionnaire at Appendix E.

20.2 Return of Tenders

Completed tenders must be returned no later than **5.00pm on Friday ? ? 20?** to:

Mrs E Anstee
Clerk to the Council
Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council
16 Foxwood
Aston
BAMPTON
OX18 2DZ

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

The tender should be returned in an envelope clearly marked “**Tender for**” and the part or whole of the tender being bid for on the outside.

Any bids received after that date will not be considered.

Any queries in relation to the bids should be addressed to Mrs E Anstee who can be contacted by telephone on 07368466413 or by email on astonpc@live.co.uk.

The “Questionnaire” attached to this tender document at Appendix E must be completed and returned at the same time.

20.2 Acceptance of Tender

The Parish Council does not undertake to accept the lowest or any tender. The Council's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into on the reasons why a tender has been rejected.

The successful tender, this document and the Council's written acceptance shall form a binding agreement.

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Appendix A - Schedule 1

1. Price

For Schedules The Contractor shall submit a price per cut for each of the three years of the contract with the exception of VAT where applicable, for the whole of the Works as detailed in the "Scope of Works" paragraph. Tenders are to be priced on an annual basis. There will be no opportunity to alter the rates tendered during the term.

2. Timing

The price shall be for the Works to be carried out during the **3 year period 2021 and 2023 and shall cater for 15 cuts per year, beginning in March 2021 and terminating in November 2023**. The timing of each cut is flexible depending on the climatic conditions prevailing. If the climatic conditions cause the grass to grow at a rate that suggests that 15 cuts will be inadequate, the Parish Council may request a maximum additional 3 cuts. This will be discussed with the Contractor during the operation of the Contract.

3. Site Visits

The Contractor is expected to visit the site to ascertain any conditions that may affect his bid. The Parish Council will not entertain any future claims for additional payments due to the Contractor's failure to comply with this provision.

4. Scope of Works

Aston

Reference	Length (m)	Breadth (m)	Times	Area (m ²)	Comments/Location
1	89.5	2.8		250.6	Bampton Road
2	87.0	1.4		121.8	Bampton Road
3	149.0	2.2		327.8	Bampton Rd/High St
4	21.0	7.9		165.9	Vicarage Close
5	39.7	1.3		50.7	High Street
6	124.0	2.2		272.8	Ham Lane
7	20.0	20.0	0.5	200.0	Incls War Memorial
8	7.0	3.0		21.0	Crn Bull St/Cote Rd
9	19.0	5.9	0.5	56.1	Southlands
10	36.2	5.5		199.1	Crn Southlands/Bull St
11	19.3	7.5		144.8	Smiths Close
11a	32.7	6.5		212.5	Smiths Close
12	37.2	7.4	0.5	137.6	Woodbridge Close
13	50.5	2.3		116.6	Bull Street
13a	56.5	0.3		16.95	Verge adjacent footpath Bull Street to Saxel Close alongside Thames Water installation
13b	89.0	0.6		53.4	Verge adjacent footpath Bull Street to Saxel Close to turn of footpath – to include cutting back of any brambles

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

14	61.0	1.4		85.4	Bull Lane
15	Not included				Bull Street
15a	2.6	2.0		5.2	Bull Street
16	102.1	3.4		347.2	Cote Road
17	149.0	2.6		387.4	Saxel CI/30mph zone
17a	56.0	2.0		112.0	Saxel CI from streetlight to boundary of 1 Saxel Close – 2 metre wide swathe at footpath edge only
18	115.0	0.8		92.0	Foxwood/30mph sign
19	126.8	6.0		760.8	Foxwood/Crn Cote Rd
19c	55.0	3.1		170.7	Foxwood/Crn Cote Rd
20	150.5	2.3		346.2	Back Lane
21	11.5	1.1		12.7	Back Lane
22	40.8	2.8		114.2	Back Lane
23	19.0	2.4		45.6	Back Lane
24 to 25	195.0	2.9		565.7	Back Lane
25 to 26	51.0	2.2		112.7	Back Lane
26	20.0	1.8		36.0	Back Lane
27	55.0	2.4		132.0	North Street
28	155.7	1.8		280.3	North Street
29	145.0	1.3		188.5	North Street
30	108.0	2.6		280.7	North Street
31	44.5	1.8		80.1	Back Lane
32	104.0	2.3		239.4	Back Lane
33	123.0	1.1		135.2	Back Lane
34	53.0	1.9		100.7	Back Lane
Total Area Aston				6978.35	

