

Acton Parish Council

Email: clerk@actonparishcouncil.gov.uk Tel: 07931 381751

10 October 2024

Members of the parish council

You are summoned to the Meeting of Acton Parish Council which will take place on Wednesday 16 October 2024 at 7pm in Acton Village Hall for the purpose of transacting the business below.

F Mullins

Fiona Mullins, Clerk

Members of the public:

Members of the public and press are welcome to attend this public meeting and have a statutory right to attend meetings of the council as observers. Attendees are requested to notify the chairman of any intention to film, photograph or record during the meeting.

There is a public forum of up to 10 minutes within the meeting for members of the public and/or press to speak.

Members of the public may be excluded by a resolution of the meeting for specific items which need to be discussed in confidence.

Agenda

Apologies and co-option

- 1(i) To receive Cllr apologies and consider whether to approve reasons for absence.

Minutes

- 2(i) To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2024 to be signed by the chair.

Declaration of interest

- 3(i) Cllrs are reminded to declare any interest on any item on this agenda at this point or at any point during the meeting in accordance with Acton Parish Council's Code of Conduct.
- 3(ii) To consider any written requests for a dispensation received by the clerk prior to the commencement of the meeting

District, County and Community reports

- 4(i) To receive the County Councillor's report
- 4(ii) To receive the District Councillor's report

Acton Field Trust

- 5(i) To receive the Acton Field Trust committee's report.

Clerk's report

- 6(i) To receive the clerk's report on any significant matters or items of correspondence not on the agenda and not already drawn to councillors' attention (Appendix 1)

6(ii) To receive the clerk's report on decisions taken under delegated powers since the last meeting (Appendix 1)

7 Public Forum (up to 10 minutes)

If you wish to make statements or ask questions during this forum, please raise your hand and the chair will call you to speak. The council's standing orders limit each individual's contribution to 3 minutes. Issues should not be discussed immediately or responded to unless the chair authorises. Matters raised may be added to the agenda for a future meeting at the discretion of the council.

Planning

8(i) To consider planning applications and resolve to submit comments where appropriate. *There were no applications as at the date of this summons. Any applications received following the issue of this agenda will be considered at this meeting.*

8(ii) To note planning application validations, parish council recommendations and local planning authority decisions made since the last meeting (Appendix 2)

Environment

9(i) To consider approving a budget of up to £300 from Neighbourhood CIL to commission a local contractor to plant daffodil bulbs at the four village gateways (Task #6 Acton Action Plan).

9(ii) To consider any actions needed to cover the change of service level from Sudbury Town Council Wardens.

9(iii) To consider the Church request of a grant of £1,500 to cover part of the costs of urgent tree work on Church Drive (Appendix 3).

9(iv) To consider any environmental or rights of way issues and to consider approving any work arising.

Governance

10(i) To review the bank account signatories and authorise any changes (Appendix 4).

10(ii) To receive a report on the Village Hall and consider next steps including a possible budget.

10(iii) To review and approve the following council policies:

- a Planning delegated powers (see website: Council documents/Governance)
- b Grants policy (see website: Council documents/Policy)
- c Reserves (Appendix 5)

Finance

11(i) To review and approve payments made in September and payments to be made before the next meeting (agenda page 3) and authorise the chairman to sign the schedule of payments.

11(ii) To receive a budget report detailing the year-to-date accounts compared to budget (Appendix 6)

11(iii) To approve the bank reconciliation as at 30 September 2024 (Appendix 7) and authorise the chairman to sign it.

11(iv) To review and approve the council's reserves including the rationale for each reserve (Appendix 8).

Councillors' reports and items for future agendas

12 Councillors may use this opportunity to: report on meetings attended; agree attendance at forthcoming meetings; add future agenda items; and report matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda.

