

# ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL

## CLERK'S BRIEFING NOTES

### PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON 7 November 2019

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Clerk's Briefing Notes – 7 November 2019  
**Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

**Correspondence sent since 3 October 2019**

All other correspondence by email.

Clerk's Briefing Notes – 7 November 2019  
**Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

**Agenda Item 8c - Recommended Actions Following WODC Planning Training for Parishes**

**S106 Funding for projects in Aston from the two housing developments - Comments**

Planning App. No.	Address	S106 Contribution Heading	Amount	Detail from s106 agreement <i>Where not specified 'to be used by the Parish Council', who is it to be used by? Are the application procedures (to WODC?) different?</i>	Trigger points  <i>For what? Payment to WODC/Parish?</i>	Contact at WODC/Publica to claim contribution
13/1494/P/OP	Land at Saxel Close	Community Facilities	£17,062	Towards sport and recreation facilities in the village of Aston <i>Where? What? Have we firm plans?</i>	On or before the occupation of the tenth market dwelling <i>When is this scheduled? Who prompts us?</i>	Tara Nielsen 01993 861558 <a href="mailto:tara.nielsen@publicagroup.uk">tara.nielsen@publicagroup.uk</a>
13/1494/P/OP	Land at Saxel Close	Dredging	£7,600	To be used by the Parish Council (eh?) for the dredging of Bull Lane Ditch Aston <i>Landowner responsibility - and he's currently doing it! Can we reassign? If so, how?</i>	On or before the occupation of the tenth market dwelling <i>When is this scheduled? Who prompts us?</i>	Claire Bromley 01993 861693 <a href="mailto:claire.bromley@publicagroup.uk">claire.bromley@publicagroup.uk</a>
13/1494/P/OP	Land at Saxel Close	Parish Council	£20,000	To be used by the Parish Council towards community facilities including a multi-use games court, a bike/skate park <i>(is there a specific plan?)</i> such facilities being within the Parish Council's area and solar panels for the <i>(Community Trust responsibility?)</i> Aston village hall	On or before the occupation of the tenth market dwelling <i>When is this scheduled? Who prompts us?</i>	Tara Nielsen 01993 861558 <a href="mailto:tara.nielsen@publicagroup.uk">tara.nielsen@publicagroup.uk</a>
13/1494/P/OP	Land at Saxel Close	Play Facilities	£10,642.28	Towards play facilities within the village of Aston <i>Where? What? Have we firm plans?</i>	On or before the occupation of the tenth market dwelling <i>When is this scheduled? Who prompts us?</i>	Tara Nielsen 01993 861558 <a href="mailto:tara.nielsen@publicagroup.uk">tara.nielsen@publicagroup.uk</a>
13/1494/P/OP	Land at Saxel Close	Village Hall	£8,000	To be used by the Parish Council for flood mitigation works to the village hall in Aston <i>OK, but is this actually required and a sufficiently high priority? Community Trust responsibility - do we apply (it shouldn't be them) and then grant to them?</i>	On or before the occupation of the tenth market dwelling <i>When is this scheduled? Who prompts us?</i>	Claire Bromley 01993 861693 <a href="mailto:claire.bromley@publicagroup.uk">claire.bromley@publicagroup.uk</a>
15/01550/OUT	Land North of Cote Road	Traffic Calming  <i>Not within our powers (OCC responsibility). How do we influence this?</i>	£10,000  <i>Amount not specified in Schedule 2</i>	Means traffic calming works on Cote Road to the east of the access to the Development <i>Schedule 2 mandates that this must be spent within 10 years (no time limits are specified for any other contribution. Why?)</i>	Before implementation of the Development <i>They've nearly finished! Have we missed the boat?</i>	Claire Bromley 01993 861693 <a href="mailto:claire.bromley@publicagroup.uk">claire.bromley@publicagroup.uk</a>
15/01550/OUT	Land North of Cote Road	Sport/Recreation Facilities	£47,872	Towards the provision of sport and recreation facilities within Aston <i>Where? What? Have we firm plans?</i>	Upon or before implementation of the development - <i>They've nearly finished! Have we missed the boat?</i>	Tara Nielsen 01993 861558 <a href="mailto:tara.nielsen@publicagroup.uk">tara.nielsen@publicagroup.uk</a>
15/01550/OUT	Land North of Cote Road	Play and Recreation Facilities	£35,992	Towards the enhancement and maintenance of play and recreation areas within Aston <i>Where? What? Have we firm plans?</i>	Upon or before implementation of the Development <i>They've nearly finished! Have we missed the boat?</i>	Tara Nielsen 01993 861558 <a href="mailto:tara.nielsen@publicagroup.uk">tara.nielsen@publicagroup.uk</a>

## Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Wright, James - Communities < >

Tue 15/10/2019 13:08

Hi Elaine...