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Cote

1	745.0	1.0		745.0	East side of Cote High Street from Cote crossroads B4449 travelling N-S to Hook Hatcheries
2	745	varying		1117.0	West side of Cote High Street from Cote crossroads B4449 travelling N-S to Hook Hatcherers
Total Area Cote				1862.0	

Maps supporting scopes of work are provided.

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Appendix B – Schedule 2

1. **Price**

For Schedules The Contractor shall submit a price per cut for each of the three years of the contract with the exception of VAT where applicable, for the whole of the Works as detailed in the “Scope of Works” paragraph. Tenders are to be priced on an annual basis. There will be no opportunity to alter the rates tendered during the term.

2. **Timing**

The price shall be for the Works to be carried out during the **3 year period 2021 and 2023 and shall cater for 15 cuts per year, beginning in March 2021 and terminating in November 2023**. The timing of each cut is flexible depending on the climatic conditions prevailing. If the climatic conditions cause the grass to grow at a rate that suggests that 15 cuts will be inadequate, the Parish Council may request a maximum additional 3 cuts. This will be discussed with the Contractor during the operation of the Contract.

3. **Scope of Work**

The scope of work is the cutting of the football pitch and the whole of the playing field grassed areas (excluding the fenced children's playground) comprising an area of approximately 26000m².

The field shall be cut in accordance with the timescale as detailed in 2 above and the cut shall be as close to the tree and shrub line bounding the field as possible. Grass cutting shall be carried out as close as possible to fixed obstructions.

This specification does not include the collection and disposal of grass cuttings thereby generated.

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Appendix C – Schedule 3

1. Price

For Schedules The Contractor shall submit a price per cut for each of the three years of the contract with the exception of VAT where applicable, for the whole of the Works as detailed in the “Scope of Works” paragraph. Tenders are to be priced on an annual basis. There will be no opportunity to alter the rates tendered during the term.

2. Timing

The price shall be for the Works to be carried out during the **3 year period 2021 and 2023 and shall cater for 15 cuts per year, beginning in March 2021 and terminating in November 2023**. The timing of each cut is flexible depending on the climatic conditions prevailing. If the climatic conditions cause the grass to grow at a rate that suggests that 15 cuts will be inadequate, the Parish Council may request a maximum additional 3 cuts. This will be discussed with the Contractor during the operation of the Contract.

3. Scope

The war memorial area in Aston is included in the scope of work and the grassed area should be cut at a minimum of two-weekly intervals, or sooner if the grass is growing well, to ensure a presentable aspect in the village. The Contractor should ensure, in particular, that this area is in a neat and tidy condition prior to the Remembrance Sunday service.

The central garden round the memorial should be kept weed free and planted with annual plants supplied by the contractor under this scope of work at the appropriate time of year which should be late October for winter flowering and early April for summer flowering.

The yew plants should be kept pruned in an attractive and even shape.

The chains between the wooden posts should be inspected, treated and painted black if there is any rust or discoloration evident.

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Appendix D – Schedule 4

1. Price

For Schedules The Contractor shall submit a price per cut for each of the three years of the contract with the exception of VAT where applicable, for the whole of the Works as detailed in the “Scope of Works” paragraph. Tenders are to be priced on an annual basis. There will be no opportunity to alter the rates tendered during the term.

