

# ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL



## CLERK'S BRIEFING NOTES

### PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON 7 March 2024

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Prepared by Elaine Anstee  
2<sup>nd</sup> March 2024

**Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

**Agenda Item 9**

*Correspondence*

All correspondence by email

**Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

**Agenda Item 10a – Asset Check**

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

**REVIEW OF EXISTENCE AND CONDITION OF PARISH ASSETS – Exterior Assets**

<b>Asset</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Existence confirmed Y/N</b>	<b>Identification of urgent maintenance where there is potential harm to public *</b>	<b>Identification of non-urgent routine maintenance required</b>
War Memorial, posts & chains	Aston village square			
<b>Bus Shelters</b>				
1	High Street, Aston			
2	Near Cote crossroads, Cote			
3	End of Saxel Close, Cote Road, Aston			
<b>Notice Boards</b>				
General	Corner of Southlands			
Parish Council	Cote Road, corner with Bull Street			
Parish Council	By the allotments in Cote			
<b>Benches &amp; Seats</b>				
Cote				

\* Please record the nature of the risk and the potential harm

Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

**Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council****ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL****REVIEW OF EXISTENCE AND CONDITION OF PARISH ASSETS – Exterior Assets**

<b>Asset</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Existence confirmed Y/N</b>	<b>Identification of urgent maintenance where there is potential harm to public *</b>	<b>Identification of non-urgent routine maintenance required</b>
<b>Benches &amp; Seats</b>				
War Memorial Green Aston				
VE/VJ Day seat	Playing field, corner next to Cote Road			
Golden Jubilee Bench QE II	Corner of Southlands/Bull Street			
Silver Jubilee Bench GV	Corner of lane running from Bull Street towards Chimney			
<b>Litter &amp; Dog Bins (funded by Parish Council)</b>				
Litter Bin	Cote Allotments			
Litter bin	Bridge on Great Brook Road leading to Ham Lane			
Litter bin	Ham Lane, Aston			
<b>Telephone kiosk</b>				
Red phone box	Cote			
<b>Defibrillators (funded by the Parish Council)</b>				
91001 DefibSafe 2 External Cabinet, Locked, Standard	Village Hall Recreation Ground, Aston			
cPAD Zoll AED 3 Semi Auto Defib+ Defibsafe 2	Telephone Box, Cote			

**Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

Stainless Steel Thermal Bag Unheated Cabinet Box				
cPAD Zoll AED 3 Semi Auto Defib+ Stainless Steel Cabinet No Power c/w Thermal Bag	Chimney - By entrance to BBOWT			
?	Aston Depot, Aston			

\* Please record the nature of the risk and the potential harm

Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL**

**REVIEW OF EXISTENCE AND CONDITION OF PARISH ASSETS – Office Equipment**

<b>Asset</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Existence confirmed Y/N</b>	<b>Identification of urgent maintenance where there is potential harm to public *</b>	<b>Identification of non-urgent routine maintenance required</b>
Filing cabinet – 4 drawer	Meeting room cupboard, Village Hall			
Two door metal cabinet	Meeting room cupboard, Village Hall			
HP Laptop with Norton Anti Virus and Microsoft 365 and Windows 10 and HP Laptop with Norton Anti Virus and Microsoft 365 and Windows 10	Stored by Clerk at private address  Stored by RFO at private address			Warranty expires – Oct 23  Warranty Expires – Feb 27

## **Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

### **Agenda Item 10b – D-Day 80<sup>th</sup> Commemorations - Flag**

#### **D-DAY FLAG OF PEACE**

We have received a communication from Bruno Peake, Pageant Master in relation to the opportunities for parish councils to take part in the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landing on 6th June this year.

A souvenir D-Day Flag of Peace is being produced for the occasion, providing a simple, meaningful and cost-effective way to take part, for councils to consider purchasing and flying from 9am on 6th June, leaving it up for one week should they wish to.

The flags come in various sizes with the largest being 5' x 3' at a cost of £28.80 including VAT, post and packaging, with the smallest being a 3' x 2' at a cost of £22.80 including VAT, post and packaging.

The flags can be purchased direct from Tracy Turner at Newton Newton Flags Limited - [emailtracy@newtonnewtonflags.com](mailto:emailtracy@newtonnewtonflags.com), the official suppliers of flags for D-Day 80 - 6th June 2024.

## **Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

### **Agenda Item 12 – Governance**

#### *a) Loans and Investment Policy/Annual Investment Strategy 2024-25*

### **Loans and Investments Policy**

#### **Document Control**

Review date is indicative and will depend on changes in legislation, best practice or when required.

Alternative formats of this document may be available upon request.