I will chase up the playground signs.

Traffic calming details below.

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/traffic/traffic-calming>

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/traffic/funding-traffic-schemes>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/329454/ltn-1-07\\_Traffic-calming.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/329454/ltn-1-07_Traffic-calming.pdf)

Basically we can have a look at what you want, assess feasibility / suitability etc then advise on consultation and implementation.

James.

**From:** Aston Cote Shifford and Chimney Parish Council <astonpc@live.co.uk>

**Sent:** 12 October 2019 14:10

**To:** Wright, James - Communities < >

**Subject:** Re: Aston 30 extension

Dear James,

Any news on when the playground signs will be moved? Chris and his team have moved the 30 mph sign but it will be obscured by the playground one.

Also could I ask your advice on traffic calming? Firstly are you the right person to ask and if not who should I talk too?

If you are the right person - what is OCC's current policy for traffic calming? We have some S106 monies and the parish council has a small reserve of funds to add to this but without an understanding of what can be done I cannot advise the parish council. They have talked about a crossing outside the school, chicanes and numbers on the road but that is all moot if it not OCC highways policy. I believe whatever is to be done we have to consult first and would like to get that under way now so we have a robust plan to put forward to claim the S106.

Kind Regards,  
Elaine Anstee

Clerk to Aston, Cote, Shifford & Chimney Parish Council  
16 Foxwood, Aston  
BAMPTON  
OX18 2DZ  
Telephone: 07368466413

## Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

OCC Website - <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/traffic/traffic-calming>

1. [Home](#)
2. [Roads, travel and parking](#)
3. [Traffic](#)
4. Traffic calming and speed humps

# Traffic calming and speed humps

How traffic calming is paid for, and when it is used.

'Traffic calming' is a term used to describe a range of measures for slowing down traffic. Measures range from road humps and bus cushions to gateways and special road signs or lining.

## How traffic calming is paid for

All proposals for traffic schemes are assessed against [Local Transport Plan](#) priorities when making the decision whether to proceed.

We identify locations and routes which have the highest injury accident histories and where schemes can be designed to reduce these problems. Funding is allocated from the overall spending limits allocated to us by the Government but traffic schemes need to meet the LTP criteria to have a chance of success. Priority is given to those schemes achieving the best 'pay back' in terms of reduced road accidents and injuries.

## Externally funded traffic calming

It is common practice for new commercial or residential developments to include traffic calming features to ensure low speeds and to avoid reduced standards of road safety. Town and Parish Councils can also fund traffic calming. More information is provided in [Externally Funded Traffic Schemes](#) or from the [Highway Enquiries Team](#).

## Traffic calming in Oxfordshire

Traffic calming is introduced where there are recorded injuries. This is often in conjunction with district, town or parish councils. Smaller and rural communities with a poor safety record are also considered for suitable traffic calming measures.

Traffic calming is now widespread across the county and road hump schemes have reduced accidents by an average of 50%.

## Problems with traffic calming

- **Finance** - Some remaining problem sites are very difficult to cure and are unlikely to benefit solely from traffic calming. Small numbers of injury accidents are spread out over wide areas, which would require extensive measures and therefore a large amount of

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

money. This makes it difficult to treat these areas on the money available. The 'payback' on such schemes is greatly reduced and therefore less attractive as a bid to the Department.

- **Consensus** - Consultation is an important part of any new traffic measure. However, getting a consensus opinion is difficult and time-consuming. This can be frustrating for those who wish to see results quickly
- **Pollution** - Studies show that pollution can be minimised if drivers maintain a constant, low speed when going over humps
- **Popularity** - Traffic calming is not favoured by everyone and communities may have differing expectations or reservations about traffic calming

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

### **Agenda Item 10d - Home Office – County Lines awareness-raising campaign**

Dear Sir/Madam

As part of the Government's ongoing commitment to tackle serious and violent crime, the Home Office has relaunched its County Lines awareness-raising campaign.