2. Timing

The price shall be for the Works to be carried out during the **3 year period 2021 and 2023 and shall cater for 2 sprays per year, beginning in May 2021 and terminating in November 2023**. The timing of each spray is flexible depending on the climatic conditions prevailing. If the climatic conditions cause the grass to grow at a rate that suggests that 2 sprays will be inadequate, the Parish Council may request a maximum additional 1 spray. This will be discussed with the Contractor during the operation of the Contract.

3. Scope of Works

Weed spraying to be carried out on the roads and footpaths through the village of Aston and at the crossroads in Cote on the B4449 (post code OX18).

The roads/footpaths included are

Aston:

- North Street from the junction with Back Lane
- The Square
- The High Street to the end of the footpath adjacent to the Kingsway Cottages development
- Ham Lane (left edge only as you enter the Lane, just the length of road that runs alongside the buildings which abut the road)
- Cote Road, ending outside the final property which abuts the road (5 Cote Road). To include the cul-de-sac of the odd numbers 9-23.
- Saxel Close – all the cul-de-sacs on this development
- Foxwood
- Foxwood Close
- Bull Street to the footpath that goes towards Saxel Close after the sewage pumping station
- Southlands
- Waites Close
- Woodbridge Close
- Footpath (alleyway) which runs between Woodbridge Close and Cote Road

Cote:

- B4449 north (house) edge only around the Crossroads – from the property called Little End Cottage to the end of the 30mph zone towards Aston, including within the bus shelter

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

The enclosed maps show the extent of the area covered.

We expect the weed spraying to cover the kerb edges where the road meets the footpath, the footpath kerb edges where there is weed growth behind the kerb edges/granite setts and the back end of the footpath edges where these abut a hard surface such as a wall or fence. The work does not include the subsequent removal of the dead weeds.

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Appendix E

Aston, Cote, Shifford & Chimney Parish Council

Grass cutting contract – playing field

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Business Name:
2. Address:
.....
3. Telephone number:
4. Email:
5. Contact Name and Position in Company:
6. If the Business is a Company:
Is it a Subsidiary of another Company?
If yes, please give details:
.....
7. Please state which branch the Contract will be serviced from:
.....
8. Date of Business formation:
9. Please state number of grounds maintenance employees:
10. Equipment to be used on contract (for mowers include type and blade/cutting width):
.....
.....
11. Please give any other details, which you feel may be relevant, for example, similar Contracts in the area or for similar authorities, etc:

Signed:

Position:

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Agenda Item 14c – 2021-22 Budget – Draft

ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD AND CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL DRAFT BUDGET 2021/22 – VERSION 1

1.0 Overview

- 1.1 A first draft of the budget for 2021/22 is attached. The precept for the year needs to be agreed at the January meeting at the latest as it must be submitted to the District Council shortly thereafter.
- 1.2 The District Council has not yet provided information on the level of the council tax support grant (introduced in 2013/14 to compensate local authorities for the impact of the localisation of the effect of council tax benefits receivable by local residents) and the council tax base for 2021/20. The council tax support grant for 2020/21 was £436 and the council tax base (the number of households across which the precept is split) was 582.8 in 2020/21. For this version of the budget it has been assumed that these figures will be unchanged in 2021/22.
- 1.3 The first draft budget shows recurrent expenditure of £25,927 and no planned one-off (project) expenditure. The total expenditure is reduced to a net of £24,548 when the non-precept income budgeted is offset against it (the gross cutting grant from Oxfordshire County Council and interest on the deposit accounts).
- 1.4 Built into the precept requirement is the usual general contingency sum of £5,000 to cover unexpected expenditure during the year and a working day-to-day balance of cash funds required to carry forward at the end of the year of £5,000. Holding a reserve of £10,000 has previously been agreed to be sufficient to give the council financial security, given its limited assets and unavoidable commitments.
- 1.5 In 2015/16 the Parish Council resolved to increase the precept by an additional £6,850 for three years to build up a recreation reserve of £32,000.00. 2017/18 was the last year of that increase. At 31 March 2018, this reserve totalled £34,476 (having been inflated by the transfer of an excess day-to-day surplus from a previous year). Other reserves are £7,362 for traffic calming.
- 1.6 In September 2017 the Parish Council carried out a public consultation on whether the precept should be returned to the level prior to the increase referred to in 1.4 above, or whether the precept should be maintained at the higher level, with the surpluses generated to be spent on identified projects in the parish.
- 1.7 Including this increase, the total “traditional” precept (the precept for tax setting purposes combined with the council tax support grant) in 2020/21 was £29,424 (£28,988 after deducting the council tax support grant of £436).