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Should the Parish Council need a loan from the Public Works Board Loan or wish to place an investment of its monies, the terms shall be negotiated by the Parish Clerk in the name of the Council and shall be for a set period of time in accordance with resolution from Full Council.

1.2 This policy sets out the financial management procedures for the monitoring of the cash flow and banking arrangements of Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council.

1.3 Authority reference is to the Council's Financial Regulations.

1.4 The Local Government Act 2003 Section 12 provides the power to invest in the following circumstances -

- a. for any purpose relevant to its functions under any enactment; or
- b. for the purpose of the prudent management of its financial affairs.

Section 15(1) of the Act requires a local authority to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

1.5 The Council acknowledges its duty of care to the community and the prudent investment of funds.

1.6 Changes to loans and investments should be reported to the Full Council at the earliest opportunity.

1.7 The Council's Sustainability Framework will be considered when approving the Council's financial institution for investments and when ensuring that the Council's reserves are invested wisely.

#### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

2.1 The Council's priorities are, in the following ranking order -

- a. The security of capital to minimise the risk of losses;
- b. The liquidity of investments to meet the cash flow needs of the council; and
- c. Maximising income within the framework of the national economic situation.

## **Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

2.2 The Council will aim to achieve a high rate of return on investments commensurate with adequate safeguards of security and liquidity.

### **3.0 LOANS**

3.1 Any loans made by the Council should be approved by the Full Council and in the name of Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council.

3.2 Any loans given should be reviewed by the Full Council on an annual basis against the Terms of the Contract.

### **4.0 BORROWING**

4.1 All borrowings shall be taken out in the name of Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council.

4.2 Any formal decision to apply for and to exercise a borrowing approval must be made by Full Council.

4.3 The Council may borrow funds but will require the formal written approval of the Secretary of State.

4.4 The Council must contact the Oxfordshire Associations of Local Councils (OALC) to discuss the proposal and to obtain the Application Form for the Approval.

4.5 Borrowing must be for a specific, generally capital expenditure, purpose detailed on the application form and in a report to council.

4.6 Whilst the loan may be taken from any source, the Public Works Loan Board (PWL) is preferred. Irrespective of the source, an Approval is required and no mortgage or charge on property is allowed.

### **5.0 INVESTMENTS**

5.1 All investments and money under the control of the Full Council shall be in the name of Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council.

5.2 All investment certificates and other relating documents shall be retained in the custody of the Parish Clerk.

5.3 All investments, deposits and interest will be in pound sterling (£).

5.4 All investment and deposits will be with banks or building societies registered in the United Kingdom.

5.5 The credit ratings of the institutions will be a minimum of 'A' and these will be monitored regularly.

5.6 In order to spread the financial risk to a minimum, investments will be made with a minimum of two financial institutions.



**Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

5.7 Investments for current expenditure will be on instant access accounts with a daily feeder to the current account.

5.8 Investments not required for current expenditure (i.e. earmarked reserves) may be placed on medium term deposits to be reviewed each year one year.

5.9 Investments not required for current expenditure (i.e. general reserve) may be placed on longer term deposits of up to two years.

Adopted - March 2021

Last Review Date – March 2023

Review Date – March 24

## **Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

### **ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2023-24**

#### **1. Introduction**

Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council acknowledges the importance of prudently investing the temporarily surplus funds held on behalf of the community.

This strategy has been prepared in accordance with the Guidance on Local Government Investments ('the Guidance'), issued under section 15(1) (a) of the Local Government Act 2003, effective from 1st April 2010.

The Local Government Act 2003 states that a local authority may invest:

- for any purpose relevant to its functions under any enactment,
- for the purpose of prudent management of its financial affairs

The Council defines its treasury management activities as "The management of the Council's cash flows, its banking and money market transactions, and the effective control of the risks associated with those activities, and the pursuit of best value performance consistent with those risks."

The Guidance states:

- a) Where a Town or Parish Council expects its investments at any time during a financial year to exceed £500,000, the Guidance should apply in relation to that year.
- b) Where a Town or Parish Council expects its investments at any time during a financial year to exceed £10,000 but not £500,000, it should decide on the extent, if any, to which it would be reasonable to have regard to the Guidance in relation to that year.
- c) Where a Town or Parish Council expects its investments at any time during a financial year not to exceed £10,000, no part of the Guidance need be treated as applying in relation to that year.

The Council expects its investments during the 2023-24 financial year not to exceed £500,000 and therefore has agreed to apply the Guidance as set out below.

#### **2. Investment Objectives**

The Council's investment priorities are:

- 1) The security of its reserves;
- 2) The liquidity of its investments; and
- 3) The return on investment.

The Council will aim to achieve the optimum return on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity.

All investments will be made in sterling, and, as a minimum, surplus funds will be aggregated in an interest bearing bank account.