County Lines is the term used to describe urban gangs supplying drugs to suburban areas, as well as market and coastal towns, by using dedicated mobile phone lines or "deal lines". Gangs use children and vulnerable people to move drugs and money to these areas. Once caught up in County Lines, exploited individuals are at risk of extreme physical and/or sexual violence, gang recriminations and trafficking.

Our campaign aims to raise awareness about County Lines among frontline staff, like teachers, health workers and those working in the transport, housing and security sectors. It is these people who are most likely to encounter those young people who are most at risk.

As such we felt that you should be provided with a copy too so please find attached a Home Office County Lines Partner Pack which is a resource to assist you and your colleagues in spotting an exploited young person.

I do hope you find this to be a useful tool!

Thames Valley Police

The pack will be available at the meeting.

## Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

### Agenda Item 10e - Council motion request re national community energy campaign

Dear Mrs Anstee

I am contacting you to ask you to help our campaign for more local, clean energy generation that would benefit local communities.

We are a not-for-profit organisation campaigning for the [Local Electricity Bill](#) – that we authored – to become law.

The Bill is currently supported by a cross-party group of 115 MPs.

The Bill aims to solve the current problem whereby local renewable energy generators, such as community energy groups, are unable to sell energy that they generate to local people. This is because of the huge setup and running costs involved in doing so.

The Bill would fix this problem by establishing a Right to Local Supply that would make the costs of selling locally generated clean energy proportionate to the scale of the operation. This would benefit the existing community energy groups across the country and, even more excitingly, create the opportunity for huge growth in such groups and other local clean energy providers.

If the Bill became law it would be excellent news for Parish and Town Councils that wished to set up their own energy companies to sell locally generated renewable energy to local people, as the set up and running costs involved would be proportionate and thus a fraction of what they are now. The revenues received by such councils could be ploughed back into local emissions reduction schemes and other local services and facilities.

#### Could you please help by doing the following?

**1. Ask Aston, Cote, Shifford & Chimney Parish Council to pass a motion in support of the Local Electricity Bill.** A model resolution is below.

**2. Sign up to the campaign** which you can do here: [www.powerforpeople.org.uk/sign-up](http://www.powerforpeople.org.uk/sign-up)

Please reply if you would like to ask anything about our campaign.

Yours sincerely

Steve Shaw

Director

Power for People

[www.powerforpeople.org.uk](http://www.powerforpeople.org.uk)

#### Council Draft Resolution

That [*insert council's name*]

(i) acknowledges the efforts that this council has made to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote renewable energy;

(ii) recognises that councils can play a central role in creating sustainable communities, particularly through the provision of locally generated renewable electricity;

(iii) further recognises

- that very large financial setup and running costs involved in selling locally generated renewable electricity to local customers result in it being impossible for local renewable electricity generators to do so,
- that making these financial costs proportionate to the scale of a renewable electricity supplier's operation would create significant opportunities for councils to be providers of locally generated renewable electricity directly to local people, businesses and organisations, and
- that revenues received by councils that became local renewable electricity providers could be used to help fund local greenhouse gas emissions reduction measures and to help improve local services and facilities;

(iv) accordingly resolves to support the Local Electricity Bill, currently supported by a cross-party group of 115 MPs, and which, if made law, would make the setup and running costs of selling renewable electricity to local customers proportionate by establishing a Right to Local Supply; and

(v) further resolves to

- inform the local media of this decision,
- write to local MPs, asking them to support the Bill, and
- write to the organisers of the campaign for the Bill, Power for People, (at 8 Delancey Passage, Camden, London NW1 7NN or [info@powerforpeople.org.uk](mailto:info@powerforpeople.org.uk)) expressing its support.



## Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

### Agenda Item 10f - OCC Youth Opportunity Fund

9 October 2019

Dear Councillor

Today we are opening the bidding process for the Youth Opportunity Fund so voluntary and community-based organisation can apply for funding from the £1m fund agreed by councillors. Grants of up to £70k will be awarded. The application form and guidelines for funding applications are now on the county council's website [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/youthopportunity](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/youthopportunity) I have attached the text of a message that you could send to community organisations in your division to encourage them to consider applying. This can also be adapted for councillor newsletters. I have also attached an electronic flyer that can be sent to community groups, and could be printed out as a small poster to be put in community spaces such as parish noticeboards. We will be sending this information in a general parish mailing and to members of the Oxfordshire Youth network, which has helped with the bidding process. Next week we start a media and social media campaign that will highlight examples of existing community-based youth provision, and encourage communities across Oxfordshire to apply. Please let me know if you have any questions on the Youth Opportunity Fund, or suggestions about ways to ensure as many applications as possible.