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2.0 Reserves

- 2.1 The forecast out-turn for 2020/21 is a deficit of £527. This is if the Parish Council covers the whole cost of the installation of power and defibrillator for Cote.
- 2.2 The forecast reserves at 31 March 2021 are £54,259. This is made up of: recreation reserve £34,476, traffic calming reserve £7,362, general contingency sum of £5,000 and a working day-to-day balance of £7,421. The target working day-to-day balance is £5,000.
- 2.3 These additional reserves have arisen from surpluses in both 2015/16 and 2016/17 and the £10,000 S106 funding in 2020/21 for traffic calming.
- 2.4 Parish Councils are not permitted to hold reserves above planned basic levels unless they are for a designated purpose. The Parish Council therefore decided in 2018/19 budget cycle to ring-fence for another purpose –to set aside funding for traffic calming to match the funds expected from the housing development(s) so that an effective measure can be installed.
- 2.5 It would be good to consider if the Parish Council would like to start a new reserve for Community Activities to support any future projects in relation to North Farm, Aston and wider initiatives in the parish.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Where expenditure is expected to be subject to an inflationary rise this has been allowed for at between 2% and 4% depending on the nature of the expenditure/supplier.
- 3.2 Explanations for many of the changes made to the budget when compared to the expected out-turn and budget for 2021/22 are provided on the attached spreadsheet.
- 3.3 The areas where greater clarity for the rationale behind the budget is required, or where further decisions by the Parish Council are required are covered below:
- 3.4 Clerk's Salary
Included at the existing level plus £400.
- 3.5 General Grass Cutting
The contract with WODC is due for renewal for 2021 onwards and a separate piece of work. With the extension of the 30 mph signs in Aston and new traffic calming measures there will be increase meterage to cut so an indicative sum has been included for grass cutting. The contract covers 14 + 2 extra cuts per year.
- 3.6 Playing Field Grass Cutting
The contract with Des Johnston is due for renewal for 2021 onwards and a separate piece of work. The contract covers a maximum number of cuts of 18 (base of 15 + 3 extra if required).

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

3.7 Grants paid under statute

This budget was reviewed in detail and updated for 2017/18. The proposed budget of £3,950 has been included at the same level as for 2020/21 and covers the following maximum grants:

Voices	£1000
Citizens Advice Bureau	£150
Community Trust – playground maintenance	£750
Aston minibus	£750
Grass cutting, Cote Chapel	£300
Grass cutting, St Mary's Shifford	£300
Grass cutting, St James' Aston	£700
	<u>£3,950</u>

Review of the Grant to Cote Chapel Historic Trust for Grass Cutting

You have asked me to set out the facts about the costs of maintaining the graveyard at Cote Historic Baptist Chapel during the calendar year 2020, so that you can present them in due form to the Parish Council at the meeting when they consider their budget arrangements for the year ; I hope that this communication will be sufficient for your purposes.

When the Local Management Committee, on behalf of Historic Chapels Trust, first contracted with Mr. F in 2015, the graveyard was in a very rough state and the only area of grass designated for cutting was on either side of the entrance pathway. ; four cuts in that year cost £290 altogether. Mr. F's work then and since has been found very satisfactory, and he has been asked, year by year, to extend the scope of his cutting and, latterly, to undertake some other ground maintenance. In consideration of his expanding remit he was paid £300 in 2016, £325 in 2017, and £400 in each of 2018 and 2019. The Parish Council covered the costs of the first three of those years and has generously contributed £300 for each of 2018 and 2019. Mr. F currently cuts all the grass area in the graveyard and attends to the paths and shrubs as required.