## **Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

The Department for Communities and Local Government maintains that borrowing of monies purely to invest, or to lend and make a return, is unlawful and this Council will not engage in such activity.

Investments will be spread over different providers where appropriate to minimise risk.

### **3. Security of Investments**

Government guidance differentiates between specified investments and non-specified investments.

#### **3.1 Specified Investments**

Specified investments are those offering high security and high liquidity with a maturity of no more than one year. In addition, short-term sterling investments must be with bodies/institutions with "high credit ratings".

For the prudent management of its treasury balances, maintaining sufficient levels of security and liquidity, the Council will use:

- • UK banks and UK building societies;
- • Public Bodies (including Local Authorities and Police Authorities);
- • UK FCA regulated qualifying money market funds with a triple A rating.

#### **3.2 Non-specified investments**

Non-specified investments are usually for longer periods (i.e. more than one year) and with bodies that are not highly credit-rated. No non-specified investments are included in the Investment Strategy for this Council as these investments are not acceptable due to their higher potential risk.

### **4. Liquidity of Investments**

The Parish Clerk in consultation with the Full Council of Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council will determine the maximum periods for which funds may prudently be committed so as not to compromise liquidity.

### **5. Long Term Investments**

Long term investments shall be defined as greater than one year. The Council will use the same criteria for assessing long term investment as identified above for specified investments.

The Council does not currently hold any long-term investments.

### **6. Risk Assessment**

The Parish Council's funds are covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (up to £85,000) as our total expenditure does not exceed £500,000 and but must still be carefully managed to mitigate the risk of losses.

## **Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

The Council will only invest in institutions of “high credit quality” as set out in section 3.1 of this strategy. The Council will monitor the risk of loss on investments by reference to credit ratings. The Council should aim for ratings equivalent to the Fitch F1 rating for short-term investments or Fitch A- for long term investments. The Council will also have regard for the general economic and political environment in which institutions operate.

The investment position will be reviewed monthly by the Parish Clerk and reported to the Full Parish Council.

The Council does not employ, in-house or externally, any financial advisors but will rely on information which is publicly available.

### **7. Use of Investment Managers**

If external investment managers are used, they will be contractually required to comply with this strategy.

### **8. Investment Strategy 2024/25**

The Council will invest as much of its balance as possible in a low-risk product in order to achieve its investment objectives.

To maintain a return on its investment and in the light of low interest rates currently available to the Council and considering the potential performance of lower liquidity investments; it is recommended that the Council will continue with its investment with the Public Sector Deposit Fund of the CCLA in order to aim to achieve an optimum return on funds. The recommendation is that £51,677.60 currently invested in the fund is maintained.

Dividends from this investment will be placed in the current account for use supporting grant applications and projects within the parish.

The Public Sector Deposit Fund (PSDF) has been identified as a low risk, high liquidity option (funds can be moved in or out in the same day) to be used in the first year of investment. A minimum £15,000 will remain as our operating costs in the Unity Trust account.

The relevant FPC officers shall have delegated authority (as contained within Financial Regulations) to set up any accounts/funds as approved in this policy and undertake transfers between the Unity Trust Account and the PSDF as required to ensure the minimum operating cost balance is maintained.

### **9. Investment Approval**

The Full Council has the authority to consider and make any short-term investments (maximum of twelve months), in accordance with the Annual Investment Strategy, subject to the prior approval of the investment provider by the Parish Council. All resolutions relating to investments will be noted in the minutes of the Full Council meetings that are circulated to all councillors.

## **Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

### **10. Investment Reports**

The Parish Clerk will prepare a report on investment activity for each Full Parish Council meeting. The report will be circulated to all councillors with the agenda and papers for the Full Parish Council meeting.

### **11. Review and Amendment of Regulations**

The Investment Strategy will be reviewed annually. The Annual Strategy for the coming financial year will be prepared by the Parish Clerk and reviewed by the Full Council.

The Council reserves the right to make variations to the Strategy at any time, subject to the approval of the Full Council. Any variations will be made available to the public.

### **12. Freedom of Information**

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this Document will be posted on the Parish website and a hard copy will be available from the Parish Clerk.

Approved by Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council on ..... under minute number.....

## **Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

### **b) - Annual review of Effectiveness of Internal Control/Financial Regulations**

#### **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 June 2023.
- 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 2023/24 when it is due.

##### **2.0 Financial Regulations**

- 2.1 The Financial Regulations document which was adopted by the Parish Council at the meeting in June 2023 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 2023, follows this report.
- 3.2 The Clerk has reviewed the statement and confirms that it continues to reflect actual practice. Amendments highlighted in yellow have been made to the Statement since it was last circulated in March 2023.