Best wishes,

Councillor Mark Gray

Cabinet Member for Communities

Oxfordshire County Council

#### Oxfordshire Youth Opportunity Fund... your community's chance to bid for funding

Voluntary and community organisations are being invited to bid for portions of Oxfordshire County Council's new £1m two-year grant fund: Youth Opportunity Fund.

Feedback from Oxfordshire residents points to strong support for improving community-run youth services. This new fund is available to help existing projects expand and new ones get started. Grants of up to £70,000 are available.

By offering start-up funding in previous years, the council has already helped many community-run groups provide support for young children and families. Now we aim to do the same for youth services.

Community-run youth schemes complement the work of the county council's children's services department, which targets resources at young people at risk of abuse and neglect.

People in neighbourhoods, towns and villages know best what is good for their community and where they would like to see improvements. Now they have the chance to start or grow existing opportunities for young people in their communities.

For further information on how to submit a bid to the Youth Opportunity Fund:

Website: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/youthopportunity](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/youthopportunity)

Contact: [youth.opportunities@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:youth.opportunities@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

**Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council****Agenda Item 14a****Financial Matters****1. Cash Balances**

	£
<i>UNITY TRUST CURRENT ACCOUNT</i>	
Balance at 30 September 2019	<b>24,458.15</b>
September payments	(1528.62)
<b>Balance at 31 October 2019</b>	<b><u>22,929.53</u></b>
<i>CCLA INVESTMENT ACCOUNT</i>	
Balance at 30 September 2019	<b>48,396.42</b>
Transactions in month of October	28.72
<b>Balance at 31 October 2019</b>	<b><u>48,425.14</u></b>
<b>TOTAL CASH HOLDING AT 31 October 2019</b>	<b><u>£71,354.67</u></b>

## Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

### Agenda Item 14b - *The General Power of Competence*

A briefing paper for town and parish councils -The General Power of Competence

#### 1. Legislative background to the power

Parish councils are corporate bodies their powers have accumulated through legislation since 1894. Their powers being constrained to specific and appropriate legislation until 2008 when they could, if eligible, exercise the Power of Well-being 2008 Order made under Sec 1 (2) of Local Government Act 2000 for the benefit of their community.

The Localism Act 2011, Chapter 1 of Part 1, Sections 1-8 has provided local authorities with a general power of competence, a radical new power with wide ranging possibilities. The broader general power of competence replaces the power of well-being.

The general power of competence was brought into force by SI. 961, The Localism Act 2011 (Consequential Amendments) Order 2012 on 28th March 2012.

#### 2. What does the power allow councils to do?

The power is a central part of this Governments move towards the decentralisation of powers down to the lowest practical level of local government. The Explanatory Memorandum to The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 no. 965 says that "The Government's intention in providing eligible parish councils with the general power of competence is to better enable them to take on their enhanced role and allow them to do the things they have previously been unable to do under their existing powers"

The Government hopes that this new power will give local councils confidence in the legal capacity to act for their communities. The idea being that councils will use this power to work with others to provide cost-effective services and facilities in new ways to meet the needs of local communities.

The General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011 Sec 1 (1) gives local authorities, including eligible local councils, "the power to do anything that individuals generally may do" as long as they do not break other laws. It is intended to be a power of first, not last, resort.

The council has to ask itself if an individual is allowed to do it, if the answer is yes then a council is normally permitted to act in the same way.

A council could:

- lend or invest money
- it could set up a company or co-operative society to trade and engage in commercial activity
- it could run a community shop or post office
- the power is not restricted to use within the parish it can be used anywhere.

#### 3. Risks and restrictions limiting the general power of competence

The general power of competence is a power; it cannot be used to raise the precept. The council can seek other sources of funding such as Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), sponsorship, commercial activity and agreements with other authorities. Councils can receive income as a consequence of using the power, they could lend money to support a local activity and earn interest on the loan, they could purchase shares in a struggling local enterprise.

