



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, LU5 5EY

Town Mayor: **Councillor E Cooper**
Town Clerk: **Clare Evans**

Tel: 01582 708540
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11th June 2024

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

To: All Town Councillors

Notice of Meeting

You are hereby summoned to the Meeting of the Houghton Regis Town Council to be held at the Council Offices, Peel Street on Monday 17th June 2024 at 7pm.

Members of the public who wish to attend the meeting may do so in person or remotely through the meeting link below.

To attend remotely through Teams please follow this link: [MEETING LINK](#)

Clare Evans
Town Clerk

***THIS MEETING MAY BE
RECORDED¹***

AGENDA

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

In accordance with approved Standing Orders 1(e)-1(l) Members of the public may make representations, ask questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.

The total period of time designated for public participation at a meeting shall not exceed 15 minutes and an individual member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.

- 3. SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

¹ *Phones and other equipment may be used to film, audio record, tweet or blog from this meeting by an individual Council member or a member of the public. No part of the meeting room is exempt from public filming unless the meeting resolves to go into exempt session.*

The use of images or recordings arising from this is not under the Council's control.

Under the Localism Act 2011 (sections 26-37 and Schedule 4) and in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, Members are required to declare any interests which are not currently entered in the member's register of interests or if he/she has not notified the Monitoring Officer of any such interest.

Members are invited to submit any requests for Dispensations for consideration.

4. MINUTES

Pages 6 -17

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15th May 2024.

Recommendation: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th May 2024.

5. COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

Pages 18 - 60

To receive the minutes of the following committees and consider any recommendations contained therein

Corporate Services Committee	4 th March and 30 th April 2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Minute number 12736 Data Protection Policy and Data Retention PolicyMinute number 12737 References Policy
Community Services Committee	None to present
Environment & Leisure Committee	None to present
Planning Committee	22 nd April 2024.
Town Partnership Committee	None to present

To receive the minutes of the following sub-committees and consider any recommendations contained therein

New Cemetery Sub-Committee	None to present.
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Recommendation: To receive the Minutes detailed above and to approve the recommendations contained therein as follows:

- Minute number 12736 Data Protection Policy and Data Retention Policy
- Minute number 12737 References Policy

6. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A verbal report will be provided.

7. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS & ON TRAINING SESSIONS ATTENDED

Councillors are requested to provide verbal reports from meetings they have attended of outside organisations or from training courses they have attended on behalf of the Council.

8. WORKING GROUP MEMBERSHIP

Members are requested to nominate a further councillor to sit on the Pride of Houghton Awards Working Group as only 4 councillors were appointed at the Annual Meeting on 15th May 2024.

Current membership of this working group comprises:

Cllrs: D Jones, D Taylor, A Slough, M Herber

Recommendation: **To nominate a councillor to sit on the Pride of Houghton Awards Working Group.**

9. YEAR END ACCOUNTS

Pages 61 - 63

Members will find attached a report providing brief outline of the year end accounting process. Members are invited to raise any queries relating to the process.

This report is provided for information purposes.

10. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2023/2024 ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2023/2024

Pages 64 - 76

In accordance with Financial Regulation 2.3, Members are advised that the internal auditor completed an interim internal audit on 21st February 2023 and the year-end internal audit on 7th May 2024. Ahead of the meeting, a copy of the Annual Internal Audit Report and supporting paperwork as part of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return, for the year ended 31st March 2024 will be circulated.

Recommendation: **To receive the Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24 and to approve the actions detailed in the annotated Observations report as attached.**

11. DATES FOR THE EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS FOR 2023/2024

Page 77

Members are requested to approve the dates for the Exercise of Public Rights in relation to the Annual Governance & Accountability Return, for the year ended 31st March 2024.

Members are advised of the following

1. Date of announcement: 20th June 2024
2. Date of commencement: 21st June 2024
3. End date: 1st August 2024

Recommendation: **To approve the dates for the Exercise of Public Rights in relation to the Annual Governance & Accountability Return, for the year ended 31st March 2024 as follows:**

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1. **Date of announcement: 20th June 2024**
 2. **Date of commencement: 21st June 2024**
 3. **End date: 1st August 2024**

12. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2023/2024
SECTION 1 - ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Page 78

In accordance with Financial Regulation 2.3, a draft completed version of Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return, for the year ended 31st March 2024 is attached for consideration, approval and signature, Appendix A.

Recommendation: 1. **To approve and sign Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2024.**

13. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2023/2024
SECTION 2 – ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

Page 79 -95

In accordance with Financial Regulation 2.3, Section 2 – Accounting Statements of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return and the supporting Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024 is attached for consideration, approval and signature subject to external audit.

Recommendation: **To approve and sign Section 2 – Accounting Statements of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2024 subject to external audit.**

14. REVIEW OF EARMARKED RESERVE MOVEMENTS 2024/25

Page 96

Members will find attached a schedule of earmarked reserves for 2024/25 with predicted movements to and from reserves during the course of the financial year.

This report is provided for information only, ear marked reserve movements are confirmed at year end.

15. RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND SCHEDULE

Pages 97 - 133

In accordance with Financial Regulation 17.1, the council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Clerk shall prepare, for approval by the council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

A copy of the Risk Management Strategy and Schedule is attached.

This was last considered at the Town Council meeting in March 2024. Members were advised at this meeting that on the advice of the Internal Auditor the review timing of this policy would change to be considered at the June Town Council meeting.

Following on from feedback from the Corporate Peer Challenge process, it is highlighted to members that the risk schedule has been extended to include risks on:

- Tax base changes
- Acts of God

Recommendation: **To approve the HRTC Risk Management Strategy & Schedule.**

16. APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

At the Town Council meeting held on the 21st March 2022 (minute number 11984) members supported the recommendation from the Corporate Services meeting held on the 28th February 2022 that the Town Council appoint IAC Audit & Consultancy Ltd, for a period of 3 years, as the Town Council internal auditor provider. This appointment covered accounting years 21/22, 22/23 and 23/24.

Members are being requested to consider the appointment of the Internal Auditor for a period of 3 years (financial years 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/7). A report was presented to Corporate Services Committee on 10th June [Corporate Service Committee 10/06/2024 \(houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk\)](https://houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk/CorporateServiceCommittee/10/06/2024)

A verbal update will be provided at the meeting on the outcome of the deliberations of Corporate Services Committee. However the following recommendation was made to Corporate Services Committee:

To recommend to Town Council, at the meeting to be held on the 17th June 2024, that IAC Audit & Consultancy Ltd be appointed as the Town Councils internal audit provider, for a period of 3 years (financial years 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/7), at a cost of £800 plus VAT per annum.

Recommendation: **To appoint IAC Audit & Consultancy Ltd as the Town Councils internal audit provider, for a period of 3 years (financial years 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/7), at a cost of £800 plus VAT per annum.**

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HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 15th May 2024 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: P Burgess
J Carroll
E Cooper Chair
E Costello
Y Farrell
W Henderson
D Jones
T McMahon
C Rollins
A Slough
C Slough
D Taylor

Officers: Clare Evans Town Clerk
Ian Haynes Head of Environmental &
Amanda Samuels Administration Services Officer

Public: 4

Apologies: Councillors: E Billington
M Herber

12823 ELECTION OF THE TOWN MAYOR

The retiring Town Mayor, Cllr Carroll, invited nominations for the position of Town Mayor for the period May 2024 to May 2025.

Nominee: E Cooper Nominated by: D Jones
Seconded by: C Slough

There were no other nominations.

Those in Favour of electing Cllr Cooper as Town Mayor: 11.

On being put to the vote Cllr Cooper was duly elected as Town Mayor for the municipal year 2024 – 2025.

The new Town Mayor retired to receive the mayoral robes and the Chain of Office from the retiring Town Mayor. The new Town Mayor read and signed the 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office'.

The new Mayor adopted the role of Chairman and gave an acceptance speech.

The Mayor expressed her thanks for being given this opportunity. Thanks were made to the outgoing Mayor, Cllr Carroll, for all his help, hard work, generosity and kindness.

Having moved to Houghton Regis over twenty years ago, the Mayor felt that it was a great place to live and chose as her theme for the coming year 'Our Town'. Reference was made to recent and upcoming events, including the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan, Houghton in Bloom and the new football pitches at Tithe Farm. There was much to be proud of.

A recorded vote of thanks from Cllr Herber was played to the retiring Mayor, Cllr Carroll. In her vote of thanks, Cllr Herber highlighted the record number of events attended by Cllr Carroll during his mayoral year and monies raised for his charitable causes. Thanks were also given to Cllr Carroll for his promotion of the town's history and for his hard work and dedication.

Cllr Carroll was presented with the Past Mayor's Badge and a mayoral yearbook.

Cllr Carroll thanked everyone for an incredible year that had seen fourteen organisations and eight schools benefit from monies raised. It had been a privilege to serve as mayor and notable highlights had been meeting with the community, the Neighbourhood Plan and the visit to Chiltern School.

The Town Mayor, Cllr Cooper announced that her charities for the year would be The Down's Syndrome Association and The Keech Hospice.

12824 ELECTION OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR

The Town Mayor invited nominations for the position of Deputy Mayor for the period May 2024 to May 2025.

Nominee:	M Herber	Nominated by:	J Carroll
		Seconded by:	D Jones

Those in favour of electing Cllr Herber as Deputy Town Mayor: 12

On being put to the vote Cllr Herber was duly elected as the new Deputy Town Mayor.

Cllr Herber was not in attendance but would sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office on her return.

12825 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Billington and Cllr Herber.

12825.1 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

The Friends of Windsor Drive took the opportunity to thank the outgoing Mayor for his help and support to clubs and organisations across Houghton Regis over the last 12 months. Cllr Carroll had made a difference in his mayoral year.

12826 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

12827 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 24th April 2024.

Amendments were requested to the minutes to include Cllrs Henderson and Taylor and for these councillors to be included in the recorded votes.

Members were happy to accept the minutes with these amendments.

Resolved: To approve the amended minutes of the meeting held on 24th April 2024 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

12828 COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUP MINUTES

To receive the minutes of the following committees and consider any recommendations contained therein

Corporate Services Committee
Community Services Committee
Environment & Leisure Committee

None to present
26th February 2024
5th February 2024

- Minute numbers 12690 Pleasure Grounds, Public Walks and Open Spaces: Byelaws
- Minute number 12692 Complying with Biodiversity
- Minute number 12695 Purchase of Land off Cemetery Road – Members were reminded that this was considered and agreed by Town Council on 18th March

Planning Committee
Town Partnership Committee

19th February, 11th March and 2nd April 2024
23rd January 2024

To receive the minutes of the following sub-committees and consider any recommendations contained therein

New Cemetery Sub-Committee

None to present

Resolved: To receive the Minutes detailed above and to approve the recommendations contained therein as follows:

- Minute number 12690 Pleasure Grounds, Public Walks and Open Spaces: Byelaws
- Minute number 12692 Complying with Biodiversity

12829 COUNCIL CALENDAR FOR 2024-25

The draft Council Calendar, including meeting dates, member briefing dates, and council and civic event dates, for 2024/25 had been presented at the Town Council meeting held on the 18th March 2024. At this meeting Members noted the draft Council Calendar, made some suggested alterations and recommended its approval at the Annual Meeting of Town Council.

The approval of the calendar of council meetings including the time and place of ordinary meetings of the council up to and including the next annual meeting of the council was in accordance with Standing Order 4.j.ix.

Resolved: To approve the Council Calendar for 2024/25.

12830 COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS & TERMS OF REFERENCE

In accordance with Standing Order 4.j.v. Council was required to review its delegation arrangements to committees and sub-committees.

These arrangements were set out in the Committee Functions & Terms of Reference. This document set out the system of delegation to the Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Groups of the Council.

The approved Committee Functions & Terms of Reference were reviewed at the Town Council meeting held on the 18th March 2024. As detailed under Minute 12756, Strategic Policies 2024/25.

One amendment was requested in regard of a typographical error.

Resolved: To approve the Committee Functions & Terms of Reference as presented for 2024/25.

12831 COMMITTEE, SUB-COMMITTEE & WORKING GROUP MEMBERSHIP

Members were requested to:

1. Nominate and approve membership on the Town Council's Committees, Sub-Committees, Working and other Groups (Standing Order 6d);
2. To appoint Chairs of Standing Committees accordingly Groups (Standing Order 6dv).