##### **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: E Anstee, Clerk  
2 March 2024

**Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

**STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL**

Prepared by E Anstee, RFO and Parish Clerk

Last reviewed and reapproved at a meeting of the Parish Council on 2 March 2023

<p>Cash Book/Bank reconciliations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cash book (spreadsheet) 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 nominated councillor), 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>
<p>Financial Regulations</p>	<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 (<i>this was reviewed and adopted in June 2023</i>)</li> </ul>
<p>Order/Tender controls</p>	<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>
<p>Legal Powers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>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.</del></li> <li>• General power of competence was adopted on 7 November 2019 under minute number 13b on page 1533.</li> </ul>

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<p>Payment controls</p>	<p><del>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.</del></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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> <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>
<p>VAT repayment claims</p>	<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>
<p>Income controls</p>	<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>
<p>Financial reporting</p>	<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 monthly basis, presented to the Parish Council and minuted as such.</li> </ul>
<p>Budgetary controls</p>	<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 collecting authority, West Oxfordshire District Council.</li> </ul>



**Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

<p>Payroll controls</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Clerk and RFO are paid under PAYE as an employee.</li> <li>• The Clerk's and RFO's salary is set by the Council and a minute is prepared to show the agreed salary.</li> <li>• The salaries are paid by SDO, with the SDO payment authorised by two Councillors and minuted at the start of the year.</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>
<p>Asset Control</p>	<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>
<p>Internal Audit</p>	<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>

## Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

### Finance Report – Agenda Item 14.

#### FINANCE REPORT

- a) *Account balances – see appendix 1 (For Information)*
- b) *Review of the Year-to-Date Financial Report*  
Report at appendix 2.
- c) *Renewal of Community First Oxon Membership*  
To decide whether to renew the Parish Council's membership of the CFO. The renewal fee is £70 which is the same as last year and is included in the budget. For resolution. See appendix 3.
- d) *Renewal of membership of CPRE*  
To decide whether to renew the Parish Council's membership of the Campaign to Protect Rural England renewal fee: £36.00 and in 2023/24 £36.00 was paid. The budget has £38 included for this membership. For resolution.
- e) *OALC Renewal*  
To decide on continuing membership of OALC and therefore access to NALC. Details in appendix 4. £275 has been included in the budget for the OALC membership in 24-25.
- f) *ICO Renewal*  
The Parish Council is registered with the ICO as a data controller and as such must pay the annual fee. It was resolved to action this as a DD under Section 6.3 of the Financial Regulations will become due on 15 March 2023. The cost is £40 but reduced to £35.00 for paying by direct debit. Full details in appendix 5. For resolution.

**Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

*g) To RESOLVE to approve the following payments for the period March 2024.*

	NET	VAT	Gross
Clerk's expenses - Microsoft £53.52	44.60	8.92	53.52
SLCC Membership – RFO – Inv MEM248350-1	85.00		85.00
SLCC ILCA Qualification Inv QL204896-1	120.00	24.00	144.00
WODC – Emptying Bins – Inv 3355676x	652.86	130.57	783.43
D Johnson – Inv 2437	30.00		30.00
ICO – DD – 15/03/2024	35.00		35.00
CFO Renewal 24-25	70.00		70.00
OALC membership 24-25 Inv A00052/2024/1	259.91	51.98	311.89
CPRE Membership 24-25	36.00		36.00
<b>Total to be decided and approved</b>	<b>£1,333.37</b>	<b>£215.47</b>	<b>£1,548.84</b>
RFO Salary including WFH allowance	185.75		185.75
Clerk - Overtime	802.31		802.31
HMRC (Tax and NI on above)	306.37		306.37
<b>Total of already approved/paid</b>	<b>£1,294.43</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£1,294.43</b>
<b>Monthly Standing Orders/DDs</b>			
Clerk's Salary including WFH Allowance	412.41		412.41
HMRC PAYE	98.40		98.40
<b>Total SDOs</b>	<b>£510.81</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£510.81</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,138.61</b>	<b>£215.47</b>	<b>£3,354.08</b>

**Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

Appendix 1 – Account Balances

**Cash Balances**

£

*UNITY TRUST CURRENT ACCOUNT*

Balance at 31 January 2024	<b>38,812.50</b>
Payments February	(1,250.17)
VAT Refund	0.00

<b>Balance at 31 January 2024</b>	<b><u>£37,562.33</u></b>
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*CCLA INVESTMENT ACCOUNT*

Balance at 31 December 2023	<b>51,447.60</b>
Transactions in month of January	230.21

<b>Balance at 31 January 2024</b>	<b><u>£51,677.60</u></b>
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<b>TOTAL CASH HOLDING AT 29 February 2024</b>	<b><u>£89,239.93</u></b>
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**Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