At the beginning of the present season Mr. F represented to the Committee that his costs, including travel and the maintenance of his machinery, had risen to the point where he finds it necessary to request £500 for his services over the year. The Committee have considered this carefully, and concluded that, while further price increases would be unacceptable, the present request is justifiable and should be accepted, subject to availability of the necessary funds. We shall be asking Mr. F for some additional groundwork from time to time.

The Committee very much hope that the Parish Council will be willing and able to consider raising their contribution to the cost of maintaining the graveyard during the current year. We are particularly keen to have the place in good order for an anticipated re-opening in the autumn, but without assistance we may have to scale back Mr. F activities, with consequent effects on the appearance of the Chapel and its surroundings.

We look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Michael. (Dr. Michael St. John Parker, Chairman and Treasurer, Cote Historic Baptist Chapel Local Management Committee.) June 2020.

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

3.8 Village Maintenance

The budget includes a round sum allowance of £1,500, payable either to a dedicated Lengthsman or for specific individual contracts for pieces of work (such as weed spraying). This continues to be significantly above the actual expenditure in recent years, and is one of the reasons why the current budget leads to a surplus – would the Parish Council like to consider reducing this budget?

3.9 Donations

The Parish Council's approach to the non-statutory donations it gives was reviewed in 2017/18. The total budget of £1,400 includes specific donations to The British Legion (£150) and Volunteer Link-Up (£135) in addition to a general donation "pot" for local organisations of £1,115. The success of this "pot" has tested (deadline for applications expires at the end of December. In 19/20, to date, an application from Aston Community Store (£500) is the only one to be granted. For the purposes of this budget, the total has been left at the 2020/21 level.

3.10 Village Hall

The budget does not include any funds to be spent on work at the village hall (beyond the routine playground maintenance grant and the cutting of the playing field). The playground maintenance grant has not been claim in 19/20 or so far in 20/21.

3.11 One-off Projects

The budget does not include any one-off projects for 2021/22. It would demonstrate good practice in financial management if the Parish Council were to identify and set aside budgets for one-off projects during the budget setting process. Councillors are therefore asked to consider potential projects for 2021/22 before the budget is finalised.

4 Precept

4.3 The net expenditure in the budget as presented is £29,548. Assuming that the District Council offers a support grant of £436 as in 2020/21, the Parish Council would need to raise £29,548 from the precept in order to create a break-even budget. This would equate to £49.95 per Band D household (using the 2020/21 council tax base). This is a increase of £21p per annum per Band D household on 2020/21 precept.

4.4 The recent budget survey indicated that there was a willingness from the residents who responded for the precept to be kept at the level it was raised to in 2015/16 in order to generate reserves for investment in local amenities.

4.5 If the precept is retained at the current level of £28,988, the budget as presented would generate a deficit of £484. On the 2020/21 council tax base this would remain at £49.74 per Band D household.

4.6 As noted in 2.4 above, Parish Councils are not permitted to hold excess reserves for unplanned purposes.

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

5 Recommendations

- 5.3 That the Parish Council considers the draft budget as presented, proposing amendments where identified.
- 5.4 Specific areas for discussion
- Village maintenance budget – potential to spend to current budget level of £1,500
 - Identification of one-off projects for 2021/22; - Agenda Item 14c
 - Consideration of specific reserves for future projects, with agreed total target reserve(s) and expected timescale for the expenditure;
- 5.5 That the Parish Council discusses the provisional level of the precept for 2021/22.
- 5.6 That the Parish Council resolves to consider a second draft of the budget at the December meeting once the council tax base is confirmed by WODC, delaying a final resolution on the precept for 2021/22 until that meeting at the earliest.