The following summarised the committee structure and associated membership:

Standing Committees

Corporate Services Committee	7 members
Environment & Leisure Committee	7 members
Community Services Committee	7 members
Planning Committee	7 members

Joint Committees

Partnership Committee 8 members (4 Town Cllrs & 4 CBC Cllrs)

Sub-Committees

To be appointed as and when required

Complaints Sub-Committee 3 members

Complaints Appeal Sub-Committee 3 members

Disciplinary, Grievance & Appeals Sub-Committee 3 members

Personnel Sub-Committee 5 members

Community Engagement Sub-Committee 5 members

Working Groups

Pride of Houghton Awards Working Group 5 members

Combating Crime Working Group 5 members

It was highlighted that there remained a vacancy on the Pride of Houghton Working Group.

Members appointed chairs of Standing Committees:

Chair of Corporate Services Committee

Nominees:	Cllr Jones	Nominated by:	Cllr C Slough
		Seconded by:	Cllr Carroll

There were no other nominations.

On being put to the vote, Cllr Jones was elected as Chair of Corporate Services Committee.

Chair of Environment & Leisure Committee

Nominees:	Cllr A Slough	Nominated by:	Cllr C Slough
		Seconded by:	Cllr D Jones

There were no other nominations.

On being put to the vote, Cllr A Slough was elected as Chair of Environment & Leisure Committee.

Chair of Community Services Committee

Nominees:	Cllr Costello	Nominated by:	Cllr Jones
		Seconded by:	Cllr C Slough

Nominees:	Cllr McMahon	Nominated by:	Cllr Carroll
		Seconded by:	Cllr Rollins

Those in favour of electing Cllr Costello:

Cllrs E Cooper, Y Farrell, W Henderson, D Jones, A Slough, C Slough and D Taylor

Those in favour of electing Cllr McMahon:

Cllrs P Burgess, J Carroll, T McMahon and C Rollins

On being put to the vote, Cllr Costello was elected as Chair of Environment & Leisure Committee.

Chair of Planning Committee

Nominees: Cllr Herber

Nominated by:

Cllr C Slough

Seconded by:

Cllr Henderson

Nominees: Cllr Carroll

Nominated by:

Cllr Burgess

Seconded by:

Cllr McMahon

There were no other nominations.

Those in favour of electing Cllr Herber:

Cllrs E Cooper, Y Farrell, W Henderson, D Jones, A Slough, C Slough and D Taylor

Those in favour of electing Cllr Carroll:

Cllrs P Burgess, J Carroll, T McMahon and C Rollins

On being put to the vote, Cllr Herber was elected as Chair of Planning Committee.

- Resolved:**
- 1. To nominate and approve membership on the Town Council's Committees, Sub Committees, Working and other Groups;**
 - 2. To appoint Chairs of Standing Committees accordingly.**

12832 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

The Town Council was invited to appoint representatives to outside organisations to act as a link between the Town Council and the organisation.

Members were provided with a list of outside organisations to which the Council was invited to appoint representatives for 2024/25 along with Cllrs who have expressed an interest in being appointed as the Council representative.

Reporting Mechanisms

Members who were appointed as representatives were requested to attend meetings of the organisations and to report to them items / issues of relevance from Houghton Regis Town Council and in turn to report back to the Town Council or the specified committee on the activities of the organisation. There was a standing item on Town Council agendas to facilitate this.

Members were advised that there was an amendment to the agenda and Cllr Farrell was nominated as representative on the Memorial Hall Committee in place of Cllr Costello.

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- Resolved:** 1. To appoint the councillor representatives for the listed outside organisations for 2024/25 as attached;
2. To note the reporting back mechanism as set out.

12833 STANDING ORDERS

In accordance with Standing Order 4.j.vii. Council is required to review its Standing Orders.

Standing Orders are ‘the written rules of a local council. they are used to confirm a council’s internal organisational and administrative procedures, procurement and procedural matters for meetings’.

Resolved: To approve Standing Orders as presented.

12834 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

In accordance with Standing Order 4.j.vii. Council was required to review its Financial Regulations.

Financial Regulations were ‘the “standing orders” of a local council that regulated and controlled its financial affairs and accounting procedures’.

The approved Financial Regulations were reviewed at the Town Council meeting held on the 18th March 2024.

Members had previously been advised that NALC intended to release amended model Financial Regulations. These were received on 7th May 2024. Officer consideration would be given to the revised model Regulations and a report would be presented in due course.

Resolved: To approve Financial Regulations as presented.

12835 SCHEME OF DELEGATION

In accordance with Standing Order 4.j.v. Council was required to review its Scheme of Delegation.

The Scheme of Delegation authorised the Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer, Heads of Services, Council and Standing Committees of the Council to act with delegated authority in the specific circumstances detailed.

A revised and more detailed Scheme of Delegation was reviewed at the Town Council meeting held on 18th March 2024 and was recommended for approval subject to amendments.

Resolved: To approve the Scheme of Delegation as presented.

12836 GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

In order for the Town Council to continue to use the General Power of Competence it needed to resolve that it met the eligibility criteria (specified below) as contained in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011:

- At least 2/3 of Members were elected at ordinary elections or at a by-election
- The clerk held the following recognised qualifications
 - (i) The Certificate of Higher Education in Local Policy;
 - (ii) The CiLCA module on the General Power of Competence

Resolved: To confirm that Houghton Regis Town Council meets the eligibility criteria for the General Power of Competence as contained in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.

12837 BANKING & SIGNING ARRANGEMENTS

At the Town Council meeting held on the 17th May 2023 the banking arrangements for the council's bank accounts were approved as follows (minute number 12437).

Banking Arrangements

To approve the bank mandate be set up as follows:

- 2 signatories from Group A (councillors) and 1 signatory from Group B (officers);
- Group A to comprise current serving councillors
- Group B to comprise Clerk & RFO and Head of Service

To remove all other signatories.

To accord with banking requirements the following resolution was also passed:

- if we add or remove Authorised Signatories in the "Add or Remove Authorised Signatories" section on the "About your request" page of this form, the Bank will update our mandate accordingly for the accounts we specify in this form's "About your business" section
- if we change the Signing Rules in the "Change the Signing Rules on the Mandate" section on the "About your request" page of this form, the Bank will update our mandate accordingly for the accounts we specify in this form's "About your business" section
- and the current mandate will continue as amended.

Signing Arrangements

Councillor Jones and Councillor Herber were nominated as the 2 members to receive, check and authorise the payment of invoices.

Members are advised that the following signatories are now authorised on the banks mandate:

Group A (councillors)

J Carroll
E Cooper
E Costello
Y Farrell
W Henderson
M Herber
D Jones
T McMahon
A Slough
C Slough

Group B (officers)
Town Clerk
Head of Corporate Services
Head of Environmental & Community Services
Head of Democratic Services

Financial Regulation 5.1 states:

The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency.

Resolved: Bank Mandate

To approve the bank mandate be set up as follows:

- **2 signatories from Group A (councillors) and 1 signatory from Group B (officers);**
- **Group A to comprise current serving councillors**
- **Group B to comprise Clerk & RFO and Heads of Service**

To accord with banking requirements the following resolution is also passed:

if we add or remove Authorised Signatories in the “Add or Remove Authorised Signatories” section on the “About your request” page of this form, the Bank will update our mandate

accordingly for the accounts we specify in this form's “About your business” section

- **if we change the Signing Rules in the “Change the Signing Rules on the Mandate” section on the “About your request” page of this form, the Bank will update our mandate accordingly for the accounts we specify in this form's “About your business” section**
- **and the current mandate will continue as amended.**

Signing Arrangements

For Councillor Jones and Councillor Herber as the 2 members to receive, check and authorise the payment of invoices.

12838 RESOLUTION FROM ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE ON 29TH APRIL 2024 RE GROUNDS MACHINERY RENEWAL

Members were provided with the report with supporting papers and draft Minutes from the Environment & Leisure Committee meeting held on 29th April 2024.

The resolution from the Committee reads (Minute 12798):

To support the Machinery Renewals Programme for 2024/25 and recommend to Council on the 15th May '24 the planned renewal/replacement funding through a hire purchase scheme. Additional funding is being sought to support additional machinery to enable the grounds team to expand their services into the growth area.

Hire purchase agreement/loan supported by Internal Auditor.

Resolved: **1. To approve the Resolution from Environment & Leisure Committee (Minute 12798), as follows:**

To support the Machinery Renewals Programme for 2024/25 and recommend to Council on the 15th May '24 the planned renewal/replacement funding through a hire purchase scheme. Additional funding is being sought to support additional machinery to enable the grounds team to expand their services into the growth area.

Hire purchase agreement/loan supported by Internal Auditor.

**2. To delegate authority to the Head of Environmental & Community Services to finalise the details of the equipment
To delegate authority to the Mayor to sign the finalised Hire Purchase in due course.**

12839 TOWN BRANDING SCHEME UPDATE

Following feedback from Members on the development of a town branding scheme at the Town Council meeting held on 22nd January 2023 (Minute 12677), further work had been undertaken. Members were invited to consider the revised branding mock up.

Resolved: **To agree on the final branding mock-up, which encourages a sense of place and community.**

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.53pm

Dated this 17th day of June 2024

Chairman

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP 2024 / 2025**STANDING COMMITTEES – 2024 / 2025****Corporate Services**

Cllrs: D Jones (Chair), E Billington, J Carroll, E Costello, M Herber, C Rollins, W Henderson

Environment & Leisure

Cllrs: A Slough (Chair), P Burgess, Y Farrell, W Henderson, T McMahon, C Rollins, D Taylor

Planning

Cllrs: M Herber (Chair), E Billington, J Carroll, E Cooper, D Jones, C Slough, D Taylor

Community Services

Cllrs: E Costello (Chair), P Burgess, E Cooper, Y Farrell, A Slough C Slough, T McMahon

OTHER COMMITTEES – 2024 / 2025**Town Partnership**

Cllrs: J Carroll, D Jones, Y Farrell, C Slough

SUB-COMMITTEES – 2024 / 2025**Complaints Sub-Committee (Reporting to Town Council)**

Cllrs: To be appointed as required.

Complaints Appeal Sub-Committee (Reporting to Town Council)

Cllrs: To be appointed as required.

Disciplinary, Grievance & Appeals Sub-Committee (Reporting to Corporate Services)

Cllrs: To be appointed as required.

Personnel Sub Committee (Reporting to Corporate Services)

Cllrs: D Jones, E Costello, W Henderson, M Herber, T McMahon

New Cemetery Sub Committee (Reporting to Town Council)

Cllrs: A Slough, J Carroll, D Jones, T McMahon, D Taylor

Community Engagement Sub Committee (Reporting to Community Services)

Cllrs: E Cooper, Y Farrell, T McMahon, C Rollins, A Slough

WORKING GROUPS – 2024 / 2025**Pride of Houghton Awards Working Group (Reporting to Community Services)**

Cllrs: D Jones, D Taylor, A Slough, M Herber

Combating Crime Working Group (Reporting to Community Services)

Cllrs: Y Farrell, C Slough, E Cooper, M Herber, T McMahon



OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS – 2024 / 2025

Bedfordshire Association of Town & Parish Councils	Cllrs: M Herber, Cllr Jones, Cllr C Slough
Bedfordshire Bus Users	Cllr McMahon
Chews Foundation	Cllr Carroll
Citizens Advice	Cllr Cooper
Hospice at Home Volunteers	Cllr Jones
Houghton Hall Park Project Board	Cllrs: D Jones, D Taylor
Houghton Hall Park MAG	Cllr Carroll
Houghton Regis North Stakeholder Group	Cllr Jones
Memorial Hall Committee	Cllrs: Carroll, Farrell
South Beds Dial-a-Ride	Cllr Herber
Friends of Windsor Drive Community Open Space	Cllr A Slough

DRY

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
Corporate Services Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
4th March 2024 at 7.00pm.

Present:	Councillors:	C Slough J Carroll E Cooper Y Farrell W Henderson M Herber C Rollins	Chairman (Sub) (Sub)
	Officers:	Clare Evans Amanda Samuels	Town Clerk Administration Officer
	Public:	0	
Apologies:	Councillors:	E Costello D Jones	

12722 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Costello (Cllr Cooper substituted) and Cllr Jones (Cllr Farrell substituted).