Appendix 2 – Year to Date

2023-24		AS AT		
BUDGET	EXPENDITURE	29/02/2024	Performance Against Budget	%
£	<b>Staff Costs</b>			
£ 4,872.86	Clerk's Salary - includes potential 3% payrise if PC resolves to follow the NALC/JPAG guidance.	£ 4,614.85	£ 258.01	95%
£ 1,218.27	HMRC	£ 1,152.80	£ 65.47	95%
£ 312.00	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.	£ 198.00	£ 114.00	63%
£ 500.00	Clerk sickness/Overtime contingency	£ -	£ 500.00	0%
£ 742.87	Travel and Training (Review for Clerk and Councillor training - industry standard 2.5% budget (£742.87))	£ 30.00	£ 712.87	4%
	<b>Office and General Expenses</b>			
£ 100.00	APM and meeting Hall Hire	£ 102.32	-£ 2.32	102%
£ 190.00	Website Costs including domain registration and renewal	£ 30.93	£ 159.07	16%
£ 200.00	External Audit	£ 210.00	-£ 10.00	105%
£ 369.00	Insurance	£ 434.66	-£ 65.66	118%
£ 72.00	Bank Charges	£ 54.00	£ 18.00	75%
£ 650.00	Office running costs	£ 1,054.18	-£ 404.18	162%
£ 150.00	Office Equipment (transfer to reserve if unspent at year end	£ 397.48	-£ 247.48	265%
£ 1,000.00	Professional Fees	£ -	£ 1,000.00	0%
£ 35.00	ICO Fee (DD)	£ -	£ 35.00	0%
£ 515.00	Subscriptions (CPRE, CFO, SLCC, OALC)	£ 463.77	£ 51.23	90%
£ 80.00	Election Expenses (estimated until WODC issue tax base)	£ -	£ 80.00	0%
	<b>General and Ground Maintenance</b>			
£ 5,000.00	Grass Cutting - verges & weed killing	£ 3,373.07	£ 1,626.93	67%
£ 1,500.00	Grass Cutting - playing field and WM	£ 2,571.45	-£ 1,071.45	171%
£ 2,171.00	Dog & Litter Bin Emptying	-£ 24.20	£ 2,195.20	-1%
£ 229.00	Clock Maintenance	£ 150.00	£ 79.00	66%
£ 600.00	Bus Shelter Cleaning	£ 210.00	£ 390.00	35%
£ 200.00	Defibrillator pads/batteries	£ 772.40	-£ 572.40	386%
£ 1,500.00	Village maintenance	£ 215.00	£ 1,285.00	14%
	<b>GRANTS</b>			
£ 1,115.00	Small Grants	£ 1,000.00	£ 115.00	90%
£ 5,435.00	General Grants	£ 3,070.00	£ 2,365.00	56%
£ 2,551.00	VAT Paid	£ 5,061.70	-£ 2,510.70	198%
<b>£ 31,308.00</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£25,142.41</b>	<b>£ 6,165.59</b>	<b>80%</b>
	<b>INCOME</b>			
£ 30,166.00	Precept	£30,166.00	£ -	100%
£ 1,049.00	OCC Grass cutting Grant	£ 2,100.17	-£ 1,051.17	200%
£ 350.00	Interest on CCLA Investment account	£ 2,033.51	-£ 1,683.51	581%
£ 2,551.00	VAT reclaimed	£ 5,112.84	-£ 2,561.84	200%
£ -	TERRA Planning Appeal	£12,579.00	-£ 12,579.00	
<b>£ 34,116.00</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£51,991.52</b>	<b>-£ 17,875.52</b>	<b>152%</b>
	<b>RESERVED FUNDS</b>			
£ 5,000.00	General Contingency fund (For example: 3 months running costs/insurance excess)	£ -	£ 5,000.00	0%
£ 1,122.54	Working Day to Day Balance	£ -	£ 1,122.54	0%
£ 9,679.00	Traffic Calming	£ -	£ 9,679.00	0%
£ -	Cote Noticeboard	£ -	£ -	
£ 5,000.00	TERRA Planning Appeal	£19,314.20	-£ 14,314.20	386%
£ 3,500.00	Aston History Boards (£1,000 per board)	£ -	£ 3,500.00	0%
£ 3,800.00	North Farm	£ -	£ 3,800.00	0%
£ 1,000.00	Office Equipment (Colour Printer/Laptop replacement 2024)	£ -	£ 1,000.00	0%
£ 3,145.00	Defibrillator Maintenance	£ -	£ 3,145.00	0%
£ 33,476.00	Recreation Reserve	£ -	£ 33,476.00	0%
£ 2,000.00	War Memorial	£ -	£ 2,000.00	0%
£ 10,000.00	Community Trust (50% match funding pot)	£ -	£ 10,000.00	0%
£ 5,000.00	Coronation (St James Church Tower Gate/Celebrations/Footpath)	£ -	£ 5,000.00	0%
<b>£ 82,722.54</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£19,314.20</b>	<b>£ 63,408.34</b>	<b>23%</b>

## Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Appendix 3  
Dear Parish Clerk,

### MEMBERSHIP OF COMMUNITY FIRST OXFORDSHIRE 2021/22

In 2020, CFO reached its centenary: that's one hundred years of supporting communities to find solutions to their planning, housing, social action, and service needs. We began our celebrations with a series of [Centenary Lectures](#) and will soon be launching a creative writing competition.

This year more than any other has shown us the true value of community. It has been heartening and humbling to see so many people stepping up to look out for each other and roll out COVID-support initiatives, often building on fantastic community work that has been taking place for so long.

CFO has only been able to remain in existence by responding to the changing needs of communities. The challenges of the pandemic are uppermost right now and by talking to you - our members - we have developed and launched a **new service** - [Community Reviews](#) - and [extended our training opportunities](#). These are designed to help your community to take stock and plan ahead, finding out what's needed and setting out what needs to be done to achieve it.

More 'traditional' challenges remain, related not the least to supporting volunteers and social action projects and responding to the pressures of new housing development. We are very pleased to **launch a new range of [Town Planning services](#)**. Building on our [Neighbourhood Planning](#) service, these are designed to help communities successfully deal with the often complex spatial planning and development issues facing them.

We've brought all these ideas and services together in an **upgraded membership offer** that also continues to offer you all the usual benefits. You can explore the full range of what your membership brings in the attached leaflet. We can also confirm that **fees remain the same as last year**.

We really do hope you will consider becoming a CFO member this year. To do so, simply complete the attached form along and email it back – we will also be sending this letter by hard copy.

Our warmest regards,

*Emily Lewis-Edwards and Tom McCulloch*  
Joint Chief Executive



## Membership Form

We wish to become a member of Community First Oxfordshire  
1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

Organisation \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership (please tick which type):

- |                                     |   |     |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Parish Meeting                                  | £25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Parish Council (population below 300)           | £35 |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Parish Council (population between 301-1000)    | £55 |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Parish Council (population between 1001 – 5000) | £70 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Town/Parish Council (population over 5001)      | £85 |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Other   | £30 |

We agree to become a member of Community First Oxfordshire and to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association (copy available on request).

### To pay your membership:

#### BACS Payment:

- Bank: Unity Trust Bank**  
Account No: **20361680**, Sort code **60-83-01**, Reference: **organisation name**)

#### Cheque

- Cheque enclosed payable to CFO for £ \_\_\_\_\_

#### Debit/Credit Card

Please phone the office – 01865 883488 to pay

**Please return form to: Membership Secretary, Community First Oxfordshire, South Stables, Worton Park, Witney, OX29 4SU or email a copy: [gemma@communityfirstoxon.org](mailto:gemma@communityfirstoxon.org)**

*At CFO we are committed to protecting and respecting your privacy. For our current up to date privacy policy please see our web site.*

Community First Oxfordshire is a company limited by guarantee (No. 2461552) and a charity (No. 900560)  
Community First Oxfordshire, South Stables, Worton Farm Park, Worton, OX29 4SU  
W: [www.communityfirstoxon.org](http://www.communityfirstoxon.org) T: 01865 883488 E: [info@communityfirstoxon.org](mailto:info@communityfirstoxon.org)



# MEMBERSHIP 2024-25

Your membership helps us support communities in Oxfordshire to continue to be great places to live and work.





## Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

CFO helps communities and individuals to identify issues that affect them and find their own solutions. We're here to support you to achieve strong, inclusive, and thriving places to live, work and play.

### NEW FOR 2024

#### Community-led Stewardship Support

Communities have many assets - these include green and open space, woodlands, community buildings, housing, and many others. More and more residents want to be actively involved in stewarding those assets to ensure that local needs and aspirations are front and centre. CFO has assembled a highly experienced Team to help explore opportunities for managing and owning assets - perhaps via a community land trust or development trust.

Visit our dedicated [website](#) or please [get in touch](#) with us for more information.

#### Rural Housing Enabling Service

In rural communities, the housing market has become divorced from local people and their incomes. Those unable to access homeownership, and with a shrinking stock of social housing, have to turn to the private rented sector, where costs are high and tenancies insecure. With young people and families often priced out of rural communities entirely, and many places struggling to maintain services such as local schools, pubs, and shops, a lack of affordable homes threatens the social fabric of rural life. Via DEFRA funding, CFO can now offer support to help parish and town councils identify small sites for affordable housing development.