Prepared by: Elaine Anstee, 31 October 2020

Clerk's Briefing Notes – 5 November 2020
Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCIAL YEAR 2021/22
Draft BUDGET - 5 November 2020

	Relevant Statute	Budget 2020/21	Actual 6 Months 2020/21	Currentl y expected outturn 2020/21	Draft Budget 2021/22	Commentary
EXPENDITURE						
Recurrent Expenditure						
<u>Ordinary Expenditure</u>						
Clerk's Salary	LGA 1972, s112	4,640	2,757	4,696	5,040	Payrise and increment budgeted for if passed by council on clerks annual review. Includes HMRC.
Office equipment	LGA 1972, s111	2,000	693	1,100	0	Laptop/PC and set up costs. Additional Domain and Office 365 costs for emails.
Office running costs	LGA 1972, s111	500	290	500	600	£6 per month
Bank charges		72	36	72	72	Annual Cost
Website costs		150	143	143	150	This year actual + 5% - Due for renewal in 2020
Insurance		361	307	307	379	no indication of change, assumed remains as prior
Audit		240	0	240	240	As existing budget
Village Hall Rental/Cost APM	LGA 1972, s111	40	0	0	40	As existing budget
Subscriptions	LGA 1972, s143	482	92	482	506	This year + 5%. ICO subs level £35 on DD
Chairman's Allowance		100	0	100	100	As existing budget
<u>Expenditure under Statute</u>						
Grass Cutting - verges & WM	HA 1980, s116	6,339	1,679	3,500	7,607	14 cuts - quotation from WODC
Grass Cutting - playing field	LG(MP)A 1976, s19	1,591	935	1,200	1,909	18 cuts - actual quotation
Grants paid under statute		4,235	2,850	4,235	4,235	See 5 Nov Report
Dog & Litter Bin Emptying	Litter Act 1983	249	137	287	261	This year + 5% infl.
Election Fees		0	0	0	0	Election fees
Training & Travel	LGA 1972, s174	527	25	75	527	Review for Clerk and Councillor training - industry standard 2.5% budget (£526.50)
Clock Maintenance	PCA 1957, ss2 & 6	229	0	0	229	3 year contract
Bus Shelter Cleaning	LG(MP)A 1953, s4	732	123	732	747	Due for review and to include new bus shelter. + 2% for inflation
Defibrillator pads/batteries		100	0	0	200	Replaced 2017 - due 21/22
Repairs		500	0	250	500	General round budget
VAT Paid			1,305	2,000		
Village maintenance (Lengthsman)		1,500	115	250	1,500	See 5 Nov Report
Small Grants		1,115		1,115	1,115	See 5 Nov Report
Recurrent Expenditure c/f		25,702	11,487	21,285	25,957	
Recurrent Expenditure b/f		25,702	11,487	21,285	25,957	
<u>Projects</u>						
Aston History Project (£5K)	WMA 1923, s1	2950		2,950		Printing Costs
Traffic Calming Reserve		764	2,453	6,000		Traffic Calming Reserve To repeat in 2020/21?
Defib in Cote Phone Box (3.5K)		3,500	0	7,000		British Heart Foundation Grant not available. Grants from Cottsway/Tescos Bags/ADE applied for. Additional costs for reconnecting electricity supply.
VE 75 Bench - 8 May 2020			946	946		
	LGA 1972, s133 & LG(MP)A 1976, s19					
Total Project Spend		4,264	3,399	16,896	0	
OVERALL EXPENDITURE		29,966	14,886	38,181	25,957	
OTHER INCOME						
OCC grass cutting grant		1,049	1,049	1,049	1,049	Same as this year
Grant from OCC Councillor Priority Fund			500	500		
Interest		360	62	300	360	
VAT Received				585		
TOTAL INCOME		1,409	1,610	2,434	1,409	
NET EXPENDITURE		28,557	13,275	35,747	24,548	
Add: Amount to set aside for reserves		5,702	10,000	10,000	5,000	S106 for Traffic Calming received 2020
Less: Amount to be spent from accumulated reserves		0	0	7,206	0	
Precept requirement to break even		34,259	23,275	38,541	29,548	

Clerk's Briefing Notes – 5 November 2020
Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Agenda Item 14a