Next meeting: Wednesday 20 November 2024

Schedule of payments for approval

Payments made under delegated powers or Financial Regulation 4.1 since last meeting:

Printer toner £91.50, clerk admin budget

Payments authorised for settlement before the next meeting:

Direct debits, standing orders and other contractual payments approved by the Council

Salaries and HMRC payments

Payments arising from previous Council decisions

Payments authorised by clerk or clerk and chair under delegated powers or Financial Regulation 4.1)

Schedule of all income received and payments made in September 2024:

Date	Description	Supplier / customer	Net	VAT	Total
09/09/2024	September interest	Lloyds Bus Bank Savings	73.33	0.00	73.33
02/09/2024	September litter picking	Litter picker	-91.97	0.00	-91.97
04/09/2024	Sept streetlight maintenance	Pearce and Kemp	-18.75	-3.75	-22.50
03/09/2024	cableties for dog waste signs	Cableties.co.uk	-36.68	-7.33	-44.01
03/09/2024	Bolts for fixing dog waste signs	Danlett Limited Hudders	-16.95	-3.39	-20.34
10/09/2024	Lloyds share dividend	Lloyds shares	4.84	0.00	4.84
12/09/2024	Pension July and August	NEST	-141.26	0.00	-141.26
16/09/2024	Half of precept	Babergh District Council	28,000.00	0.00	28,000.00
18/09/2024	Locality grant for SID	Suffolk County Council	1,844.00	0.00	1,844.00
30/09/2024	September salary	Clerk	-968.44	0.00	-968.44
30/09/2024	External audit fee	PKF Littlejohn	-420.00	-84.00	-504.00
30/09/2024	Printer toner	Cartridge People	-91.50	-18.30	-109.80

These payments are to be authorised at the Parish Council Meeting dated 16 October 2024

Councillor Signature: _____

APPENDIX 1: Clerk's Report / Actions

Prepared 10 October and presented to the parish council meeting held on 16 October 2024

ID	Minute	Tasks in progress	Who
1	24/09 6(i)	Email to Philip F-M re 4 long standing SCC issues.	Clerk
2	23/01 9(i)e	Gym trail, one piece on Marsh Walk £4,400 budget.	Clerk
3	23/06/21 9(ii)	APC contribution of £2,000 (CIL funds) towards SCC resurfacing footpath15. Request £250 from Cllr FM.	Clerk
4	24/01 10(iii)	Raise issues with Acton Playing Fields and Village Hall management committee	GR
5	20/09 6(i)	New Road markings at Vicarage Lane/Sudbury Rd - Picture to P F-M.	Clerk/GR
ID	Minute	Tasks still to do	
6	23/06 8(vii)	Review internal control report on website	Clerk
7	24/06 12(iv)	Ask the school to maintain the hedge along the boundary, to include cutting back of tall branches blocking light from the streetlight	Clerk
8	24/09 6(i)	Go Start Community Transport newsletter liaise with the Link.	Clerk
9	24/09 10(vi)	Place order for two new streetlights on Sudbury Rd	Clerk/GR
10	23/01 9(v)a	Apply to SCC for Street Furniture Licence SCC for SID pole on Vicarage Lane	Clerk
ID	Minute	Tasks completed	
11	24/09 10(vi)	Contact with residents about the Sudbury Rd streetlights on	GR/Clerk
12	24/09 9(iii)	Publish newsletter website, Acton Massiv and key locations	Clerk
13	23/07 8(iii)	Pavements Access Improvements - 3 locations £8,500	GR
14	24/05 10(viii)	upgrade to Microsoft 365 Business Standard	Clerk
15	23/11/ 8(iii)c	Replace the "clean up after your dog" signs.	GR
16	24/09 11(iii)	Place order with SCC/PRoW contractor for 3rd cut end of Sept.	Clerk
17	ongoing	Letters re hedges	Clerk
18	annual	Allotment rent requests, 2 new tenants can now take on allotments	Clerk
19	24/09 10(vi)	Grants paid	Clerk

Significant matters not on agenda:

- Response to resident about the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 17 July 2024
- Volunteer work on the wildlife reserve to dismantle shed
- Acton Christmas Lights Switch On scheduled for Saturday 30 November at 4pm on Queensway Green. (Cllrs McSweeny and Clark)