Please [get in touch](#) with us for more information.

Society is changing and our communities face ever more complex challenges - the following principles guide CFO's work.

#### Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)

We think that stronger, more sustainable communities are built using the skills and gifts that people already have. ABCD identifies and harnesses existing 'assets' to strengthen and improve things locally. These could be skills, knowledge, capacity, resources, experience or just enthusiasm. ABCD starts with what's already there rather than making judgements about what's lacking.

#### Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

The values and practice of CFO are rooted in human rights, social justice, and respect for diversity. In our projects we seek to achieve inclusion, remove barriers to involvement, and challenge racism and discrimination. Equality and inclusion create strong, creative, and dynamic places to live and work - we believe that an ongoing appraisal of how we can further those values is at the heart of CFO's mission.



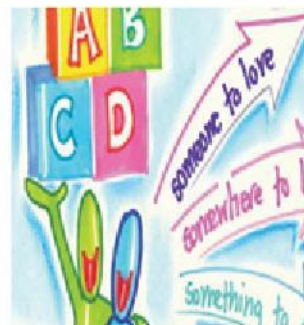
## Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

# WHY BECOME A MEMBER OF COMMUNITY FIRST OXFORDSHIRE

CFO is a community development charity. We help and support community action projects and volunteering, community halls and shops, transport schemes, and local businesses. We run Neighbourhood Planning, Town Planning and Placemaking consultancies, helping clients including communities and Local Authorities on a range of themes, such as making the most of the complexities of the planning system, identifying infrastructure requirements, and creating strong, inclusive, and thriving communities.

### INCLUDED IN YOUR MEMBERSHIP:

Community development, volunteering and social action support	Community Reviews	Town Planning masterclass
Community-led and affordable housing advice and support	Network and training opportunities	Advocating on behalf of Oxfordshire rural communities
National voice on rural and community development matters	The Oil Scheme gives members access to many suppliers, giving the best prices available	Discounts on fee paying services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Housing Needs Surveys</li><li>• Neighbourhood Planning</li><li>• Community Infrastructure Assessments</li></ul>







## WHAT DO MEMBERS SAY ABOUT WORKING WITH COMMUNITY FIRST OXFORDSHIRE?

*"It was a great introduction to a topic I knew almost nothing about and has really opened my eyes to a new way of creating and sustaining projects in the community - and one which makes perfect sense."*

### **FEEDBACK FROM A PARTICIPANT OF OUR ASSET BASED TRAINING**

*"Thank you so much for all you do to keep us informed and, particularly during the pandemic, your guidance and interpretation of the vast and ever-changing government guidance was absolutely invaluable!"*

### **CHARLBURY CORNER HOUSE AND WAR MEMORIAL HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

*"CFO has offered us valuable guidance and mentoring throughout the Neighbourhood Plan process. Without them it would have been virtually impossible to reach our objective. We have no hesitation in recommending CFO to any organisation who may require their expertise."*

### **BRIZE NORTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP**

*"Many thanks for all the work you and your team do for our communities. We do appreciate it!"*

### **YARNTON VOLUNTEER DRIVER SCHEME**



#### **Contact Details:**

Tel: **01865 883488**

Email: **info@communityfirstoxon.org**

**www.communityfirstoxon.org**

Address: **South Stables, Worton Park, Witney, Oxon. OX29 4SU**

Charity No: 900560

## Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

### Appendix 4

Dear Elaine,

*Please could you ensure that this is forwarded to your Chair and, if approved for payment, please ensure the invoice number is quoted as the payment reference and that payment reaches OALC by Friday 31st May 24 to avoid a late payment fee (£20+VAT).*

As Chair of the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils (OALC), I hope your Council will continue its membership of our Association for the coming financial year 2024-25.

Membership of OALC provides access to support and information in an ever-changing local government context. Each year there is new legislation which councils are required to implement. We aim to assist our member councils by alerting them to forthcoming changes, providing briefings, templates and a comprehensive training program, as well as answering questions and providing guidance. We are also able to obtain member discounts e.g. Parish-online.co.uk a specialist provider of website to Parish Councils.

OALC is financially independent of all Oxfordshire district councils and the county council. Our income comes from just two sources, **SUBSCRIPTIONS AND TRAINING**. Our subscription is calculated on electorate and is a combination of the NALC affiliation and OALC's membership fees. This year there will be an increase of 3.5% (equivalent to 0.73 pence per elector), which includes the 3% NALC increase. An invoice for the annual subscription is attached to this email. We would encourage your council to pay the invoice by BACS, if at all possible, quoting the invoice number and parish name as reference. This helps us to keep administrative costs down.

