

MILTON ABBOT GROUPED PARISH COUNCIL

(Parishes of Milton Abbot, Chillaton, Dunterton and Bradstone)

To all Members of the Council

You are hereby summoned to attend the Annual Meeting of the Milton Abbot Grouped Parish Council to be held at **7.15pm on Thursday 3rd May 2018 at Marystowe Church Hall** for the purpose of transacting the business set out below.

Members of the public are welcome to attend.

S Honey

Shane Honey, Clerk to the Council

Wednesday 25th April 2018

ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

A G E N D A

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Confirmation of the Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 18th May 2017 [previously circulated]**
- 3. Chairman's Report**
- 4. Election of Chair for 2018/19**

Invitation for nominations for the office of Chair.

- 5. Election of Vice Chair for 2018/9**

Invitation for nominations for office of Vice Chair.

- 6. Declarations of Interest and Annual Review of Register of Interests**

Councillors are requested to review their Register of Interests and advise the Clerk of any amendments.

- 7. Annual review of delegation arrangements**

In accordance with Standing Order 5j (v), the Council must review its delegation arrangements at its Annual Meeting together with the terms of reference of any Committees it has established. There does not appear to be any need for any additional delegation and **the Council is therefore requested** to confirm that no further delegations be made to committees or sub-committees, at the present time.

- 8. Representation on external bodies**

The Council is represented on these external bodies:

Southern Area Link meeting: Councillor Brewer and one Vacancy

MACKPlan Team: Councillor's Asbridge [Chair], Hough, Pahlsson

Other external bodies: The Clerk is not aware of any, but seeks the advice of the Council.

The Council is requested to determine which Councillors should represent it on external bodies in 2018/19.

9. The Annual Return – (Formerly Annual Governance Statement) and External Auditors Report

Exempt authorities and External Auditor

There are various changes to the legislation taking effect from 2017/18, most notably the potential for authorities where the higher of income or expenditure for the year was £25,000 or less, to declare themselves as 'exempt' from a limited assurance review by an external auditor if they meet certain qualifying criteria. As the Council receives an income below £25,000 it can dispose of the need for an external audit.

However, all authorities, even if they declare themselves 'exempt', will still need to fully complete and publish an annual return and must still have a named appointed auditor to deal with questions or objections from interested persons about the accounts. The Council's appointed external auditor for this purpose is PKF Littlejohn.

The Annual Return

The Annual Return will now be known as the "Annual Governance and Accountability Return" and will need to be completed in accordance with "proper practices" as set out in '*Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England, a Practitioners' Guide*', and then be published in accordance with the applicable Transparency Codes.

The new, Annual Governance and Accountability Return forms were sent by our appointed auditor electronically at the end of the financial year.

The Clerk seeks permission to compile the draft Annual Return and Exemption Form and liaise with the Internal Auditor to confirm the year end accounts (Appendix E) which, if approved, will be placed on the Council's website.

In accordance with Financial Regulation 1.5, before approving the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, the Council must review the effectiveness of its systems of internal financial control, which must be in accordance with proper practices.

The proper management and control of the Council's money relies on the effective scrutiny of its income and expenditure and on robust processes to avoid fraud or other irregularities when paying bills and receiving payments.

Management and control: Reviews of the Council's finances, including the reconciliation of its income and expenditure with its bank accounts, are provided by the Clerk at each ordinary meeting of the Council. Payments to the Council's creditors have to be authorised at a Council meeting, and may be paid by cheque or BACS, unless otherwise approved under the Council's urgency procedure, in which case such action is reported to the Council at its next meeting.

When cheques are signed the cheque stub is also initialled. In order to ensure proper management and control over all BACS payments, a Councillor initiates the payment, which is then authorised by a second Councillor.

In the case of the Clerk’s salary, for which payroll services are undertaken by a local Accountant, payment will be authorised as appropriate at the end of each month either by cheque or BACS by two authorised signatories. Such payments will be reported to the Council at its next meeting.