12723 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12724 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

12725 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 4th December 2023.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 4th December 2023 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

12726 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN

Personnel Sub-Committee: 9th October 2023

Resolved: To receive the Minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting of the 9th October 2023.

12727 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Members were provided with a copy of the Income and Expenditure Report, highlighting significant variances, for Corporate Services Committee to date.

12728 BANK AND CASH RECONCILIATION STATEMENTS

Members were requested to receive the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements for November and December 2023 and January 2024.

- Resolved:**
- 1. To approve the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements for November and December 2023 and January 2024;**
 - 2. For these along with the original bank statements to be signed by the Chair of Corporate Services Committee and the Council's RFO.**

12729 LIST OF CHEQUE PAYMENTS

Members were provided with a list of payments for the period November 2023 to January 2024 (inclusive).

This report was provided for information.

12730 INVESTMENT REPORT

The Corporate Services Committee received the quarterly report on investments containing a forecast of capital expenditure, investment opportunities and a recommendation for further investment including: where, length and amount.

It was highlighted that the gross dividend yield from the property fund was 4.94% while the yield rate on the deposit account was 5.3%. This was something that Members might want to take into consideration when discussing the investment review report.

12731 INVESTMENT REVIEW REPORT

At the Corporate Services meeting held on the 4th December 2023 Members were advised that a report on the review of the Town Councils investments would be presented at this meeting.

It was highlighted that the initial investment of £600,000 in the Property Fund in 2014 was currently valued at £595,000. While the capital value had, historically, been higher than this, it was worth noting that annual interest continued to be received on this investment in the region of £30,000-40,000. Houghton Regis Town Council had been asked to assess its appetite for risk and to consider whether more secure investments would be advisable. A review had been carried out and it was felt that funds from the property fund should be withdrawn and consideration given to options with a more secure rating. Members voted for the recommendations as follows:

DJT.

Proposed by Cllr Herber
Seconded by Cllr Farrell
Members voted unanimously to accept all recommendations

- Resolved:**
- 1. To give notice to the CCLA Property Fund that the council wants to withdraw its funds.**
 - 2. To subsequently invest these funds in the CCLA Deposit account as it is a AAA rated investment.**
 - 3. To confirm that the Council has an investment risk appetite comparable to at least a AA-rating or higher.**
 - 4. To use the Property fund 6-month notice period to investigate government gilts and investment opportunities at local banks and building societies further and report back to Corporate Services in due course.**

12732 INSURANCE CLAIMS

Members were advised that there had been no insurance claims since the last meeting.

12733 REVIEW OF CHARGES 2024/2025

In accordance with Financial Regulation 9.3 Members were provided with a list of charges for 2023/24 which were under the control of the Committee. In order to support users of these facilities, it was suggested that Members consider applying the same charges for 2024/25.

Members were reminded, the information in regard to the hire of the small meeting room had been removed as this room was now occupied by office staff.

Resolved: To approve the charges for 2024/25 as attached.

12734 VAT RETURN & VAT ON SPORTING FEES - UPDATE

Members were provided with a copy of the VAT Return for quarters 1, 2 and 3 for financial year 2023/2024.

Members were advised that following this committee's decision to submit a reclaim of VAT for the period October 2019 to the end on the financial year 2023, a full refund had been received and had been distributed to those clubs who had paid VAT during this period.

12735 PHOTOCOPIER LEASE RENEWAL

The council's current photocopier lease was due to expire on the 30th June 2024. This lease agreement was for a period of 5 years.

Members were requested to agree to enter into a new lease agreement for a replacement copier.

Members were provided with a report with details of comparable quotes. The recommendation was to approve Company A to supply a quarterly lease at an amended figure of £127.80.

Cllr Henderson proposed an amendment to the recommendation to reflect the revised charge.

Seconded by Cllr Herber

Members agreed unanimously to the amendment

Cllr Henderson proposed the amended recommendation

Seconded by Cllr Herber

Members agreed unanimously to the amended recommendation

Resolved: To enter into a contract with Latent Digital Solutions for the supply, installation and maintenance of a Ricoh copier at a quarterly lease of £127.80 with copying charges of mono copies at £0.003 per copy and colour copies at £0.03 per copy, for a period of 5 years.

12736 DATA PROTECTION POLICY & DATE RETENTION POLICY

Members were provided with a report and advised that the Town Council's Data Protection Policy was last reviewed on the 25th November 2019. Since there had been no changes to Data Protection legislation the Data Protection Policy remained fit for purpose.

Houghton Regis Town Council was obliged to retain documentation for a number of purposes, in relation to data, and in order for the Town Council to comply with these obligations a Data Retention Policy had been produced.

It was confirmed that the retention period for data was six years, after which the information needed to be deleted. This was in line with NALC and SLCC best practice guidelines.

Resolved:

- 1) To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Town Councils Data Protection Policy**
- 2) To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Town Councils Data Retention Policy**

QJJ

12737 REFERENCES POLICY

Members were reminded that at the last meeting of Corporate Services meeting held on the 4th December 2023 Members deferred the adoption of the draft Town Council Reference Policy until further advice had been sought, in regard to whether a reference could be provided indefinitely. The adoption of the Town Council Safer Recruitment & Selection Policy, which would automatically guarantee an interview to a candidate with a disability who met the essential criteria of the post, had also been deferred while advice was sought.

Members were informed that the References Policy was a new policy, however, the Safer Recruitment & Selection Policy and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy were updated documents.

Members had been in favour of Houghton Regis Town Council providing references indefinitely; however, based on HR advice and Data Protection and Retention timelines, references should only be provided for 6 years. It was suggested that an open reference could be offered to employees as part of the exit process, which would confirm their term of employment with the Council.

The Safer Recruitment Policy and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy would enable Houghton Regis Town Council to guarantee an interview to disabled applicants who met the essential criteria for the role. It was felt that it would be a positive move if a logo to reflect this could be included on the application form.

Resolved:

- 1) To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Town Council's References Policy.**
- 2) To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the revised Town Council's Safer Recruitment & Selection Policy.**
- 3) To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the revised Town Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

12738 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

- **Staff Salaries**
- **Staff appraisal outcomes**

Resolved: In accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the item set out below on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the general interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

12739 PAY SCALES 2024/25

At the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on the 15th January 2024, members received a list of the Salary Point number for all staff along with overtime rates, additional payments, mileage rates and employer and employee pension contribution rates and to resolve (minute number PE305) to recommend to Corporate Services that these be noted and signed by the Chair Corporate Services at its meeting on 4th March 2024.

Resolved: To note the list of the Salary Point number for all staff along with overtime rates, additional payments, mileage rates and employer and employee contributions rates and for this list to be signed by the Chair of Corporate Services.

12740 STAFF APPRAISALS

Members were provided with a report on the outcomes of the autumn staff appraisal process.

Resolved: 1. To note the update on the Autumn staff appraisals;
2. To receive and approve the summary of the Clerk's appraisal completed on 13th December 2023.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.25pm
Dated this 10th day of June 2024

Chairman

Q.J. Jones.

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
Corporate Services Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
30th April 2024 at 7.00pm.

Present:	Councillors:	C Slough J Carroll E Costello Y Farrell W Henderson M Herber C Rollins	Chairman (Sub)
	Officers:	Clare Evans	Town Clerk
	Public:	0	
Apologies:	Councillors:	D Jones	

12810 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Jones (Cllr Farrell substituted).

12811 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12812 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

12813 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Ongoing Staffing Matter

Resolved: In accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the item set out below on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the general interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

12814 ONGOING STAFFING MATTER

Members received a report in regard to an ongoing staffing matter.

Resolved: To agree the suggestion put forward.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.30pm
Dated this 10th day of June 2024

Chairman

D. J. Jones.

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Planning Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

22nd April 2024 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: C Slough Chairman
J Carroll
E Cooper
M Herber
D Jones
D Taylor

Officers: Debbie Marsh Head of Corporate Services
Amanda Samuels Administration Officer

Apologies: Councillors: 0 Emma Billington

12781 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Councillor Billington. Members noted the vacancy on this committee had now been filled by newly elected Councillor Debbie Taylor.

12782 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12783 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

12784 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd April 2024.

Resolved To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd April 2024 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

12785 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

CB/24/00776/FULL Single storey rear and side extension. Rear fence relocation.
(click for more details) 39 Farriers Way, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5FF Mrs Madalina Prisecaru

CRS

Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council raised no object to the proposed single storey rear and side extension but made the following comments in regard to the proposed rear fence relocation.

Houghton Regis Town Council raised objections to the fence relocation on the grounds that rear fence relocation would:

- Have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the area.
- Have a detrimental impact on the highway visibility for pedestrians and vehicular users.
- Be likely to set a precedent that would have a detrimental impact on the original design aspirations.

Houghton Regis Town Council endorsed the observations made by the Tree & Landscape Officer, in their report, which opposed the enclosure of amenity land.

In addition to this Houghton Regis Town Council noted their concern that the proposed development would abut the neighbouring properties garage and would leave the neighbouring property owner minimal space for carrying out any future repairs.

Noted:

[CB/24/00910/NMA](#)
(click for more
details)

Non-material amendment to planning permission
CB/18/04471/FULL (48 new residential units) Amendment
to the wording of Condition 10 (Archaeology) Oakwell Park,
Thorn Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6JH

CRLS

[CB/24/01030/DOC](#)
(click for more details)

Discharge of Condition 9 against planning permission ref. CB/12/03613/OUT (Outline planning permission with the details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for later determination. Development to comprise: up to 5,150 dwellings (Use Class C3); up to 202,500 sqm gross of additional development in Use Classes: A1, A2, A3 (retail), A4 (public house), A5 (take away); B1, B2, B8 (offices, industrial and storage and distribution); C1 (hotel), C2 (care home), D1 and D2 (community and leisure); car showroom; data centre; petrol filling station; car parking; primary substation; energy centre; and for the laying out of the buildings; routes and open spaces within the development; and all associated works and operations including but not limited to: demolition; earthworks; engineering operations. All development, works and operations to be in accordance with the Development Parameters Schedule and Plans.)
Houghton Regis North Site 1, Land on the northern edge of Houghton Regis

[CB/24/01002/TDM](#)
(click for more details)

Telecommunications Determination Masts: Erection of 20m High Pole on new root foundation, together with 3No. Antennas, 2No Cabinets and associated ancillary works.
Houghton Park Car Park, Parkside Drive, Houghton Regis

Comments: Members noted that the proposed site for the mast was next to the car park entrance at Parkside Rec; however, they were unaware of any consultation having taken place. As the land was leased from CBC by Houghton Regis Town Council, it was felt that some notification should have been received.

Members requested that CBC was approached to establish if it was providing the land and, if so, on what basis.

Noted:

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

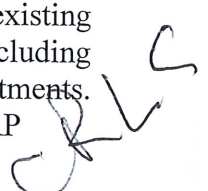
[CB/23/03976/ADV](#)
(click for more details)

Advertisement: 2 no illuminated fascia signs & 2 no illuminated box projecting signs. Tithe Farm Post Office, 8 Hillborough Crescent, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5NS

Refusals:

[CB/23/04109/LB](#)
(click for more details)

Listed Building: Conversion of threshing barn to form three office units with associated external alterations, part demolition, extension, external alteration and conversion of stable to provide a single dwelling, demolition of existing commercial unit and erection of 6 dwelling houses including associated parking, landscaping and boundary treatments. Manor Farm, Sewell Lane, Sewell, Dunstable, LU6 1RP



Withdrawals:

CB/24/00057/FULL Removal and relocation of fence. Change of use of amenity
(click for more details) land to residential garden land. 44 Bidwell Hill, Houghton
Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5EP

**12786 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT SITES/LOCAL PLAN-
UPDATE/PROGRESS**

Woodside Link – No substantive update to report.

A5 M1 Link – No substantive update to report.

All Saints View – No substantive update to report.

Linnere – No substantive update to report.