Financial Matters

Cash Balances

£

UNITY TRUST CURRENT ACCOUNT

Balance at 30 September 2020	37,281.60
October payments	(2147.81)

Balance at 31st October 2020	<u>35,133.79</u>
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CCLA INVESTMENT ACCOUNT

Balance at 30 th September 2020	48,671.91
Transactions in month of September	5.57

Balance at 31st October 2020	<u>48,677.48</u>
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TOTAL CASH HOLDING AT 31st October 2020	<u>£83,811.27</u>
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Clerk's Briefing Notes – 5 November 2020
Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Monthly (Year to Date) Financial Report – For Information

2020-21 Budget	£	As at 30/09/2020	Performance Against Budget	%	Commentary
RECEIPTS					
Precept	28988	28988	0	0%	505 received in April - remainder due in Septem
WODC Grant CTSG	436	436	0	0%	505 received in April - remainder due in Septem
OCC grass cutting grant	1049	1549	-500	52%	Recieved in Full against Grass Cutting Verges ar
Interest	360	74	286	-21%	CCLA Investment Account
VAT Refund	0	585	-585	NA	
INVESTMENTS IN	0	0	0	NA	
Sundry	0	10000	-10000	NA	S106 for Traffic Calming in Aston
Total Receipts	30833	41631	-10798	-35%	
EXPENDITURE					
Clerk's salary	3,740	2147	1593	-57%	
Working from home allowance	216	118	98	-55%	
HMRC	900	610	290	-68%	
Bank charges	72	36	36	-50%	£6 per month due quarterly.
Office equipment	2,000	693	1307	0%	
Office running costs	284	172	112	-61%	Photocopying/Printing/Stamps plus sundries
Website costs	150	143	7	-96%	Renewed for 2 years in 2020
Insurance	361	307	54	-85%	This has been paid in full so £54 surplus
Audit	240	0	240	0%	
Election Costs	0	0	0	0%	
Annual Parish Meeting expenses	40	0	40	0%	
Subscriptions	482	92	390	-19%	
Chairman's Allowance	100	0	100	0%	
Grass Cutting - verges & WM	6339	2751	3588	-43%	Ubico - Renewal due 2021
Grass Cutting - playing field	1591	935	656	-59%	DJ - renewal due 2021
Grants paid under statute	4235	2350	1885	-55%	
Dog & Litter Bin Emptying	249	240	9	-97%	WODC - plus new bin from Feb 2020
Fete Bins		0	0	0%	
Training & Travel	527	25	502	-5%	
Clock Maintenance	229	0	229	0%	New contract with Derby's from March 2020 for 3 years
Bus Shelter Cleaning	732	253	479	-35%	New bus shelter added in Nov 2020
Defibrillator pads/batteries	100	0	0	-100%	
Repairs	500	0	500	0%	
VAT Paid	0	1566	-1566	0%	
Village maintenance (Lengthsman)	1500	115	1385	-8%	VE/VJ Be3nch Installation
Small Grants	1115	500	615	-45%	
Total Expenditure	25702	13054	12648	-51%	
Projects					
Aston History Project (£5K)	2950	0	2950	0%	
Traffic Calming Reserve	764	2453	-1689	0%	
Defib in Cote Phone Box (3.5K)	3500		3500	0%	
VE 75 Bench - 8 May 2020	0	946	-946	0%	
New Dog Bin - Great Brook Road	0	224	-224	0%	
Total Project Spend	7214	0	7214	0%	
Contingency Budget	5000	0	5000	0%	
			0		
OVERALL EXPENDITURE	37916	16677	21239	-44%	
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	-7083	28577	-35660	0%	
Reserves					
Opening at 1 April	52048	0	52048	0%	
Closing at 31 March	44965	0	44965	0%	
Closing reserves analysis:					
Working day to day balance	1363	0	1363	0%	
Contingency reserve	5000	0	5000	0%	
Recreation reserve	34476	0	34476	0%	
Traffic Calming Reserve	4126	0	4126	0%	
	44965	0	44965	0%	