



Westmeston Parish Council

**COUNCILLORS ARE SUMMONED TO ATTEND A MEETING OF COUNCIL
TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY 16th MARCH 2021 AT 7.30pm VIA ZOOM**

A Beams

Andy Beams
Locum Clerk to the Council

10th March 2021

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89617036531>

Meeting ID: 896 1703 6531

Members of the public have a right and are welcome to attend.

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for absence:** To receive and accept any apologies for absence.
- 2. Declarations of interest:** To note any declarations of interest.
- 3. Public questions:** To receive questions from member of the public.
- 4. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 23rd February 2021:** To approve the minutes to be signed by the Chairman.
- 5. Financial matters:**
 - (a) To approve payment of invoices:**

Payee	Reason	Amount
Tessa Haughton	Defibrillator battery	£81.00
Andy Beams	Locum Clerk February 2021	£425.00

- 6. Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Subject Access Requests:** To consider responses from contractors regarding support arrangements – *Paper attached.*
- 7. Planning:**
 - (a) To agree a response to the following planning application**

Application LW/21/0151

Spring Farm, Hundred Acre Lane, Wivelsfield, BN6 8SH

Alterations as shown on the proposed plans and described briefly in the spec of works show the additional windows and doors.

Application SDNP/21/07771/HOUS

Haileywood Cottage, Streat Lane, Streat, BN6 8RU

Two storey rear/side extension.

(b) **Inter council steering group** – To formally appoint Cllr Tickner as the representative for Westmeston Parish Council and to receive any feedback from the first meeting held on 8th March 2021.

(c) **Eton College Site** – To discuss the proposals for the site and agree any actions.

(d) **Lewes District Council Local Plan** – To consider MP letter and LDC response and agree any actions.

(e) **South Downs National Park Authority Consultations** – To remind members of the two consultations in progress: **Camping and Glamping Technical Advice Note** and **Parking Supplementary Planning Document**

8. Councillor vacancy: To confirm council to fill vacancy via Co-Option and adopt the draft Co-Option Policy.

9. IT: To consider and agree requirements for IT and telephone equipment for Clerk – *paper attached*.

10. Payroll: To consider and agree proposal for establishing payroll - *paper attached*.

11. Verbal updates on items for information:

- Spatham Lane speed limit
- MP attendance at future meetings

12. Date of next meeting: To confirm the date of the Annual Meeting 11 May 2021 at 7.30pm.

Briefing Note – Contractor support

Background

Further to the decision at the last council meeting, I have sourced three contractors able to offer support to the council in dealing with an FOI/SAR. The contractors were sourced via an online search, with emphasis placed on those based locally. I have no previous experience of dealing with any of them.

Information requested

Each contractor was asked to confirm they could support the council, provide information on cost, a brief outline of how they would go about completing the task, and confirm that any information they access during the search would be treated in the utmost confidence.

The responses of each of the contractors are summarised below:

Weald IT - wealdcomputers.com

Confirmed they able to provide the support and could action the request within a few days. Hourly rate of £95, although discounts are available if a block of time is purchased in advance. Unable to confirm how long they thought the work would take. Could complete the task either on site (Covid restrictions allowing) or remotely. They have a confidentiality agreement that would be completed in advance of any work.

IT Outcomes - <http://www.itoutcomes.com>

Confirmed they able to provide the support and could action the request within a maximum of ten working days. Hourly rate of £62.50. Based on the description of the work, they estimate between 2 to 5 hours' time required, depending on the system they are accessing. Could complete the task either on site (Covid restrictions allowing) or remotely. They have a confidentiality agreement that would be completed in advance of any work.

K&L IT Services - <http://www.kandl-it.co.uk>

Confirmed they able to provide the support and could action the request within a few days. Hourly rate normally £65, but they do a lot of work for local authorities and would be prepared to charge a flat fee of £100 + VAT regardless of the time taken. Could complete the task either on site (Covid restrictions allowing) or remotely. They have a confidentiality agreement and NDA (non-disclosure agreement) that would be completed in advance of any work.