Actions taken under delegated powers: admin purchase, printer toner

APPENDIX 2 Planning decisions

Prepared on 10 October and presented to the Parish Council on 16 October 2024

DC/24/04089	The Barn, Cuckoo Tye Detached double garage/storage building Parish Council recommendation Support with condition Planning Authority decision Awaiting decision
DC/24/03715	Cherry Trees Waldingfield Road Acton CO10 0AG Submission of Details, Reserved Matters Application for Outline Planning Permission DC/21/05159. Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale to be considered for the erection of 1no self-build single storey eco dwelling. Parish Council recommendation Object Planning Authority decision Awaiting decision
DC/24/03534	31 Queensway Acton Sudbury Suffolk CO10 0AW Erection of single storey rear extension (following demolition of conservatory) Parish Council recommendation Support Planning Authority decision Granted
DC/24/02452	Orchard End High Street Acton CO10 0AJ Severance of plot and erection of 1no one and a half storey dwelling. Parish Council recommendation Oppose Planning Authority decision Withdrawn
DC/22/05231	Chilton Woods Mixed Development To North Of Woodhall Business Park Sudbury Suffolk Application for approval of Reserved Matters (matters relating to appearance, scale, layout and landscaping) for Phase III Parish Council recommendation Support Planning Authority decision Awaiting decision
DC/23/04007	Tamage Road estate – gym trail Application under S73a for the Removal or Variation of a Condition following grant of DC/19/03126 dated 30.07.2020 and subsequent S73 DC/22/01674 - as per details and documents received. Parish Council recommendation Support Planning Authority decision Awaiting decision
DC/23/02730	Land East Of Appleshaw, Newmans Green Variation of Condition 2 (Approved Plans and Documents) following grant of Planning Permission DC/20/00060 dated 17.02.20 Parish Council recommendation No objection Planning Authority decision Awaiting decision

APPENDIX 3: Grant Request

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, ACTON, SUFFOLK

Contact details redacted

Dear Fiona

Further to your email informing me that the Parish Council would no longer be undertaking the Survey on the Lime Tree Avenue leading to the church, I have commissioned a survey which has been carried out by Haydens.

The report has noted that there are 2 trees which are suffering with disease and has said that these must be felled to the ground, I have received 2 quotations detailed below:-

Suffolk Tree Services £3150 plus vat inc TPO application

Urban Forestry (Bury St Edmunds) Ltd £4764 plus vat plus cost of TPO application

Both are for exactly the same work including the use of a cherry picker for the aerial work. It will entail the Drive being closed for 2-3 days. I attach copies of both these quotes.

I am writing to you as All Saints' Church, Acton does not have the funds to cover the total of this work. Our current reserves which are held to cover the maintenance of the Church are £11,682. Our requirements for the upkeep, insurance and heating etc for the remainder of this year are £7300 and we have to build up our reserves to cover the cost of having the church roof replaced within the next 5-10 years at a cost in the region of £175,000. We get no monies from Central Government.

I am therefore kindly requesting that the Parish Council make a grant towards the cost of this work of £1500. I am also applying to the Diocese for a grant of £500 as the drive is the access to the Vicarage which is currently let.

I have applied for a Faculty from the Diocese for this work to be carried out.

Yours sincerely

Chris Moss

Secretary and Churchwarden

Appendix 4: Acton Parish Council bank signatories

For review Oct 2024

Acton Parish Council's investment strategy is to invest only in deposit accounts with Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) guarantees and aim to keep the balances as close to the guaranteed amounts as possible. Two signatories are required for any transfers from Acton Parish Council bank accounts. The bank reconciliation that is reviewed regularly by full council shows the balances that are held in each account.

The current bank signatories are listed below:

Lloyds Treasurers (current account)

Cllr Nick Antill (registered for internet banking)
Cllr John Gibbens (registered for internet banking)
Cllr Christine Johnson (registered for internet banking)
Cllr Graham Round (registered for internet banking)
Cllr Katie McSweeney
Clerk Fiona Mullins – delegate access
Assistant clerk Sadie Clark – delegate access

Lloyds Bus Banking (savings account)

Cllr Nick Antill (registered for internet banking)
Cllr John Gibbens (registered for internet banking)
Cllr Christine Johnson (registered for internet banking)
Cllr Graham Round (registered for internet banking)
Cllr Margaret Maybury (no longer a parish cllr)
Cllr Katie McSweeney
Clerk Fiona Mullins – delegate access

Nationwide (savings)

Cllr Nick Antill
Cllr Christine Johnson
Cllr John Gibbens
Cllr Graham Round
Cllr Katie McSweeney
Clerk Fiona Mullins – contact address

Skipton (savings)