However, to use this power the council must have the support of the local community. While councils are being encouraged to be innovative they should be aware of the risk of:

- being challenged
- their trading activities damaging other competing local enterprises
- damage to the councils reputation and public money if a project goes wrong.

Existing duties remain in place, such as having regard to the likely effect on crime and disorder, biodiversity and the duty to provide allotments

Existing financial and procedural duties remain in place for regulating governance for example - no delegation to a single councillor

## Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council

Councils must continue to comply with relevant existing legislation - employment law, Health and Safety legislation, equality legislation and duties related to data protection and freedom of information.

If a council wishes to trade it must set up a company or co-operative society and abide by company law. The council can charge for services provided under the power. ,

If the council wishes to invest in a local business which it hopes will support the local economy it should follow Government advice. If it wishes to support a community enterprise, an economic development grant might be a sensible option.

If another authority has a statutory duty to provide a service (e.g. education) it remains their duty to provide it but your council may assist. The council needs to ask itself whether an individual, private company or community trust could help, if the answer is yes then the council can assist. An appropriate delivery body may need to be set up.

If the action the council wishes to take is also covered by a specific power then any restrictions that apply to the overlapping power remain in place. So if existing legislation requires the council to ask permission before acting, then it must do so. For example, the council asks permission of the Highways Authority before doing work on roadside verges.

#### 4. How does the general power of competence relate to Sec 137 expenditure?

Monies that can be spent under Sec 137, Local Government Act 1972 are limited and have to be budgeted for separately, they are restricted in that they cannot be used to give money to individuals and expenditure must be commensurate with the benefit. Sec 137 is a power of last resort. A council that is eligible to use the general power of competence can no longer use Sec 137 as a power for taking action for the benefit of the area or its community except Sec 137 (3) which permits the council to contribute to UK charities, public sector funds and public appeals remains in place.

The general power of competence is a very broad ranging power, far wider than any power that has previously been available to town and parish councils, wider than sec 137 and the power of well-being.

#### 5. How to become eligible to use the power of general competence

The conditions for eligibility are set out in the Statutory Instrument, Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012. They are:

##### 1. Resolution.

The council must resolve at a meeting that it meets the criteria for eligibility relating to the electoral mandate and relevant training of the clerk. The resolution can be passed at any meeting of the council but a further resolution must be passed at every subsequent "relevant annual meeting" for the council to be able to continue to exercise the power. A "relevant annual meeting" is the annual meeting that takes place in a year of ordinary elections, once every four years.

##### 2. Electoral Mandate

At the time the resolution is passed, at least two thirds of the members of the council must hold office as a result of being declared elected. This means they should have stood for election, whether at an ordinary or by election, even if unopposed, rather than co-opted or appointed. If two thirds is not a whole number then it must be rounded up. For example, if the total number of councillors is 8, then two thirds is approx. 5.3, then the number of councillors that must be elected is 6.

##### 3. Qualified clerk

At the time the resolution is passed the clerk must hold the certificate in local Council Administration, the Certificate of Higher Education in Local Policy, the Certificate of Higher Education in Local Council Administration or the first level of the foundation degree in Community Engagement and Governance (or successor qualifications) awarded by the University of Gloucestershire. The clerk must also have completed training in the exercise of this power as part of one of these qualifications or as separate exercise.

If the council loses its qualified clerk or has insufficient elected councillors then it must record its ineligibility at the next 'relevant' annual meeting of the council (after the ordinary election). If it has already started an activity it can finish that but not start anything new.

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

### References/web links

Localism Act 2011

[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted)

Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2012/9780111519868/body>

Localism Act 2011: Explanatory Notes

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/notes/division/5/1/1>

Charging guidance

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/151291.pdf>

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

### **Agenda Item 14c – 2020-21 Budget – Draft**

#### **ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD AND CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL DRAFT BUDGET 2019/20 – VERSION 1**

##### **1.0 Overview**

- 1.1 A first draft of the budget for 2021/21 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 2019/20. The council tax support grant for 2019/20 was £466 and the council tax base (the number of households across which the precept is split) was 529.20 in 2019/20. For this version of the budget it has been assumed that these figures will be unchanged in 2020/21.
- 1.3 The first draft budget shows recurrent expenditure of £25,630 and no planned one-off (project) expenditure. The total expenditure is reduced to a net of £24,221 when the non-precept income budgeted is offset against it (the grass 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 £2,770 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 2019/20 was £26,701 (£26,325 after deducting the council tax support grant).