Financial Processes: All expenditure is authorised under the procedure referred to above. All payments are made by cheque or BACS. Cheques have to be signed by two authorised signatories, currently Councillor’s Brewer, Westcott, Pahlsson and Hough. In the case of on-line banking two of the authorised signatories, namely Councillor’s Westcott, Pahlsson and Hough will be required to log in and authorise the payment. The Clerk, who as Responsible Financial Officer [RFO] issues cheques and has ‘view only’ on-line access, has no authority to give instructions to the Council’s bankers on any matter. There is therefore no opportunity for any single councillor, or the RFO to incur expenditure on the Council’s behalf or otherwise divert the Council’s financial assets.

The Parish Council is requested to:

- i) consider whether the arrangements for management and control and the associated financial processes are effective
- ii) determine which councillors shall be authorised signatories for 2018/19 and signed up to on-line banking
- iii) authorise the Clerk to complete the Annual Governance and Accountability Return and Exemption Form for the Council’s approval, submission and for publication on-line.

10. Audit of 2017/18 Accounts – No External Audit required

Notice that the Council’s accounts for the year ended 31st March 2018 will be available for inspection by members of the public and advertised on the public notice boards in Chillaton and Milton Abbot. The inspection period begins on **Monday 2 July – Friday 13 July 2018**. The Clerk will report on any requests made to the Council in due course.

The accounts for the year ended 31st March are set out in Appendix **E** for the Council’s information. This is an update of the report made at the last meeting of the Council and awaits approval of the Council’s internal auditor.

The Clerk will report back with the Internal Auditors report at the June 2018 Parish Meeting.

11. Annual review of the Council’s asset inventory

Unless there are some historical assets that the Clerk is not aware of, the Council’s inventory is limited to:

Parcel of land adjoining the Church and Churchyard in Milton Abbot leased from Bedford Estate in 1963 for a term of 999 years subsequently sub-let to the Village Hall Management Committee and the Community for a play area	0
Noticeboard - Chillaton (purchased April 2017)	220.00
Noticeboard – Milton Abbot	0
Two vehicle activated signs in Chillaton	4820.00
One Samsung Galaxy Tablet	100.00

Two defibrillators	1458.33
TOTAL	£ 6598.33

These figures are net of VAT.

It is recommended that the annual asset inventory be noted.

12. Annual Review of the Council's Insurance Cover

The Clerk seeks permission to obtain a new set of quotes to include the two new defibrillators.

13. Annual report of internal auditor

The Council's internal auditor will report on the Council's financial management and control and the financial processes used on 2nd May. The Clerk will report back with the Internal Auditors report at the June 2018 Parish Meeting.

14. Appointment of Internal Auditor for 2018/19

Mr Rutherford will discuss his future as the Council's internal auditor on 2nd May with the Clerk who will report back to the Council.

15. Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

DALC have just issued new model standing orders. The Clerk will review the need for any changes to the Council's Standing Orders and report back.

In November 2014 it was agreed that the following be included in the Council's Standing orders:

At the beginning of each year, the Council may decide that executive powers be delegated to the Clerk of the Parish Council where urgent action is required between scheduled meetings, and where it is not possible or convenient to call a special or extraordinary meeting.

The Clerk may, following consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Parish Council deal with urgent business. Any action involving expenditure will not be in conflict with agreed Parish Council policy. All actions taken under executive powers must be reported to the next meeting of the Parish Council.

It is suggested that the Council adopts the current version of its Standing Orders and Financial Regulations for 2018/19 and confirms the delegation of executive powers for urgent action to the Clerk for a further year, as set out above.

16. Risk Assessment – Annual Review

To consider the report of the Clerk attached at Appendix D. The Council is required to carry out an annual review of the likelihood of harm, damage or loss occurring because of its activities.

17. Annual Parish Meetings

The Annual Parish meeting for Milton Abbot was held at 7pm on Wednesday 2nd May and, Chillaton; directly before the ordinary Parish Council meeting, on Thursday 3rd May. A report will be verbally provided by the Chairman.