Cllr Nick Antill
Cllr Christine Johnson (primary account signatory)
Cllr Margaret Maybury (no longer a parish cllr)
Cllr Graham Round

APPENDIX 5 RESERVES POLICY

For review October 2024

Reviewed annually

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Acton Parish Council is required to maintain adequate financial reserves to meet the needs of the organisation. The purpose of this policy is to set out how the Council will determine and review the level of reserves.
- 1.2 Sections 32 and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 require local authorities to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement. However, there is no specified minimum level of reserves that an authority should hold and it is the responsibility of the Responsible Financial Officer to advise the Council about the level of reserves and to ensure that there are procedures for their establishment and use.
- 1.3 Reserves can be categorised as general, ringfenced or earmarked. Earmarked reserves can be held for several reasons:
 - Renewals – to enable services to plan and finance an effective programme of equipment and infrastructure replacement. These reserves are a mechanism to ensure smooth expenditure so that a sensible replacement programme can be achieved without the need to vary budgets.
 - Insurance reserve – to enable the Council to meet the excesses of claims not covered by insurance.
 - Other earmarked reserves may be set up from time to time to meet known or predicted liabilities.
- 1.5 Ringfenced reserves are money or grants allocated for a specific project only. These reserves can be used to carry forward an underspend – some services commit expenditure to projects but cannot spend the budget in year. Reserves are used as a mechanism to carry forward these resources.
- 1.6 General reserves are funds which do not have any restrictions as to their use. These reserves can be used to smooth the impact of uneven cash flows, offset the budget requirement if necessary or can be held in case of unexpected events or emergencies.

2. Earmarked and Ringfenced Reserves

- 2.1 Earmarked reserves will be established on a “needs” basis in line with anticipated requirements.
- 2.2 Any decision to set up a reserve must be made by the Council.
- 2.3 Expenditure from reserves can only be authorised by the Council.

- 2.4 Reserves will not be held to fund ongoing expenditure. This would be unsustainable as at some point the reserves would be exhausted. To the extent that reserves are used to meet short term funding gaps, they will be replenished in the following year. However, reserves used to meet a specific liability will not need to be replenished, having served the purpose for which they were originally established. All Earmarked and Ringfenced Reserves are recorded on a schedule held by the Responsible Financial Officer which lists the various reserves and the purpose for which they are held.
- 2.5 The Parish Council's Risk Management Scheme and planned and potential expenditure items inform the council's decisions on the appropriate level of reserves.

3. General Reserves

- 3.1 The level of General Reserves is a matter of judgement. The primary means of building general reserves will be through an allocation from the precept and other income during annual budget setting. This will be in addition to any amounts needed to replenish reserves that have been consumed in the previous year.
- 3.2 Setting the level of General Reserves is one of several related decisions in the formulation of the medium-term financial strategy. The Council must build and maintain sufficient working balances to cover the key risks that it faces as expressed in its Risk Management Scheme.
- 3.3 If, in extreme circumstances, the General Reserves become exhausted due to major unforeseen spending pressures, the Council will be able to draw down from its earmarked reserves to provide short-term resources. Even at times when extreme pressure is put on the Council's finances, the Council will keep a minimum balance in General Reserves at all times sufficient to pay one month of staff salaries.

4. Review of reserves

- 4.1 The level of financial reserves held by the council will be agreed by the Parish Council annually before or during the setting of the budget for the next financial year.
- 4.2 The level of General Reserves that should be held by the Council is between 45% and 65% of annual precept to cover 6 to 9 months of running costs.

APPENDIX 6 Budget Report

10/10/2024

Acton Parish Council

Budget report from 1-Apr-2024 to 30-Sep-2024 (figures exclude VAT)