Bidwell West – Although not specifically Bidwell West, Members responded to the proposed street naming of the Red Cow farm development, land off Bedford Road, Bidwell. It was noted that all suggestions provided by Houghton Regis Town Council had been discounted and the Developers now proposed Belleview Drive as a potential name. Members expressed disappointment at this suggestion, which they felt was inappropriate and did not reflect the historical aspect of the site. It was felt that the name should be rejected and the discussion on the street naming be put onto a future agenda.

Kingsland – No substantive update to report.

Windsor Drive – No substantive update to report.

Section 106 Monies – No substantive update to report.

Resolved: To note the information

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.33pm

Dated this 13th day of May 2024

Chairman

CRL Slough



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Data Protection Policy

Date of Approval:	28 th September 2015
Date of Review:	25 th November 2019; 4 th March 2024
Date of Re-approval	20 th July 2020; 17 th June 2024

Based on NALC Legal Topic Note 38, Data Protection November 2018

1.0 Scope

This policy must be complied with fully by all members, staff, agents, partners and contractors of Houghton Regis Town Council who collect, keep, process or deal with personal data for or on behalf of Houghton Regis Town Council.

Houghton Regis Town Council supports the objectives of the Data Protection Act 2018 (the DPA) and the GDPR (which also forms part of UK law) and intends to conform to the requirements of the Act at all times.

Houghton Regis Town Council needs to collect and use certain types of information about people with whom it deals in order to operate. This includes information relating to current, past and previous employees, suppliers, residents and others with whom it communicates.

Houghton Regis Town Council, as a data controller, pays a data protection fee to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) under the Data Protection (Charges and Information) Regulations 2018.

2.0 The Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA)

The DPA establishes a framework of rights and duties which are designed to safeguard personal data. This framework balances the legitimate needs of organisations to collect and use personal data for business and other purposes against the right of individuals to respect for the privacy of their personal details. The Act stipulates that anyone processing personal data must comply with **Six Principles** of good practice. These Principles are legally enforceable.

The Principles require that personal information:

1. Shall be processed fairly and lawfully and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject;
2. Shall be obtained only for specified, explicit and lawful purposes and shall not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose or those purposes;
3. Shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose or purposes for which it is processed;
4. Shall be accurate and where necessary, kept up to date;
5. Shall be kept in a form that permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data is processed;
6. Shall be processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures.

Definition of the Act are

“Controller” means the natural or legal person which, alone or jointly with other, determines the purposes of and means of the processing of personal data;

“Data subject” means the identified or identifiable living individual to whom personal data relates;

Personal data is defined as any information relating to an identified or identifiable living individual;

Identifiable living individual means a living individual who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to-

- (a) an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data or an online identifier, or
- (b) one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of the individual.

Sensitive personal data is defined as personal data consisting of information as to:

- Racial or ethnic origin;
- Political opinion;
- Religious or other beliefs;
- Trade union membership;
- Processing of genetic data and or biometric data
- Sexual life or sexual orientation;

3.0 Implementation of the DPA

Through appropriate management Houghton Regis Town Council will:

- Ensure that data is collected and used fairly and lawfully;
- Process personal data only in order to meet operational needs or fulfill legal requirements;
- Take steps to ensure that personal data is up to date and accurate;
- Establish appropriate retention periods for personal data;
- Ensure that data subjects' rights can be appropriately exercised;
- Provide adequate security measures to protect personal data;
- Ensure that a nominated officer (Town Clerk) is responsible for data protection compliance and provides a point of contact for all data protection issues;
- Expect all of its employees and councillors to comply fully with this policy and the principles of the DPA. Deliberate breaches of this policy will be considered as gross misconduct. Individuals, as well as the Town Council, can be prosecuted for breaches of the Data Protection Act;
- Provide adequate training for all staff responsible for personal data;
- Ensure that everyone handling personal data knows where to find further guidance;
- Ensure that queries about data protection, internal and external to the organisation, is dealt with effectively and promptly;
- Regularly review data protection procedures and guidelines within the organisation

4.0 Processing Personal Data

Personal data must be processed fairly and lawfully in accordance with the provisions of the DPA.

Personal data may only be processed for notified purposes as stated with the DPA.

Anyone with responsibility for holding or collecting data must ensure that data kept and processed about any data subject is accurate and up to date. All due skill and care must be taken. Data must not be excessive to need, and superfluous data must be destroyed or removed from the system.

Houghton Regis Town Council is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy and nominates the Town Clerk to ensure compliance with the Act and ensure that members of staff are aware of the provisions of the Act. In this role, The Town Clerk will be known as the Data Protection Act Representative. The nomination of such a person shall not release other members of staff from compliance with this Act and this policy.

Any processing of sensitive data must comply with the special and more stringent rules set out in the DPA.

5.0 Security and Registration

Each member, member of staff and data holder are responsible for ensuring that data cannot be accessed by unauthorised personnel and to ensure that data cannot be tampered with, lost or damaged. All superfluous data must be disposed of in a secure manner.

The Information Commissioner enforces and oversees the DPA and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The Information Commissioner keeps a register of all organisations which process data. The Council shall submit a notification to the Information Commissioner and pay the prescribed fee in accordance with legislative requirements currently in force, which will be dealt with by the Town Clerk. Members and staff must furnish the Town Clerk with any information requested for this purpose. Members and staff must notify the Town Clerk if, during the course of any years, this information changes, and the Town Clerk must update the register entry accordingly. Members may have to register personally with the Information Commissioner with respect to constituency or party records.

6.0 Agents, Partner Organisations and Contractors

If a contractor, partner organisation or agent is appointed or engaged to collect, hold, process or deal with personal data for or on behalf of the Council or if they will do so as part of the services they are providing to Council, the Town Clerk must confirm that the agent, partner organisation or contractor is able, willing and does comply with the DPA. There must be specific obligations in every such partnership agreement and contract requiring the partner/contractor to comply with the DPA.

7.0 Disclosure of Personal Data

Personal data will only be disclosed in accordance with the provisions of the DPA.

8.0 Rights of Data Subjects

A person about whom information is held is, subject to any exemptions applying, entitled to:

- (a) be informed by the data controller as to whether any information is held on then along with;
 - (i) a description of the data; and
 - (ii) a copy of the information
- (b) request and receive information giving:
 - (i) the purposes for which the data is being held
 - (ii) the recipients
 - (iii) the source of the data
- (c) restrict processing of their data

- (d) object to the processing of personal data for direct marketing purposes
- (e) not to be subject to automated decision-making
- (f) receive compensation from the data controller and/or the data processor for the damage suffered as a result of an infringement of GDPR
- (g) obtain from a data controller without undue delay the rectification of inaccurate personal data
- (h) erase personal data
- (i) be notified by a data controller when a personal data breach is likely to result in a high risk to a data subject's rights
- (j) to receive a copy of personal data or to transfer personal data to another data controller (data portability)

Access to personal data held by a data controller must be dealt with within one month of request, free of charge. Where requests are manifestly unfounded or excessive, in particular because they are repetitive, the data controller may charge a fee for providing the information or refuse to respond.

9.0 Disclosure to and about Third Parties

Personal data must not be disclosed about a third party except in accordance with the DPA. If it appears absolutely necessary to disclose information about a third party to a person requesting data about themselves advice must be sought from the Data Protection Act Representative.

10. Inaccurate Data

If an individual complains that the data held about them is wrong, incomplete or inaccurate, the position should be investigated thoroughly including checking with the source of the information. In the meantime, a caution should be marked on the person's file that there is a question mark over the accuracy. An individual is entitled to apply to the court for a correcting order and it is obviously preferable to avoid legal proceedings by working with the person to correct the data or allay their concerns.

11. Requests by Individuals to Stop Processing Information

If data is properly held for communication purposes, an individual is entitled to require that this is ceased as soon as possible. Requests must be made in writing but generally all written or oral requests should be heeded as soon as they are made. The cessation must be confirmed in writing.

If data is held for any other purposes an individual may request that processing ceases if it is causing them unwarranted harm or distress. This does not apply if they have given their consent, if the data is held in connection with a contract with the person, if the Council is fulfilling a legal requirement or if the person's vital interests are being protected. Valid written requests must be heeded within 21 days. The cessation must be confirmed in writing.

12. Complaints

Any complaint or concern expressed by an individual in connection with the DPA must be reported to the Town Clerk immediately in case legal action is taken. The Town Clerk will ensure that there has been no breach of the DPA and, if so, take the necessary remedial action.

13. Exemptions

There are a number of purposes which are exempt from certain provisions of the DPA. Clarification on the scope of exemptions can be sought from the Town Clerk.

14. Violations of Rules and Procedures

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to report any suspected breaches of the DPA, or of this policy, to the Town Clerk.

It is the responsibility of all members to report any suspected breaches of the DPA, or this policy, to the Town Clerk or the Deputy Town Clerk.

Failure to comply with this policy by employees of the Council may result in disciplinary action being taken. Failure to comply by members of the Council may constitute a breach of the Members' Code of Conduct. Failure to comply by partners, agents or contractors may constitute a breach of their agreements.

15. Further Information and Other Related Policies

If in doubt about any aspect of this policy, the Town Clerk should be consulted.

Other related policies include the Equal Opportunities Policy and the Freedom of Information Policy.

For more information on the Data Protection Act, the Information Commissioner's website provides useful guidance,
<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/>

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by Corporate Services Committee every 4 years or in response to changes in legislation



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

DATA RETENTION POLICY

Date of Approval:	17 th June 2024
Date of Review:	4 th March 2024
Date of Re-approval	

Based on NALC Legal Topic 40, 3rd August 2022

Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Strategic Approach to Record Management**
- 3. Staff Responsibilities**
- 4. Periods of Retention**
- 5. Record Disposal**
- 6. Annex A – Table of documents, by activity.**
- 7. Policy review**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Houghton Regis Town Council is obliged to maintain and retain documentation for a number of purposes, including audit, tax liabilities and in the event of legal disputes and proceedings. Subject to those reasons, papers and records may be destroyed if they are no longer of use or relevance.
- 1.2 Both the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the UK GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) require public bodies to manage information and its access in particular ways.

2. Strategic approach to record management

- 2.1 Houghton Regis Town Council's policy on record management will enable the Council to:
 - Comply with the relevant legislation and codes of practice,
 - Create authentic, reliable and useable records,
 - Support the Council's functions, including asset management,
 - Document the Council's decisions and activities,
 - Reduce storage costs,
 - Facilitate the paperless office,
 - Enable the efficient and accurate retrieval of information,
 - Dispose correctly of records no longer required.
- 2.2 The Town Clerk will be responsible for record management. All initial queries should be made to the Town Clerk.
- 2.3 The DPO may undertake regular reviews of this policy to verify that it is in effective operation and advise of any changes for ongoing improvement.

3. Staff responsibility

- 3.1 All staff are obliged to:
 - Keep accurate records in an organised and accessible form,
 - Keep records for only as long as necessary,
 - Document actions and decisions in records,
 - Document reasons for the disposal of records,
 - Ensure all records created by the Town Council are relevant, complete and accurate, without any unsubstantiated or subjective commentary, and protected against unauthorised addition, deletion, alteration, use or concealment.

4. Periods of retention

- 4.1 The minimum periods for which various types of records must be kept are set out in the Retention Schedule at Annex A. These reflect statutory requirements, codes of practice and recommendations published by professional and other bodies. In the absence of any guidance, it will be the responsibility of the Town Clerk to determine a suitable retention period.
- 4.2 At the end of the retention period, the record must be assessed to determine whether it should be retained for a further period. This is particularly relevant where the record has been the subject of a request for access to information under the Data Protection Act (DPA) or the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). This is the case even where access to information has been refused, as the record should be retained until the end of the period in which an appeal can be lodged or the appeals procedure exhausted.

5. Record disposal

- 5.1 Records designated for disposal must be securely disposed of to preserve confidentiality. No record is to be disposed of without the approval of the Town Clerk, reasons must be given for disposal, and a note made of which records are destroyed with their date of destruction.