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

### **2.0 Reserves**

- 2.1 The forecast out-turn for 2019/20 is a deficit of £5,096. This is after the payment of £7,592 for the new bus shelter.
- 2.2 The forecast reserves at 31 March 2020 are £46,650. This is made up of: recreation reserve £34,476, traffic calming reserve £2,770, general contingency sum of £5,000 and a working day-to-day balance of £4,404. 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.
- 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.

### **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 2019/20 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 £500.
- 3.5 General Grass Cutting  
The contract with WODC was renewed in 2018/19 at a fixed rate for 3 years.
- 3.6 Playing Field Grass Cutting  
The contract with Des Johnston was renewed in 2018/19 for three years. 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
	<hr/>
	£3,950

### 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 LGA 1972 s137 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 not yet been tested (deadline for applications expires at the end of December. In 19/20, to date, applications from Clean Slate (£152) and Aston History Group (£500) have been granted. For the purposes of this budget, the total has been left at the 2019/20 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).

### 3.11 One-off Projects

The budget does not include any one-off projects for 2020/21. 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 2020/21 before the budget is finalised.

## 4 **Precept**

4.3 The net expenditure in the budget as presented is £31,124. Assuming that the District Council offers a support grant of £466 as in 2019/20, the Parish Council would need to raise £21,971 from the precept in order to create a break-even budget. This would equate to £40.64 per Band D household (using the 2019/20 council tax base). This is a decrease of £8.16 per annum per Band D household on 2019/20 precept.



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

- 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 £26,325, the budget as presented would generate a deficit of £3,014. On the 2019/20 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.

### **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 2020/21; - Agenda Item 14d
  - 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 2020/21.
- 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 20/21 until that meeting at the earliest.

Prepared by: Elaine Anstee, 26 October 2019

Clerk's Briefing Notes – 7 November 2019  
**Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council**

**ASTON, COTE, SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY PARISH COUNCIL**  
**FINANCIAL YEAR 2020/21**  
**DRAFT BUDGET - 7 November 2019**

	Relevant Statute	Budget 2019/20	Actual 6 Months 2019/20	Currently expected outturn 2019/20	Draft Budget 2020/21	Commentary
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>						
<b>Recurrent Expenditure</b>						
<u>Ordinary Expenditure</u>						
Clerk's Salary	LGA 1972, s112	4,000	2,163	4,418	4,640	Payrise and increment budgeted for if passed by council on clerks annual review .
Office equipment	LGA 1972, s111				2,000	Laptop/Pc
Office running costs	LGA 1972, s111	500	241	500	500	As existing budget
Bank charges		72	18	72	72	£6 per month
Website costs		150	0	141	150	Annual Cost
Insurance		382	307	364	361	This year actual + 5% - Due for renewal in 2020
Audit		200	200	200	240	New provider, assumed remains as prior
Village Hall Rental/Cost APM	LGA 1972, s111	40	0	40	40	As existing budget
Subscriptions	LGA 1972, s143	401	89	198	421	on DD
Chairman's Allowance		100	0	100	100	As existing budget
<u>Expenditure under Statute</u>						
Grass Cutting - verges & WM	HA 1980, s116	6,037	1,744	5,805	6,339	14 cuts - quotation from WODC
Grass Cutting - playing field	LG(MP)A 1976, s19	1,591	1,020	1,530	1,591	18 cuts - actual quotation
Grants paid under statute		3,950	2,228	3,755	3,950	See 7 Nov Report
Dog & Litter Bin Emptying	Litter Act 1983	239	117	219	249	This year + 4% infl.
Election Fees		88	88		0	Election fees
Training & Travel	LGA 1972, s174	220	0	200	220	Review for Clerk and Councillor training - industry standard 2.5% budget (£526.50)
Clock Maintenance	PCA 1957, ss2 & 6	229	0		229	This has not been spent in 18/19 or 19/20
Bus Shelter Cleaning	LG(MP)A 1953, s4	464	246	348	740	Due for review and to include new bus shelter.
Defibrillator pads/batteries			0			Replaced 2017 - due 21/22
Repairs		500	0	500	500	General round budget
VAT Paid			458	623		
<u>Expenditure from "Free Resource" (S137)</u>						
Village maintenance (Lengthsman)		1,500	199	1,500	1,500	See 7 Nov Report
Subscriptions (CPRE & ORCC)		114	36	106	119	This year + 4%
Grants - See Separate Analysis		1,400	652	1,400	1,400	See 7 Nov Report
<b>Recurrent Expenditure c/f</b>		<b>22,177</b>	<b>9,805</b>	<b>22,019</b>	<b>25,361</b>	
<b>Recurrent Expenditure b/f</b>		<b>22,177</b>	<b>9,805</b>	<b>22,019</b>	<b>25,361</b>	
<u>Projects</u>						
Aston History Project	WMA 1923, s1					
Traffic Calming Reserve		764		764	764	Traffic Calming Reserve To repeat in 2019/2
Bus Shelter				7,952		
	LGA 1972, s133 & LG(MP)A 1976, s19					
<b>Total Project Spend</b>		<b>764</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8,716</b>	<b>764</b>	
<b>OVERALL EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>22,941</b>	<b>9,805</b>	<b>30,735</b>	<b>26,125</b>	
<b>OTHER INCOME</b>						
OCC grass cutting grant		1,049	1,049	1,049	1,049	Same as this year
Interest		101	62	300	360	
VAT Received						
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>1,150</b>	<b>1,110</b>	<b>1,349</b>	<b>1,409</b>	
<b>NET EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>21,791</b>			<b>24,716</b>	
Add: Amount to set aside for reserves		<b>5,702</b>			<b>5,764</b>	
Less: Amount to be spent from accumulated reserves		<b>0</b>			<b>0</b>	
<b>Precept requirement to break even</b>		<b>27,493</b>			<b>30,480</b>	

