

HAUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

2 Ashmore Drive, Gnosall, Stafford, ST20 0RP Tel: 01785 824749

Clerk's Report – March 2016

Planning

Application 15/23374/REM – This application has been resubmitted and a new application is being sent for the Parish Council to consider. The position of the house on plot number 9 has been amended as the original plans showed the property too close to a tree with a Preservation Order.

No other planning applications have been received.

External Audit

Changes to External Audit arrangements have been reported in several SPCA bulletins sent this year. Councils have the choice to remain with the current arrangements or opt out and if a council chooses to opt out, it must be a council decision made by 31st March 2016.

If notification of a council's decision to opt out is not received by 31 March 2016, the Council will be regarded as opted-in for the five-year period beginning on 1 April 2017 and ending on 31 March 2022 and the council will not have another opportunity to opt out before the end of that period.

Opting out is a significant decision which requires careful consideration and it will have resourcing implications for authorities. Further guidance to clarify what opting out means in practice can be found at www.localaudits.co.uk

Key implications are:

- an opted-out authority regardless of size MUST appoint an appropriate external auditor by 31 December 2016
- auditors must be eligible to be appointed. As a minimum the authority's auditor must be a registered auditor as defined by the Companies Act. Advice from the SLCC conference I attended on 16th March was the auditor must be qualified to audit local authority accounts.
- to appoint an external auditor an opted-out authority must convene an appropriate independent auditor panel which meets the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. More detailed guidance on auditor panels is available in Schedule 4 of the Act and from CIPFA;

My recommendation is to remain with the current arrangements as opting out will create a significant amount of work (and maybe expense).

Website

Details of the new website have been sent to cllrs for them to view it and comment on. Subject to councillors being satisfied with the layout and content, the website is ready to be launched.

Correspondence

- Thank you letter from St Giles Church for the £500 donation and a request to the parish council for financial support in 2016.
- Dates of Civic Amenity Vehicle for 2016/17 – 4th June, 20th August and 14th January 2017
- Members Digest no. 218
- Thank you card from Mrs Guymer to Chairman for the donation
- SPCA letter with details of subscriptions for 2016/17
- Letter from Tower Mint with example of a commemorative coin for The Queen's 90th birthday
- Weekly SPCA bulletins – emailed on receipt to all cllrs
- Poster from SBC with details free dog chipping service
- Letter from GEM Conservation Ltd with quotation for war memorial cleaning and repairs
- External Audit form for year ending 31.3.16

Accounts for approval – March 2016

Paid To	Details	Amt	VAT	Total to pay
R Mathews	Salary	£49.61	£0	£49.61
J Cooper	Salary & expenses	£287.39	£0	£287.39
Haughton Village Hall	Hall Hire February 22nd	£23.00	£0	£23.00
HMRC	NI & PAYE	£302.40	£0	£302.40
Mr Furber	Mole Catcher	£130.00	£0	£130.00
SPCA	Cllr Training x 2	£35.00	£0	£35.00
SPCA	Good Cllrs Guide x 7	£17.50	£0	£17.50
			TOTAL	£844.90

Jayne Cooper

Clerk, Haughton Parish Council, 20th March 2016