6. ANNEX A

Types of documentation by activity:

Accounting

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Receipt and payment accounts	Paper based and digital	Rialtas Software, Safe room, shared network	Indefinite	Archive
Bank statements, including deposit/savings accounts	Paper based and digital	Shared network	Last completed audit year	Audit and management
Bank paying in books	Paper	Small safe	Last completed audit year	Audit and management
Cheque books	Paper	Small safe	Last completed audit year	Audit and management
Paid invoices	Paper based and digital	Rialtas Software, shared network,	6 years	VAT and HMRC Compliance

		lever arch files (Finance Officer)		Handbook Manual CH15400
Paid cheques	Paper based and digital		6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
VAT Records	Paper based and digital	Rialtas Software, lever arch files (Finance Officer)	6 years generally but 20 years for VAT on rents	VAT
Petty cash, postage and telephone books	Paper based and digital	Small safe and shared network	6 years	Tax, VAT, and Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Investments	Paper based and digital	Shared network Filing room	Indefinite	Audit and management
Cash book and Accounts Reconciliations	Digital	Rialtas Software, shared network	Financial year plus 6 years	HMRC Compliance Handbook Manual CH15400
Payroll records	Digital	Rialtas Software, shared network	Financial year plus 6 years	HMRC Compliance Handbook Manual CH15400
Payroll forms	Digital	Shared Network Rialtas Software	Financial year plus 6 years after employment ended	Management
Records relating to staff Pension contributions	Digital	Shared Network Rialtas Software	End of Scheme plus 6 years	The Retirement Benefits Schemes (Information Powers) Regulations 1995 s.15

Administration (Mayoral)

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Mayor's Christmas Card Labels	Digital	Shared Network	Rolling list, amended each year.	Management

Mayor's Christmas Card List – GDPR Forms	Digital	Shared Network	Until requests are made to remove the addressee from the list (i.e. no longer a resident)	UK GDPR/DPA 2018 Must be securely disposed of if the individual exercises their right to be forgotten.
Mayoral Event GDPR Forms	Digital	Shared Network	Until requests are made to remove the addressee from the list (i.e. no longer a resident)	UK GDPR/DPA 2018 Must be securely disposed of if the individual exercises their right to be forgotten.
Mayor's Consort contact details	Digital	Shared Network	4 years (Council term)	Management
Mayor's Consort Disabilities or allergies	Digital	Shared Network	End of post	Management
Invitations for Mayor of Deputy	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council Terms)	Management
Invitations for Mayor and Deputy	Paper	Labelled Folders on desk of Civic and Events Manager	1 year	Management (given to Mayor / Deputy at end of the Mayoral Term, with personal contact details removed).
Mayoral / Deputy Mayor's Engagement Forms	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council Terms)	Management
Postal Correspondence	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council Terms)	Management
Electronic Correspondence	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council Terms)	Management
Log of Events	Digital	Shared Network	Permanent	Archives
Mayoral Year Book	Digital	Shared Network	Permanent	Archives

Mayoral photographs	Digital	Shared Network	Permanent	Archives
Mayoral / Deputy Mayor's Handbook	Digital	Shared Network	Until superseded	Management

Administration (Meetings)

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Minute Books	Digital and paper format	Large safe, Shared Network, Town Council website	Indefinitely	
Agendas and reports for Full Council, Committees, Sub-committees and Working Groups	Digital Paper copy	Shared Network Filing room	Date of meeting plus 8 years	Management
Draft Minutes	Digital Note form	Shared Network Personal notebooks	As soon as formal minutes are produced. However typed minutes are draft until approved.	Management
Calendar of Meetings	Digital	Shared Network	4 years	Management
Audio / Video recordings of Meetings	Digital	Shared Network YouTube	Until formal minutes are approved.	Management
Working Group Co-optees	Digital	Shared Network	4 years (1 Council term)	Management

Administration (Members)

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Record of meeting attendance	Digital	Shared Network Website	Date of next election plus two years	Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12 para 40

Register of Members addresses	Digital Paper copy	Shared Network Website Officers	Date of next election plus two years	Management
Register of Members interests, register of gifts and hospitality and register of third-party transactions	N/A		Date of next election plus 6 years	Localism Act 2011 Section 29
Records relating to receipt of gifts			Financial year of receipt plus 8 years	Management
Documents relating to Code of Conduct	Digital	Shared Network Website	Date of Code of Conduct plus 6 years	Localism Act 2011 Section 28
Records related to the investigation of complaints about breaches of the Members Code of Conduct	Digital	Shared Network	Date of investigation completed plus one year.	Localism Act 2011 Section 28
Documents relating to the creation and management of members training and induction	Digital	Shared Network	Current year plus 6 years	Management

Administration (Transparency)

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Council Expenditure	Digital	Shared Network Website	8 years (2 Council terms)	Local Government Transparency Code 2015
Grants Approved	Digital Paper Copy	Shared Network Lever arch folder on Community Services managers desk	8 years (2 Council terms)	Local Government Transparency Code 2015
Fraud Reporting	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Local Government

				Transparency Code 2015
Procurement	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Local Government Transparency Code 2015

Allotments

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Register and plans	Digital Paper copy	Rialtas Software, Shared Network	Indefinite	Audit and Management
Records regarding allotment holders	Digital	Rialtas Software, Shared Network	Tenure of plot	Management
Legal documentation	Digital	Shared Network	Indefinite	Management

Annual Report

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Annual Report	Digital	Shared Network Website	Permanent	Record of Council activity / Service delivery

Asset Management

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Microsoft Licences M365	Digital - Microsoft 365	Cloud based	M365 passwords changed after employee has left HRTC. Data (emails etc) accessed only by those with passwords. After M365 Licence for a user is removed emails have a 30 days retention period unless converted	Management

			to a shared mailbox, then emails are retained or as long as necessary.	
Data back up	Digital	HRTC Server Techies Server	30 days back up Permanent retention of data till user deletes information	Management

Asset Valuation

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Asset Register	Digital	Shared Network	Permanent	Management

Audit (Internal)

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Audit report	Digital	Shared Network	8 Years (2 Council terms)	Management

Audit (External)

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Audit Submission	Digital	Shared Network	Permanent	Management
Audit Supporting Documents	Digital	Shared Network	Permanent	Management
Audit Conclusion	Digital	Shared Network	Permanent	Management
Audit Certificate	Digital	Shared Network	Permanent	Management

Bedford Square Public Conveniences

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Service Level Agreement	Digital	Shared Network	Indefinite	Management

(Legal Documentation?)				
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Budget setting

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Budget setting calculations	Digital	Rialtas Software Shared Network	Financial year plus 6 years	HMRC Compliance Handbook Manual CH15400
Approved Budgets	Digital	Rialtas Software	Financial year plus 6 years	HMRC Compliance Handbook Manual CH15400
Budget monitoring	Digital	Rialtas Software	Financial year plus 6 years	HMRC Compliance Handbook Manual CH15400

Buildings and Recreation Grounds (Pavilions, Bowls Club, Workshop, Houghton Regis Memorial Hall and Town Council Offices, Village Green, Parkside Rec, Tithe Farm, Moore Crescent, Orchard Close, Windsor Drive, Thorn.

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Deeds of Titles Conveyancing information	Paper based and digital	Large Safe Filing Room Shared Network	Indefinite	Management
Searches and surveys	Paper based and digital	Filing Room Shared Network	Indefinite	Management
Leases	Paper based and digital	Filing Room Shared Network	Indefinite	Management
Play Area Equipment inspections	Paper based, pre – 2020. Digital post 2020 – app based.	Filing Room Shared network Online App stored by a third party,	21 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended) Personal Injury Claims

Cemetery

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Register of fees collected, register of burials, register of purchased graves, register/plan of grave spaces, register of memorials, applications for interment, applications for right to erect memorials, disposal certificates, and copy certificates of grant of exclusive right of burial.	Digital and paper copies	Safe room, Photocopying room Rialtas Software	Indefinite	Archives and Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 (SI. 204)
Headstone Safety checks	Paper based,	Workshop	21 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended) Personal Injury Claims

Christmas Lights / Christmas Tree

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Third Party Risk Assessments	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
Service Level Agreements	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
Third Party Insurances	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management

Community Events

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Databases for events and trips	Digital	Shared network	1 year	Management Must be securely disposed of if the individual exercises their right to be forgotten.
Event Planning documentation (i.e., TTRO's, SAG info, site plans etc.	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
HRTC Risk Assessments	Digital	Shared Network	21 years	Management and Limitation Act 1980 (as amended) Personal Injury Claims
Programmes /Orders of Service	Paper Digital	Filing Room Shared Network	Permanent	Record of event / archiving
Booking Forms	Digital	Shared Network	1 year	Management
Third Party Risk Assessments	Digital	Shared Network	21 Years	Management and Limitation Act 1980 (as amended) Personal Injury Claims
Service Level Agreements	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
Letters regarding events	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
Third Party Insurances	Digital	Shared Network	21 Years	Management and Limitation Act 1980 (as amended) Personal Injury Claims
Invitations	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management

Guest lists and invitations	Digital	Shared Network	After completion of event	Management
Competition details (guidelines, rules and purpose)	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
Competition entries	Digital	Shared Network	End of competition	Management
Competition – Parental Consent for publication	Digital Paper based copies of cards etc	Shared Network Social media Filing Room	For as long as they are in the public domain	UK GDPR/DPA 2018
Skate Park Competition entry forms and parental consent	Digital	Shared Network	21 years from the date of the event	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended) Personal Injury Claims

Complaints from the public

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Complaints	Paper based and digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
Responses	Paper based and digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management

Consultations (Public)

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Paper and Electronic surveys	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management

Consultation Responses (Public)

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Paper and Electronic responses	Digital	Shared Network	1 Year from the end of the consultation	Management
Collated responses and associated reports	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management

Contracts / Tenders

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Quotes	Digital	Shared Network	3 years after tender awarded	Management
Invitations to tender	Digital	Shared Network	6 years after the end of the contract	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Unsuccessful tenders	Digital	Shared Network	3 years after tender awarded	Management
Successful tenders	Digital	Shared Network	6 years after tender awarded	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Signed Contracts	Digital	Shared Network	6 years after tender awarded	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Contract /tender Register	Digital	Shared Network	Permanent	Archive

Data Protection

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Breach Log	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
Records regarding the breach	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management

Disposal of Records

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Records regarding Disposal of ICT Equipment	Paper based and digital	Filing room Shared Network	Date of disposal plus 8 years	Management
Certificates of paper shredding	Paper based and digital	Filing room Shared Network	Date of certificate plus 8 years	Management
Records relating to the disposal of emails	Digital	Shared Network	Date of records plus 4 years	Management
Records relating to the	Digital	Shared Network	Date of records plus 4 years	Management

disposal of documents				
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Electronic Communications

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Members' Email	Digital	Council tablets	End of service / Resignation plus 1 year	Management
Officers Email	Digital	Council Laptops / Desktop machines / Council mobile phones	Duration of role plus one year, except in relation to audit matters. Internal audit 8 Years (2 Council terms), external audit indefinite.	Management /Emails may be archived
Facebook Messenger	Digital	Online	One month	
WhatsApp / text messages	Digital	Council mobile phones	One month	
Post	Paper based and digital	Filing room Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
Voice messages	Digital	Council mobile phones	1 day	

Freedom of Information

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
FOI requests	Digital	Shared Network	Date of requests plus 5 years	Management and standard practice
FOI responses	Digital	Shared Network	Date of requests plus 5 years	Management and standard practice
FOI records log	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council Terms)	Management
Subject Access Requests	Digital	Shared Network	Date of requests plus 4 years	Management
Subject Access responses	Digital	Shared Network	Date of requests plus 4 years	Management
SAR Database	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council Terms)	Management

General Administration

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Venue bookings - Application to hire, lettings diaries, copies of bills, hire records, records of tickets issued.	Paper based and digital	Shared Network	6 Years	VAT Purposes
Receipt Books	Paper format	General Office	6 Years	Management
Football pitches - Application to hire, lettings diaries, copies of bills, hire records, records of tickets issued.	Paper based and digital	Shared Network	6 Years	VAT Purposes
Enquiries and feedback from the public via website (contact us)	Digital	Website	Details should be deleted by HRTC / Web providers monthly	Converted to email and not retained online

Grants

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Grants Forms and supplementary information	Digital	Shared Network	9 Years	Management
Grants Confirmation letter / Email	Digital	Shared Network	9 Years	Management
End of Awards Report	Digital	Shared Network	9 Years	Management
Grants Rejection Letter / Email	Digital	Shared Network	9 Years	Management
Table of Grants awarded	Digital	Shared Network	9 Years	Management