Payments	Period		Variance
	Budget	Actual	
Administration			
Community events	600.00	0.00	600.00
Newsletter	600.00	0.00	600.00
Elections	100.00	0.00	100.00
Subscriptions	950.00	681.41	268.59
Training and Publications	2,000.00	60.00	1,940.00
Neighbourhood Plan	0.00	144.00	-144.00
Audit	850.00	815.00	35.00
Administration	3,500.00	1,305.52	2,194.48
Room hire	900.00	196.00	704.00
Insurance	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
Chairmans expenses	60.00	0.00	60.00
Bank charges	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Administration	10,560.00	3,201.93	
Staff costs			
Staff costs	25,000.00	8,270.09	16,729.91
Total Staff costs	25,000.00	8,270.09	
Environment			
Paths maintenance	600.00	120.00	480.00
Hedge and Tree maintenance	3,000.00	785.00	2,215.00
Community wardens	3,500.00	910.21	2,589.79
Other environmental costs	2,500.00	253.07	2,246.93
Play Area Maintenance	1,200.00	2,350.00	-1,150.00
Refuse collection	2,300.00	1,792.02	507.98
Health and Safety inspections	150.00	0.00	150.00
Wildlife Reserve	1,500.00	0.00	1,500.00
Total Environment	14,750.00	6,210.30	
Street lighting			
Street lighting - electricity	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00
Streetlight Maintenance	450.00	112.50	337.50
Total Street lighting	2,450.00	112.50	
Other			
Grants	600.00	350.00	250.00
Closed churchyard maintenance	1,100.00	0.00	1,100.00
Allotments	100.00	0.00	100.00
Donations	3,300.00	536.00	2,764.00
Fixed Assets	0.00	8,130.06	-8,130.06
CIL Expenditure	0.00	16,557.64	-16,557.64
VAT on payments	7,000.00	6,413.71	586.29
Acton Field Trust	0.00	3,629.45	-3,629.45
Total Other	12,100.00	35,616.86	
Total Payments	64,860.00	53,411.68	11,448.32

Receipts

	Budget	Period Actual	Variance
Other Receipts			
VAT Refund	7,000.00	13,966.66	-6,966.66
Community Infrastructure Levy	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other grants or donations	350.00	849.20	-499.20
Allotment rents	300.00	32.50	267.50
Bank interest	700.00	3,509.10	-2,809.10
Other income	20.00	13.25	6.75
Total Other Receipts	8,370.00	18,370.71	
Precept			
Precept	56,000.00	56,000.00	0.00
Total Precept	56,000.00	56,000.00	
Total Receipts	64,370.00	74,370.71	-10,000.71

APPENDIX 7 Bank Reconciliation

Acton Parish Council

Opening balance 1 April 2024 291,415.21

Movement in balances

Receipts 74,370.71

Payments 53,411.68

Excess of receipts over payments 20,959.03

Closing balance (30 September 2024) **312,374.24**

Bank accounts

Lloyds Treasurers 55,656.98

Lloyds savings (BusBankInstant) 86,411.13

Nationwide Building Society 85,000.00

Skipton Building Society 85,000.00

Wise prepaid card 306.13

TOTAL bank balances (30 September 2024) **312,374.24**

APPENDIX 8 RESERVES ANALYSIS

Reserves analysis	Opening 1 April 2024	Cash flow to 30/09/2024	Close as at 30/09/2024		
Cash	291,415.21	20,959.03	312,374.24		
Reserve Funds	01/04/2024	Net change	30/09/2024	Change	Rationale
General	24,727.38	20,959.03	54,434.13	Increased	Balance of funds currently held
Amenities and facilities (CIL)	126,275.32	0.00	126,275.32	No change	Ring-fenced, actual CIL funds held
Neighbourhood Plan	2,278.27	-2,278.27	0.00	Zero	NP now completed
Wildlife area	10,600.16	0.00	10,600.16	No change	Key community asset
Churchyard Maintenance	6,335.17	0.00	6,335.17	No change	Potential unforeseen requirements
Street Lights	18,882.50	0.00	18,882.50	No change	2 new streetlights to be commissioned
Play Equipment Maintenance	29,371.89	0.00	29,371.89	No change	Ageing play equipment
APF Village Hall	5,300.00	0.00	5,300.00	No change	Village Hall grant requests expected
Hedges and Trees	55,070.03	0.00	55,070.03	No change	Ageing trees
Footpaths Maintenance	5,105.04	0.00	5,105.04	No change	Volunteer work on footpaths expected
Energy (extraordinary)	5,300.00	-4,300.00	1,000.00	Reduced	Electricity costs no longer a high risk
Acton Field Trust	2,169.45	-2,169.45	0.00	Zero	Transferred to AFT May 2024
Total Reserve Funds	291,415.21		312,374.24		