What are the benefits of membership?

- **Representation at district, county, regional and national level**, 97% of town and parish councils, in Oxfordshire belong to OALC; we represent your interests at all levels of local government. Membership of OALC includes membership of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) which lobbies Ministers and central government on your behalf. They have successfully lobbied with our help to ensure no cap on precepts. NALC also respond on your behalf to the continuous flow of government consultations, to emphasise the issues affecting town and parish councils.
- **Advice, guidance, briefings and information**, we answer hundreds of queries by phone and email for member councils, the queries cover all manner of governance, procedure and administration. If we don't know the answer, we can pass the query on to NALC solicitors for their opinion or to other experts in appropriate organisations without cost.
- **Monthly Update for councils**; keeping you and your council up to date on new legislation, news and consultations – these updates summarise all the important developments which you and your council need to be aware of.
- **Specialised advice from OALC consultants** on HR/Employment issues and Finance, Audit and VAT. Initial expert advice is free of charge. We pay so that member councils can benefit from this specialised advice.
- **Training**; an expanding training programme for clerks and councillors, with reduced rates for member councils. Look at the [events section](#) of our website. Topics include Clerks

## **Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

training, Memorial Safety, Play Areas, Employment, Biodiversity, Councillor and Chairmanship training. We also run a free County Council day with relevant officers from highways, countryside, gypsy and traveller services, emergency planning etc..

- **Access to the Members Areas of OALC and NALC websites**, which provides many useful reference documents, briefings, including 88 Legal Topic Notes.

Members of our Executive Committee represent the interests of local councils on various outside bodies at both county, regional and national level. We participate in County and District partnerships where they still exist. We work to improve the efficiency, transparency and professionalism of town and parish councils and parish meetings and use every opportunity to lobby relevant bodies on parishes' behalf.

The Association office is staffed by Lucy Dalby, County Officer and Rachel Brown, Assistant County Officer, both of whom will be happy to provide further information about our work if you wish to contact them.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Katharine Keats-Rohan

Chair

## Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Appendix 5

**Organisation name:** Aston, Cote, Shifford & Chimney Parish Council

**Reference:** Z2599197

Dear Elaine Anstee

### GDPR/Data Protection Act 2018

#### **Data protection renewal fee is due - we will collect your direct debit payment on or before 15/03/2024**

Organisations that process personal data are subject to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Under the Data Protection (Charges and Information) Regulations 2018 (the Regulations) they must also pay an annual data protection fee, unless they are exempt.

Your payment and registration as a data controller under the Regulations will expire on 15/03/2024. You must now either:

- take the tier assessment to confirm the fee you need to pay (see [ico.org.uk/fee-self-assessment](https://ico.org.uk/fee-self-assessment)), or
- cancel your registration if your circumstances have changed, telling us why you no longer need to be registered.

#### **Amount required**

Under the Regulations, you must pay an annual fee of £40, £60 or £2900 depending on the size or turnover of your organisation. **VAT is nil in all cases.**

Based on your last assessment you are now required to pay **£40.00**. However, you should use our tier assessment tool (see [ico.org.uk/fee-self-assessment](https://ico.org.uk/fee-self-assessment)) to confirm how much you need to pay, and contact us immediately if your current assessment is wrong.

As you have a direct debit in place, we'll renew your registration automatically. **You will receive an annual £5 reduction each time you pay by direct debit.** We intend to collect your data protection fee on or around 15/03/2024.

#### **Further information**

You must let us know if any of the details we hold about you change. If you want to tell us about a change to your details please go to [ico.org.uk/update](https://ico.org.uk/update). The online change service is very quick and easy to use. You will need your registration reference and security number.

If you are required to have a Data Protection Officer (DPO) under the GDPR or you choose to appoint one, you should also tell us about this. For more information please see [ico.org.uk/DPOs](https://ico.org.uk/DPOs).

If you need any more information about the fee, please see [ico.org.uk/fee-guide](https://ico.org.uk/fee-guide).

**Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

If you want to discuss your payment or your obligation to pay, call us on 0303 123 1113, or email [dataprotectionfee@ico.org.uk](mailto:dataprotectionfee@ico.org.uk). You'll need the **registration reference** from the top of this email and the **security number** we sent you when you first applied.

If you need help with your other data protection obligations, including any relating to changes brought about by COVID-19, please see [ico.org.uk](https://ico.org.uk) or call us on 0303 123 1113. We are here to help at what we know is a very challenging time.

For more information about what we do with personal data see our privacy notice at [ico.org.uk/privacy-notice](https://ico.org.uk/privacy-notice).

Yours sincerely

Michael Fitzgerald  
Director of Digital, IT and Business Services  
Information Commissioner's Office