Health and Safety

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Accident reports	Paper based and digital	Personnel files Shared Network	3 years from the date of accident	The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR)

Insurance

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Insurance Policies	Paper based and digital	Filing room Shared Network	Date of exp of policy + 40 years	Management and legal proceedings
Certificates for Insurance against liability for employees	Paper based and digital	Filing room Shared Network	Indefinite	Future claims
Claims made against HRTC	Paper based and digital	Filing room Shared Network	Case concluded plus 4 years	
Register of Claims made against HRTC	Digital	Shared Network	Permanent	Archive
Claims made by HRTC	Paper based and digital	Filing Room Shared Network	Permanent	Archive

IT Security

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Breach Log	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
Records regarding the breach	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management

Later Living Group

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
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Databases for events and trips	Digital	Shared network	1 year	Management Must be securely disposed of if the individual exercises their right to be forgotten.
Event Planning documentation (i.e, TTRO's, SAG info, site plans etc).	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
HRTC Risk Assessments	Digital	Shared Network	Date of event, plus 4 years)	Management
Programmes /Orders of Service	Paper based and digital	Filing Room Shared Network	Permanent	Record of event / archiving
Booking Forms	Digital	Shared Network	1 year	Management
Third Party Risk Assessments	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
Service Level Agreements	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
Letters regarding events	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
Event Planning documentation (i.e, TTRO's, SAG info, site plans etc).	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management

Mayoral Events

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Databases for events and trips	Digital	Shared network	1 year	Management Must be securely disposed of if the individual exercises their right to be forgotten.
Invitations	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
RSVP's	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management

Event Planning documentation (i.e, TTRO's, SAG info, site plans etc).	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
HRTC Risk Assessments	Digital	Shared Network	21 Years	Management and Limitation Act 1980 (as amended) Personal Injury Claims
Programmes /Orders of Service	Paper Digital	Filing Room Shared Network	Permanent	Record of event / archiving
Booking Forms	Digital	Shared Network	1 year	Management
Third Party Risk Assessments	Digital	Shared Network	21 Years	Management and Limitation Act 1980 (as amended) Personal Injury Claims
Service Level Agreements	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
Letters regarding events	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
Third Party Insurances	Digital	Shared Network	21 Years	Management and Limitation Act 1980 (as amended) Personal Injury Claims
Invitations	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
Guest lists and invitations	Digital	Shared Network	After completion of event	Management
Thank you letters	Digital	Shared Network	2 years	Management

Media Liaison

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Press Releases	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management

Press Statements	Digital	Shared Network	8 years (2 Council terms)	Management
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Partnership working (SLA's)

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Service Level Agreements	Digital	Shared Network	8 Years (2 Council terms)	Management

Photographs (Events)

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Civic Events	Digital	Shared Network	Permanent	Records and archiving of events
Community Events	Digital	Shared Network	Permanent	Records and archiving of events
Volunteers (Proof of ID/Certification)	Digital	Shared Network	Cessation of appointment	
Grants PR	Digital	Shared Network	Permanent	Records

Photographs (Members and Officers)

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Officers and Members at Events /PR	Digital	Shared Network	Permanent	Records and archiving of events
Officers (staff photos)	Digital	Shared Network	Cessation of employment	
Members Ward Photos	Digital	Shared Network	Cessation of appointment	

Policies

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Houghton Regis Town Council policies and procedures	Digital	Shared Network	Until superseded	Management

Pride of Houghton Awards

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Promotion	Digital	Shared Network	8 Years (2 Council terms)	Management
Nomination Forms	Digital	Shared Network	8 Years (2 Council terms)	Management
Table of nominations	Digital	Shared Network	8 Years (2 Council terms)	Management
Event PR	Digital	Shared Network	8 Years (2 Council terms)	Management

Property / Contracts

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Title deeds, leases, agreements Contracts	Paper based Digital	Filing room Large safe Shared Network	Indefinite	Audit and management

Quotations and Tenders

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Quotations and Tenders	Paper Digital	Filing room Shared Network	6 Years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)

Social Media

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Facebook	Digital	Online	Permanent	Management
Instagram	Digital	Online	Permanent	Management
X (formerly Twitter)	Digital	Online	Permanent	Management

Staff / Personnel Administration

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional info
Timesheets	Digital	Shared network	2 years from the date in which they were made	Audit (requirement) and personal injury (best practice)

				The working Time Regulations 1998 Part III
Salary Information (Tax and NI)	Digital	Shared Network Off site with Payroll providers	Not less than three years after the tax year to which they relate	Income Tax (Pay As You Earn) Regulations 2003 Reg 97
Pensions	Digital	Shared network	12 years	Superannuation
Annual leave records	Digital	Shared Network	Financial year plus 6 years	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Unpaid leave	Digital	Shared Network	Financial year plus 6 years	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Parental leave	Digital	Shared Network	5 years from birth / adoption or 18 years if the child received Disability Allowance	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Sickness records	Digital	Shared Network	6 years after employment ceases	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)	Digital	Shared Network	3 years after the end of each tax year	The Statutory Sick Pay (General) Regulations 1982 Reg. 13
Medical Certificates	Paper based and digital	Paper based personnel files Shared Network	6 years after employment ceases	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Written Warning	Digital	Shared Network	Date of warning plus 6 months	Management
Disciplinary records	Digital	Shared Network	6 years after employment ceases	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Occupational Health Work place assessment records	Digital	Shared Network	6 years after employment ceases	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Health and Safety Training records	Paper based and digital	Personnel files Shared Network	6 years after employment ceases	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Records relating to employment history	Paper based and digital	Personnel files Shared Network	6 years after employment ceases	Limitation Act 1980 S.5

References received	Paper based and digital	Personnel files Shared Network	6 years after employment ceases	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Applications and CVs received for successful candidates	Paper based and digital	Personnel files Shared Network	6 years after employment ceases	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Applications and CVs received for unsuccessful candidates	Paper based and digital	Personnel files Shared Network	6 months from date of role being filled or vacancy closed	ICO Employment Practices Code para 1.7
Interview Notes	Paper based and digital	Personnel files Shared Network	6 years after employment ceases	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Appraisal documentation (inc. probationary interviews, promotions and demotions)	Paper based and digital	Personnel files Shared Network	6 years after employment ceases	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Next of Kin Information	Paper based and digital	Personnel files Shared Network	6 years after employment ceases	Management
Induction Records	Paper based and digital	Personnel files Shared Network	6 years after employment ceases	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Employment Contracts	Paper based and digital	Personnel files Shared Network	6 years after employment ceases	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Copies of Identification Documents	Paper based and digital	Personnel files Shared Network	2 years after employment ceases	Immigration (Restrictions on Employment) Order 200 s.6
Job Descriptions	Paper based and digital	Personnel files Shared Network	Until superseded	Management
DBS Checks	Paper based and digital	Personnel files Shared Network	Current year plus 3 years (life of a DBS check)	Management
Right to work checks	Paper based and digital	Personnel files Shared Network	2 years after employment ceases	Right to work checks (Home Office)
Records regarding a temporary worker	Paper based and digital	Paper based personnel files Shared Network	6 years after employment ceases	Limitation Act 1980 S.5

Redundancy records	Paper based and digital	Paper based personnel files Shared Network	6 years after employment ceases	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Reference Requests	Digital	Shared Network	6 years after employment ceases	Management
Staff training records	Paper based and digital	Paper based personnel files Shared Network	6 years after employment ceases	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Training certificates	Paper based and digital	Paper based personnel files Shared Network	6 years after employment ceases	Limitation Act 1980 S.5
Training evaluation	Paper based and digital	Paper based personnel files Shared Network	Termination of employment	Management

Town Crier Newsletter and publications

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Town Crier Newsletter	Paper based and digital	Files in the general office Shared Network Website	Permanent	Archives
Leaflets, Fliers and Posters	Paper based and digital	Filing Room Shared Network	Permanent	Archives
Website Blogs	Digital	Online Shared Network	4 years (1 Council Term)	Management

Vehicles

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
V5 documents	Paper	Workshop	Duration of vehicle ownership	
Road Tax documentation	Digital	Rialtas software	Duration of vehicle ownership	
MOT Certificates	Paper	Workshop	Duration of vehicle ownership	
Service records	Paper Digital at AMF Services	Kept in the vehicles Docs for RTV Buggies and	Duration of vehicle ownership	

		Tractor are kept at AMF Services		
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Whistleblowing

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Allegation	Digital	Shared Network	Date of requests plus 5 years	Management (and standard practice)
Correspondence with Whistleblower	Digital	Shared Network	Date of requests plus 5 years	Management (and standard practice)
Investigative document	Digital	Shared Network	Date of requests plus 5 years	Management (and standard practice)

OTHER

Documents	Format	Location	Retention Period	Additional Info
Data / requests for Ranger work	Digital	Ranger App Shared Network	Three years	Management

7. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every four years by the Corporate Services Committee or sooner if required.



TOWN COUNCIL

Agenda Item 9

Date: 17th June 2024

Title: YEAR END ACCOUNTS PROCESS

Purpose of the Report: To advise members of the year end accounting processes.

Contact Officer: Clare Evans, Town Clerk

1. RECOMMENDATION

The report is provided for information only.

2. BACKGROUND

This report is provided to advise members of the year end accounting processes.

There are 3 elements to the Council's accounts:

1. Day to day accounts administration
2. Year end close down
3. Preparation of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return

The report provides guidance on each of these elements.

3. DAY TO DAY ACCOUNTS ADMINISTRATION

The administration of the council's accounts is undertaken by the Town Clerk / RFO with support from the Finance Officer.

4. YEAR END CLOSE DOWN

The RFO specifies a date for year end close down to DCK Accounting Solutions for mid May. This is to enable March invoices to be received and processed and for journals of corrections, adjustments, accruals and prepayments to be completed.

DCK Accounting Solutions then undertake the following:

1. Check prepayment, accrual and adjustments journals
2. Complete any outstanding journals over which there was a query

3. Make recommendations as appropriate to RFO & Accounts Officer
4. Check the proposed EMR transfers, make necessary amendments and input the appropriate journal entries
5. Print journal report for HRTC officer to check
6. Close down for the month of March and complete back-up
7. Closed the year and complete year end back-up.
8. Open new live company for the subsequent year's accounts.

5. PREPARATION OF THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN

The Annual Governance & Accountability Return comprises:

- Completion of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return form;
- Bank Reconciliation Statement for year end;
- Explanation of Differences to figures contained within the Annual Return form;
- Reconciliation of Boxes 7 & 8 of the Annual Return form;
- Statement of Accounts for the Year;
- Completion of Intermediate Audit Questionnaire supported by evidence specified by the external auditors.

DCK Accounting Solutions assist in the completion of the Annual Return. In preparation they require a Questionnaire to be completed in January which provides them with information on the Council's pension scheme, recruitment, advertising, publicity, asset purchases and disposals to date, leases and tenancies, and agency work. This information is provided to assist with the preparation of the Notes to the Statement of Accounts. In addition, the RFO specifies a date for the completion of the Statement of Accounts to DCK Accounting Solutions for early June dependent on the date of the Town Council meeting.

DCK Accounting Solutions provide a draft of Section 2 Statement of Accounts Notes to the Accounts by the date specified. Officers check information provided.

DCK Accounting Solutions do not prepare the following for submission with the Annual Return:

- Bank Reconciliation Statement for year end;
- Explanation of Differences to figures contained within the Annual Return form;
- Reconciliation of Boxes 7 & 8 of the Annual Return form;
- Completion of Intermediate Audit Questionnaire with evidence required

These are completed by the RFO.

6. HRTC CORPORATE PLAN

4 Management and Operations: To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Town Council as the key local service provider

4.5 Enhance the role of the council.

7. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Implications

- This process is supported by the following council policies:
 - Standing Orders
 - Financial Regulations
 - Internal Audit, Planning & Review

Legal Implications

Smaller authorities must:

- Approve and publish the unaudited AGAR by 30th June 2022
- Must commence the period of public rights on or before 1st July 2022
- Submit the AGAR to the external auditor by 30th June 2022
- Publish the audited AGAR and notice of completion by 30th September 2022

Financial Implications

- There are no budget implications.

