

Information for the Parish Council Meeting on 30 March 2020

3 Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda - for information only)

3.1 Update on the flower verge pilot

It has been agreed with Amersham Town Council ("ATC") that two different seed mixes will be spread on the site together with yellow rattle seeds. The Clerk will therefore be asking if the Horticultural Society is still happy to purchase their choice being Pictorial Meadow, which will be sown with a mix sourced by ATC called Banquet. The Clerk is responsible for purchasing the yellow rattle seed. ATC have attended the site and sprayed off the area but the timing of further work is likely to be affected by the current situation.

3.2 Update from The Farnhams Support Group – Covid19

A verbal report will be provided during the meeting.

3.3 Update on Coronavirus Bill

Now known as the Coronavirus Act, having received royal assent on Wednesday 25 March 2020, this document contains provisions for local authority meetings to be held remotely but new regulations are needed to allow this to actually happen. The National Association of Local Councils is pressing on this as a matter of urgency. In the meantime, they advise that if local councils decide to not hold meetings and take decisions by email or other remote methods it is likely that afterwards if there were a challenge that the courts will accept that exceptional times called for exceptional measures. They suggest that in the absence of government guidance, taking decisions remotely should only be done for truly urgent issues. In this case, local councils should evidence their decision making as best they can, for example by asking councillors to confirm their votes by email to the clerk for the clerk to keep as a record of the decision.

4 Open Spaces:

4.1 To ratify decision to remove the roses from the flower beds at Kingsway Green and plant seasonal flowers for the Summer

It was recently agreed by email that Amersham Town Council should clear the flower beds on Kingsway Green (excluding the crocus bulbs planted by the Rotary Club) and top up the soil level to make them ready for planting. The only cost would be for the top soil and the Clerk is waiting for the quote which has been delayed due to the current situation. It was further agreed that the Parish Council would then ask the resident who previously offered to plant the beds to do this on the understanding that it was just for the summer season whilst a more permanent plan was developed. If the resident is unable to help ATC can plant them and they source their plants from Farnham Common Nurseries just like the resident. The Parish Council would need to meet the cost of the plants.

5 Finance:

5.1 To ratify payment of £125 to cover the printing costs of The Farnhams' Support Group – Covid19

It was recently agreed by email to settle the cost of printing leaflets for distribution to homes in Hedgerley, Farnham Common and Farnham Royal to advise residents of the support available to them. The amount agreed was £100 but more leaflets were produced and therefore the cost increased slightly.

- 5.2 To approve payments and note receipts, as per the cashbook
The cashbook has been reviewed and approved by the Chairman of the Finance Committee and will be forwarded to councillors separately.
- 5.3 To consider the quote received for preparing the 2019/20 annual accounts
The Parish Council usually instructs AGHS Accountants to prepare the annual accounts. The Clerk has approached this firm again and they have agreed to act this year and provided a fixed quote of £525 plus VAT. Any queries raised by internal or external auditors will be charged separately. In respect of queries raised on the 2018/19 accounts they would like to raise a bill for £80 plus VAT.
- 5.4 To consider the appointment of internal auditors and the quote received from them
Last year the Parish Council changed internal auditors to The Fish Partnership. The Clerk has approached this firm again (now called Wilkins Kennedy) and they have agreed to act this year and provided a quote for a capped fee of £1,125 plus VAT.
- 5.5 To consider the quote received for repairs to the Christmas lights
The Christmas light supplier has serviced the lights and sent through a schedule of repairs. The cost of these repairs is £1,487 plus VAT.

6 Planning:

- 6.1 To ratify comments submitted on recent applications
The schedule of comments submitted to the planning authority following recommendation by the Planning Working Group will be forwarded to councillors separately.
- 6.2 To note recent planning decisions
The schedule of planning authority decisions will be forwarded to councillors separately.