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

Agenda Item 14d – Budget Projects

### **Business Plan – Aston History Book Project**

#### **Overview**

The Aston History Group has accumulated a wealth of local information over many years such as documents, interviews with elderly residents and old photographs. It was decided that it would be worth gathering all of this information into some form of book and adding to it suitable illustrations where no photographs are available. Further discussion led to a decision to carry out more in depth research of local and national resources in an effort to compile a more comprehensive book covering not just recent history but also the historical origins of the Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney communities.

The book is planned to cover such topics as religion, agriculture, the different trades working in the area when the parish was self-sufficient, enclosures, absentee landlords, the local laundry and training school, the arrival of Basque refugees from the Spanish Civil War, geology, settlement, social life, the poor, leisure, law and order. Therefore there should be many areas of interest to attract people into buying this book.

The completed book would then be offered for sale to local residents, former residents, local history societies, local businesses and organisations. This will provide people with a great reference document and local resource for many years to come.

#### **Finance**

The book is expected to retail for around £15 per copy and will be offered direct to people through the Aston History Group. Copies will also be offered for retail in local shops and businesses. Financial grants have been applied for to help with the costs of the project from such organisations as the Greening Lamborn Trust, Oxfordshire Local History Association, Bampton Community Shop. A bid for a grant from the National Lottery Community Fund was unsuccessful. A local produce show recently raised £100 towards the project. A fundraising quiz will be held in Aston Village Hall in March 2020 to hopefully raise an additional amount. Aston History Group is prepared to set aside £1,000 from its own funds to go towards this project.

#### **Marketing**

Potential customers will be informed about the availability of the book through local media such as the Aston Voices magazine, Witney Gazette and broadcast interviews on local radio. The Oxfordshire Local History Association newsletter would be used to attract potential customers through that medium.

Local shops in Aston, Bampton, Witney, Carterton, Eynsham, Faringdon, Long Hanborough, Minster Lovell and Burford would be encouraged to offer the book for retail. It is planned that the book should be available for sale in time for Christmas 2020.

#### **Success**

The project will be considered to have been a success when it achieves sales of more 200 copies of the book.

#### **Challenges**

The challenges for this project are:

The length of time to complete the necessary research to create the fullest picture of the origins and history of these communities.

Raising sufficient funding to cover the costs of the production and printing.

Inspiring enough interest in the completed book for numbers of people to buy it.

#### **Proposal**

Given that there is the potential for a shortfall in funding and that the cheapest printing and production cost is £2,950 it would be extremely helpful if the Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council would be able to provide some or all of this amount in the budget planning process for the financial year 2020 / 2021.

Trevor Jackson On behalf of Aston History Group