Risk Implications

- Failure to submit the Annual Governance & Accountability Return by 30th June 2022 would result in the external auditor issuing Qualified Accounts. This may result in reputational damage to the council.

Equalities Implications

Houghton Regis Town Council has a duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

This report does not discriminate.

Climate Change Implications

There are no climate change implications arising from the recommendations

Press Contact

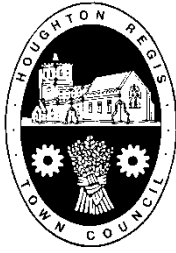
The decision relating to this agenda item will be communicated to the press, via the council's website and social media.

8. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

This is an annual process. The report provides background guidance for members information.

9. APPENDICES

None.



TOWN COUNCIL

Agenda Item 10

Date: 17th June 2024

Title: INTERNAL AUDIT 2023/24

Purpose of the Report: To present to members to internal auditors findings for the financial year 2023/24.

Contact Officer: Clare Evans, Town Clerk

1. RECOMMENDATION

To receive the Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24 and to approve the actions detailed in the annotated Observations report as attached.

2. BACKGROUND

Internal Audit is a function of management and forms part of the Council's internal control mechanisms. It is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than eliminate all risk. It thus provides a reasonable, not absolute, assurance of effectiveness.

The audit should cover the areas of 'risk' identified by the annual return and any additional matters Council chooses. It must be based on the financial year.

The scope of the internal audit is set out in the Internal Audit Planning & Review Policy. This is reviewed on an annual basis by Corporate Services Committee and subsequently approved by Town Council [221219 Internal Audit Planning & review policy.pdf \(houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk\)](https://www.houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk/221219%20Internal%20Audit%20Planning%20&%20review%20policy.pdf)

The internal audit for the financial year 2023/24 was carried out by IAC Audit & Consultancy Ltd on 29th November 2023 and 7th May 2024.

Please note that the dates included at the bottom of Appendix E are the dates of reports. Those on the left are dates within the financial year when reports were issued (one of them was date of last year's audit report) and the date on the right is the date of signature of this year's report.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Members will find attached from the internal auditor the following:

- Cover letter dated 9th June 2024 – App A
- Observations reports annotated to show a response (Comments column) – App B
- Summary report – App C
- Full Summary report – App D
- Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24 - App E
- Covering letter explaining the ‘Not Covered’ response in relation to Control Objective K, L and O - Appendix F

The Observations report as annotated is the suggested council’s response, with timeline, to the internal audit.

It is highlighted that the Internal Auditor has given a ‘Not Covered’ response in relation to Control Objective K, L and O. Appendix E provides a covering letter explaining why this response has been given.

4. HRTC CORPORATE PLAN

Aspirations

4 Management and Operations: To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Town Council as the key local service provider

4.5 Enhance the role of the council.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Implications

- Internal Audit report to be presented to Town Council in October 2024

Legal Implications

- There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations

Financial Implications

- There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations

Risk Implications

- There is a reputational risk should the council not follow accounting practices.

Equalities Implications

Houghton Regis Town Council has a duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

This project / issue does not discriminate.

Climate Change Implications

- There are no climate change implications arising from the recommendations.

Press Contact

- There are no press implications arising from the recommendations.

6. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The internal audit for 2023/24 has been carried out by an independent and suitability qualified company. A number of observations have been made and an action plan to address these observations has been presented to members for consideration and approval.

7. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Cover Letter dated 9th June 2024

Appendix B – Observations report – annotated

Appendix C - Summary report

Appendix D – Full Summary report

Appendix E – Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

Appendix F - covering letter explaining the ‘Not Covered’ response in relation to Control Objective K, L and O



Clare Evans
Town Clerk
Houghton Regis Town Council
Council Offices
Peel Street
Houghton Regis
Bedfordshire
LU5 5EY

9th June 2024

Dear Clare,

Year End audit Cover Letter (with Interim)

An audit was carried out by Kevin Rose on Tuesday 7 May 2024. This was the Year End audit following on from the interim audit carried out on 29 November 2023.

The audit was undertaken using the standard IAC Audit Checklist, which we use for all Local Councils, which has 203 items. A total of 66 items were tested during this audit in addition to the 114 items tested and checked during the interim audit. 23 further items were checked during this audit and confirmed as being 'Not Applicable' to Your Council. All items on the checklists were tested during the year.

Areas subject to audit were;

- the Payment system (Box B)
- Risk and insurance (Box C)
- Budget and precept setting and monitoring (Box D)
- Income billing, collection and VAT (Box E)
- Payroll(Box G)
- Assets and investments (Box H)
- Bank reconciliations (Box I)
- Accounting Statements (Box J)

Summary of tests undertaken this audit

Positive response	61
Negative response	5
Not Applicable to your Council	23
Total tests carried out	<u>89</u>

Of the 66 applicable items tested a Positive response was obtained in respect of 61 tests. There were 5 Negative responses identified and 7 Observations were made, details of which are set out in the attached Year End Internal Audit Observations.

Summary of tests undertaken for the financial year (including the Interim audit)

Positive response	150
Negative response	10
Not Applicable to your Council	43
Total tests carried out	<u>203</u>
Tests not carried out	Nil

I am pleased to advise that no 'Non-Compliances' were identified that would give rise to a negative response on the statutory Annual Internal Audit Report.

I would like to express my thanks for the assistance and hospitality provided to me during my audit.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Rose'.

Kevin Rose ACMA
Director

Houghton Regis Town Council Financial Year 2023-24

Year End Internal Audit Observations



IAC Audit and Consultancy Ltd

Audit date: 7 May 2024

C This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.

No.	Audit Test	Response	Observation	Recommendation	Priority	Comments
1	Council has formally documented Internal Controls	No	<i>Council has not formally documented Internal Controls</i>	Council should formally document its Internal Controls.	High	The Council annually reviews its policy titled Internal Audit Planning, Reporting and Review Policy (Minute 12543). During the IA the auditor felt that this policy has scope to align better with internal processes. The Head of Corporate Services is in the process of reviewing this policy accordingly. This amended policy will be presented for consideration and approval to Town Council in October 2024.
2	The Council, meeting as a whole, has reviewed the effectiveness of its internal control system as required by Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015	No	<i>The Council has not reviewed the effectiveness of its internal control system as required by Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.</i>	Council to note the requirement for it to regularly review its internal control system.	High	This Observation is linked to the above Observation and will be satisfied as above.

E Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.

No.	Audit Test	Response	Observation	Recommendation	Priority	Comments
1	Invoices / Charges levied agree to approved rate of Fees and Charges	Yes	<i>it was noted that the fees and charges for the cemetery states that "In the case of non-residents of Houghton Regis, all fees will be tripled" however it was noted on review of the schedule of fees that the stated fees did not always agree to three times the residents fees.</i>	Council to review the schedule of cemetery fees and charges to ensure that the non-resident fees are actually set at three times the residents fee.	Medium	This relates to numerical historic rounding and has been adjusted to be accurate. COMPLETE

2	Cash income is promptly banked	Yes	<i>It was noted that it is not currently practice for the cash received and recorded in the receipts books to be verified against the cash banked. It is therefore not clear how it is ensured that all cash collected has been banked.</i>	As part of the banking procedure receipt books should be verified to the cash on hand to be banked. The receipt book should be marked/initial to indicate that the cash receipted has been verified and banked.	Medium	A process to reconcile the receipt book and bank paying in slips has been implemented. COMPLETE
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H Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.

No.	Audit Test	Response	Observation	Recommendation	Priority	Comments
1	The asset register has been subject to review by Council	No	<i>As at the date of the year end audit the updated asset register had not been subject to review and approval by the Council.</i>	Prior to the approval of the statutory Accounting Statements the Council should formally review the asset register and confirm approval of the register and any additions or disposals made in the year.	Medium	The revised Asset Register was reviewed in March 2024 by Town Council. The report was presented for information. This observation requires Council to approve the Asset Register and any additions and disposals. This is noted for future years. COMPLETED
2	Assets purchased have been recorded gross and not netted off against any trade ins.	No	<i>It was noted that the purchase of a mobile steam cleaner for £17,999 had been recorded as £9,999 net of a trade in of £8,000 rather than being recorded gross with the trade in balance credited to income.</i>	The Council to ensure that assets purchased are recorded at their gross cost. Trade-in income should be recorded as a separate item of income (and VAT accounted for appropriately)	Medium	This is noted for future purchases and sales. COMPLETED
3	Schedule of investments available	No	<i>It was noted that, at the date of the year end audit visit, a current valuation of the investment in the property fund was not available. It is unclear how the Council has monitored performance of this investment in the absence of regular valuations.</i>	The Council to ensure that a valuation for the property fund as at 31st March 2024 is obtained, a copy of which should be provided to the Internal Auditor.	Medium	This evaluation was obtained post the visit from the IA. In future officers will ensure it is available at the time of visit. NOTE: HRTC have provided notice to CCLA to withdraw the councils investment in this fund. COMPLETED

Year End audit summary Houghton Regis Town Council

(shaded Internal Control Objectives are not applicable to your Council)



Year End Audit Date 7 May 2024

Internal Control Objective		N/A	Tested	Positive	Negative	Observations	Non Compliance
Box A	Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.		0	0	0	0	YES
Box B	This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	4	9	9	0	0	
Box C	This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.		5	3	2	2	
Box D	The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	1	1	1	0	0	
Box E	Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	6	9	9	0	2	
Box F	Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.		0	0	0	0	
Box G	Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	8	16	16	0	0	
Box H	Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	1	10	7	3	3	
Box I	Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.		9	9	0	0	
Box J	Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	2	7	7	0	0	
Box K	If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 AGAR tick "not covered")		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Box L	The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Box M	The authority, during the previous year (2022/23) correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (evidenced by the notice published on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).		0	0	0	0	
Box N	The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	1	0	0	0	0	
Box O	(For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Totals		23	66	61	5	7	1

Houghton Regis Town Council



Interim Audit Date: 29/11/2023

Year End Audit Date 07/05/2024

Internal Audit Summary for the year 2023-24

(shaded Internal Control Objectives are not applicable to your Council)

Internal Control Objective		Observations	Observation Analysis					Responses			
			Non - Compliance	High	Medium	Low	Advisory	Positive	Negative	N/A	Not Checked
A	Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0
B	This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	4	0	4	0	0	0	35	3	5	0
C	This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	3	1	1	0	0	1	9	3	0	0
D	The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	0	3	0
E	Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	3	0	0	3	0	0	18	1	6	0
F	Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	0
G	Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	0	8	0
H	Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	3	0	0	3	0	0	7	3	1	0
I	Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	0	0	0
J	Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	2	0
K	If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 AGAR tick "not covered"	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	N/A
L	The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	7	N/A

Internal Control Objective		Observations	Observation Analysis					Responses			
			Non - Compliance	High	Medium	Low	Advisory	Positive	Negative	N/A	Not Checked
M	The authority, during the previous year (2022/23) correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (evidenced by the notice published on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0
N	The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	1	0
O	(For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	7	N/A
Total		13	1	5	6	0	1	150	10	43	0

Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

Houghton Regis Town Council

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During the financial year ended 31 March 2024, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2023/24 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	Yes		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	Yes		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	Yes		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	Yes		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	Yes		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	Yes		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	Yes		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	Yes		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	Yes		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	Yes		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. <i>(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 AGAR tick "not covered")</i>			N/A
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.			N/A
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations <i>(during the 2023-24 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2022-23 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set)</i> .	Yes		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23 AGAR <i>(see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes)</i> .	Yes		
O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			N/A

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

07/06/2023 29/11/2023

Kevin Rose ACMA- IAC Audit & Consultancy Ltd

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

Date

DD/ 09/06/2024

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).



The Clerk
 Houghton Regis Town Council
 Council Offices
 Peel Street
 Houghton Regis
 Bedfordshire
 LU5 5EY

09-Jun-24

Explanation of "Not Covered" responses

Further to our Internal Audit of your Council for the financial year 2023/24 I am pleased to submit the signed Internal Report for your Annual Return. We have completed our work and I can confirm that we have not given a Negative response for any of the Internal Control Objectives.

You will note that we have given 'Not Covered' responses in respect of Control Objective K, L and O and we are required to explain why we have done this.