Recommendation

Based on the information provided, each contractor appears to approach the task in a similar way, and all have measures in place regarding confidentiality of information. Given the uncertainty of the amount of time the task might take, I would recommend the fixed fee option provided by K&L IT Services, as this provides a guaranteed cap on the cost for the council.

Briefing Note – IT and phone requirements for Clerk

Background

At the August 2020 meeting, the council agreed a budget of up to £1,200 to purchase the required IT equipment needed for the Clerk role. Due to a variety of circumstances, this matter was never progressed.

The Locum Clerk has used his own laptop, printer and mobile phone over the last six months, and council meetings have been held via the Locum Clerk's personal Zoom licence. With a new Clerk now in place, the council is encouraged to agree the requirements needed to fulfil the role.

Requirements

The Locum Clerk and new Clerk have discussed what is needed and have agreed on the following:

- Laptop and associated Office 365 licence, antivirus protection and cloud backup
- Printer and ink
- Zoom subscription (required while the council holds virtual meetings. May not be required in the long term, depending on government rules on remote/hybrid meetings)
- Mobile phone (pay as you go with top up purchased as needed)

These items will incur an initial purchase cost, and some will require annual renewal at a cost to be budgeted for in future.

Cost and payment options

A breakdown of suitable equipment is detailed below to provide an outline of likely cost.

	Initial cost	Annual ongoing cost
HP Laptop – RAM 8GB, storage 256GB, Windows 10, i3 processor, 14" HD screen	£529.00	Nil
McAfee Livesafe Premium + Antivirus software and Knowhow Cloud Back Up	£39.99 (discounted for first year with laptop purchase)	£80.00
Office 365 Business Standard Package	£124.99	£124.99
HP Office Jet Printer	£234.99	Nil
HP Ink	Free for 1 st year with printer	As required
Zoom Subscription (up to 100 people max)	£119.90	£119.90 if required
Mobile phone – Pay as you go	From £20 including initial top up	Top up as required

The laptop, printer and associated items can all be purchased through either a high street retailer or via Amazon. Zoom subscription can be purchased directly from the Zoom website. A mobile phone can be purchased from a variety of sources. Initial costs are likely to be around £1,065 - £1,100 with annual ongoing costs of £200 - £250 (excluding Zoom subscription).

Most items will need to be purchased using a credit card, and the Locum Clerk has indicated that he is willing to pay for the items using his personal credit card and then reclaim the amount (with appropriate receipts) via expenses through the council.

Decision required

Councillors are asked to agree the requirements and authorise the Locum Clerk to make the necessary arrangements.

Briefing Note – Payroll

Background

In May 2014, HMRC gave clear guidance as to the status of a Parish Clerk, confirming that they are employees of the council and cannot be self employed. As such, a payroll system and appropriate records must be kept and the council, as an employer, may be liable for PAYE and NI contributions. Detailed guidance, including updates to the advice is available via this link: <https://www.gov.uk/hmrc-Parish Clerk>

Existing arrangements

A Locum Clerk is not a direct employee of the council but operates as a contractor in the same way a grounds maintenance contractor would work, providing invoices for payment and being responsible for their own HMRC tax declarations.

While the salary is likely to be under any threshold triggering PAYE and/or NI contributions for the employer, there may be tax implications for the new Clerk depending on the receipt of any other regular income.

It is therefore important to establish a suitable payroll system.

Recommendation

As a small employer (under 10 staff) there are a range of free software tools available to the council to manage payroll. The HMRC Basic PAYE Tools is perhaps the easiest to use and receives regular updates to ensure it complies with any changes to HMRC rules.

This software can be downloaded free of charge and used to calculate an employer and/or employee deductions on a monthly basis, It will also keep appropriate records and can be used to generate P45's and P60's as required.