- *The reason for the "Not Covered" response for Objective K is that it is not applicable to your Council as the Council did not certify itself exempt from limited assurance review for the 2022/23 financial year.*
- *At present no specific guidance has been provided to set out what the 'relevant legislation' is in respect of Control Objective L. We have tested against the requirements of Statutory Instruments 2015/480 The Local Government (Transparency Requirements) and 2015/494 The Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirements), neither of which apply to your Council. The publication requirements of Statutory Instrument (2015/234) The Accounts and Audit Regulations are covered in our responses to Internal Control Objectives M and N. The Council should note that we have not considered any additional publication requirements that may apply, for example those set out in the ICO Model Publication Scheme for Parish Councils.*
- *The reason for the Not Covered response for Objective O as it is our understanding that the Council does not act as Trustee.*

The External Auditor may query why we have responded 'Not Covered' and, if so, you should provide them with a copy of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Rose'.

Kevin Rose ACMA
Director



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, LU5 5EY

Telephone: 01582 708540

Email: info@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk

www.houghtonregis-tc.go.uk

Confirmation regarding the exercise of public rights

Parish Council name: **Houghton Regis Town Council**

The Parish Council must inform the electorate of an exact 30 working day period during which public rights may be exercised. This is inclusive of the start and finish dates.

The inspection period **must** commence no later than 3 July 2023 and must **include the first 10 working days of July**.

The elector's rights must start **exactly** one day after the annual return has been published on your website (or other free to access website used by the Council) with the statutory notice at Attachment 3.2. Publication of the annual return must be as soon as practical after the unaudited annual return has been approved by the Parish Council, and in line with the regulatory inspection period.

Working days are defined as Monday – Friday. They do not include Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays.

(See calendar guide overleaf, noting that because the earliest date to start a compliant public rights period is 5 June 2023 the definition of 'as soon as practical' excludes any earlier dates than this.)

The inspection period commences on: 21st June 2024
And ends on: 1st August 2024

Signed

Date: 10th June 2024

Position held: Town Clerk & RFO

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

Houghton Regis Town Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024, that:

	Agreed		
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

<https://houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk/> ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for


Houghton Regis Town Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	
1. Balances brought forward	746,279	826,230	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	1,119,236	1,196,781	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	422,331	2,573,167	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	-571,106	-749,067	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	-24,069	-12,034	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	-866,441	-3,201,958	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	826,230	633,119	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	577,485	667,405	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	4,196,414	6,873,900	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	202,202	686,554	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2024 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

 Date 06/06/2024

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Houghton Regis Town Council

Unaudited Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Houghton Regis Town Council

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31 March 2024

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Houghton Regis Town Council

Council Information

31 March 2024

(Information current at 17th June 2024)

Mayor

Cllr E. Cooper

Councillors

Cllr E. Billington

Cllr P. Burgess

Cllr J. Carroll

Cllr E. Costello

Cllr Mrs Y. Farrell

Cllr W. Henderson

Cllr M. Herber

Cllr D. Jones

Cllr T. McMahon

Cllr C. Rollins

Cllr A. Slough

Cllr C. Slough

Cllr D. Taylor

Town Clerk

Mrs Clare Evans

Auditors

Mazars LLP

Salvus House

Aykley Heads

Durham

DH1 5TS

Internal Auditors

IAC Audit & Consultancy Ltd

23 Westbury Rd

Yarnbrook

Wiltshire

BA14 6AG

Houghton Regis Town Council
Statement of Accounting Policies
31 March 2024

Auditors

The name and address of the External Auditors is provided for information only.

These Statements are not subject to audit and the External Auditors have no responsibility for them.

Accounting Convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Accounting Guidance Notes for Local Councils (the Guide) issued by The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) as applicable to a medium sized council.

These accounts have been prepared having regard to the fundamental accounting concepts of: Going Concern, Prudence, Accruals, Relevance, Consistency, Reliability, Comparability, Understandability and Materiality.

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Fixed Assets

All expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of fixed assets is reported in the notes to the accounts, provided that the fixed asset yields benefits to the authority and the services it provides for a period of more than one year. Fixed assets are valued on the basis recommended by CIPFA. The year end values are stated on the following basis:

land, operational properties and other operational assets are reported in notes to the accounts at cost (where known) or at insurance values current when first reported as approximating to the lower of net replacement cost and net realisable value at that time (previous years at current insurance values).

certain community assets are the subject of restrictive covenants as to their use and/or future disposal. Such assets are therefore considered to have no appreciable realisable value and are included at nominal value only.

Revenue Grants

Revenue grants are credited to income when conditions attached thereto have been fulfilled and/or equivalent expenditure has been incurred. Grants received in respect of which the conditions have not been fulfilled, or expenditure incurred, are carried forward as deferred revenue grants.

Investments

Investments are included in the balance sheet at historic cost and realised gains or losses are taken into the income and expenditure account as realised. Details are given at notes 8 and 9.

Debtors and Creditors

The council reviews the level of its commercial debtors on a regular basis and provisions are made, as required, where the likelihood of amounts proving ultimately collectable is in doubt.

Value Added Tax

Income and Expenditure excludes any amounts related to VAT, as all VAT suffered/collected is recoverable from or payable to HM Revenue and Customs. Any amounts not so recoverable are treated as a separate expense.

Houghton Regis Town Council
Statement of Accounting Policies
31 March 2024

External Loan Repayments

The council is not required by the Guide to incorporate external borrowings in its Balance Sheet. Details are shown at note 14.

Leases

The council is not required by the Guide to incorporate Hire Purchase and/or Finance Lease obligations in its Balance Sheet. Details are shown at note 13.

Reserves

The council maintains certain reserves to meet general and specific future expenditure. The purpose of the council's reserves is explained in notes 15 to 16.

Interest Income

All interest receipts are credited initially to general funds.

Pensions

The pension costs that are charged against precept in the council's accounts, in respect of its employees, are equal to the contributions paid to the funded pension scheme for those employees.

These contributions are determined by the fund's actuary on a triennial basis and are set to meet 100% of the liabilities of the pension fund, in accordance with relevant government regulations.

The next actuarial valuation is due at 31st March 2025 and any change in contribution rates as a result of that valuation will take effect from 1st April 2026.

Houghton Regis Town Council
Income and Expenditure Account
31 March 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
INCOME			
Precept on Principal Authority		1,196,781	1,119,236
Agency Services	12	1,200	1,200
Capital Receipts, Grants and Loan Proceeds		2,628,308	263,580
Interest and Investment Income	1	79,152	49,949
Leisure and Recreation		19,780	19,129
Allotments		4,312	-
Cemetery & Churchyard		23,629	27,184
Community & Youth		31,759	4,378
Miscellaneous		7,880	9,303
Community Development		3,946	12,308
Sale of Assets		8,000	31,300
Community Services		-	4,000
		<u>4,004,747</u>	<u>1,541,567</u>
EXPENDITURE			
Establishment/General Administration		849,227	677,242
Agency Costs	12	37,500	31,092
Election Expenses		30,063	5,350
Capital Expenditure incl Capital Grants	7	2,693,986	368,599
Loan Interest and Capital Repayments		12,034	24,069
Operational Expenditure:			
Leisure and Recreation inc. Pavilions		174,489	206,470
Allotments		2,496	1,786
Cemetery & Churchyard		5,152	2,321
Planning and Development		6,375	5,204
Highways - Footpaths and Lighting		-	551
Democratic Representation and Management		11,864	10,450
Town Security		-	1,387
Public Toilets		22,450	20,337
Community Development		85,293	66,566
Grants Under Specific Powers		22,347	22,769
Community Services		9,783	17,423
		<u>3,963,059</u>	<u>1,461,616</u>
General Fund			
Balance at 01 April 2023		429,251	417,477
Add: Total Income		<u>4,004,747</u>	<u>1,541,567</u>
		4,433,998	1,959,044
Deduct: Total Expenditure		<u>3,963,059</u>	<u>1,461,616</u>
		470,939	497,428
Transfer from/(to) Earmarked Reserves	16	14,865	(68,177)
General Reserve Balance at 31 March 2024		<u>485,804</u>	<u>429,251</u>

The notes on pages 8 to 14 form part of these unaudited statements.

Houghton Regis Town Council

Balance Sheet

31 March 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £
Long Term Assets				
Investments Other Than Loans	8		600,000	600,000
Current Assets				
Debtors and prepayments	10	231,156		281,166
Investments	9	469,500		554,500
Cash at bank and in hand		197,905		22,985
		<u>898,561</u>		<u>858,651</u>
Current Liabilities				
Creditors and income in advance	11	<u>(291,218)</u>		<u>(292,996)</u>
Net Current Assets			607,343	565,655
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities			<u>1,207,343</u>	<u>1,165,655</u>
Total Assets Less Liabilities			<u>1,207,343</u>	<u>1,165,655</u>
Capital and Reserves				
Earmarked Reserves	16		721,539	736,404
General Reserve			485,804	429,251
			<u>1,207,343</u>	<u>1,165,655</u>

Signed:

Cllr E. Cooper

Mayor

.....

Mrs Clare Evans

Responsible Financial Officer

Date:

.....

The notes on pages 8 to 14 form part of these unaudited statements.

Houghton Regis Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2024

1 Interest and Investment Income

	2024	2023
	£	£
Interest Income - General Funds	79,152	49,949
	<u>79,152</u>	<u>49,949</u>

2 Publicity

Section 5 of the Local Government Act 1986 requires the council to disclose expenditure on publicity. Details are shown under the following broad categories:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Publicity	-	1,770
Councils Website	315	268
Newsletter	5,958	4,856
	<u>6,273</u>	<u>6,894</u>

3 General Power of Competence

With effect from 28th September 2015 Houghton Regis Town Council acquired the right to exercise the General Power of Competence extended to Town and Parish Councils under the Localism Act 2011 by S.I. 2012 No 965 (The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012). Therefore, with effect from 28th September 2015 the council no longer exercises the powers conveyed by Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

4 Tenancies

During the year the following tenancies were held:

Council as landlord

Tenant	Property	Rent p.a. £	Repairing / Non-Repairing
Various	Allotments	4,312	Non-Repairing

Council as tenant

Landlord	Property	Rent p.a. £	Repairing / Non-Repairing
Central Bedfordshire Council	Workshop	15,500	Non-Repairing
Central Bedfordshire Council	Parkside Recreation Ground	50	N/A
Central Bedfordshire Council	Tithe Farm Recreation Ground	5	N/A

5 Pensions

For the year of account the council's contributions equal 26.80% of employees' pensionable pay. These contributions will remain at 26.80%, in future years, which will provide adequately for future liabilities.

Houghton Regis Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2024

6 Fixed Assets

	2024	2023
	£	£
	Value	Value
At 31 March the following assets were held:		
<u>Land and Buildings</u>		
Bowls Green Shed	2,800	2,800
Houghton Regis Memorial Hall	293,000	293,000
Council Offices and Land	260,400	260,400
Sports Pavilion Moore Crescent	340,020	340,020
Leasehold-Tithe Farm Pavilion	138,900	138,900
Leasehold-Tithe Farm Sports Development Project	2,916,552	288,382
Leasehold-Parkside Pavilion	154,784	154,784
Leasehold - Orchard Close Pavilion	115,940	115,940
Leasehold-Village Green Pavilion	459,836	459,836
	4,682,232	2,054,062

	2024	2023
<u>Vehicles and Equipment</u>		
Recreation Ground Equipment	50,826	62,826
Office Equipment	48,475	44,164
Office Boiler	2,990	2,990
Office Furniture	100,226	100,226
Pavilion Furniture & Equipment	7,446	7,446
Play and Sports Equipment & Safety Surfaces	288,158	272,208
Skate Park	90,306	90,306
M U G A	30,062	30,062
Christmas Decorations	63,069	63,069
Kubota Tractor M9540 - LK09 EPL	35,000	35,000
Ford Ranger EX67 KKW	16,942	16,942
Ford Ranger EN68 VTG	22,520	22,520
Ford Ranger LC69 HCL	18,990	18,990
P7E Trailer	795	795
LT106G Trailer	2,465	2,465
Ifor Williams Trailer	800	800
Work Platform (f/lift)	650	650
Dennis Mower	1,500	1,500
Verticut Mower	1,200	1,200
Ransomes Cylinder Mower	850	850
Hayter Mower	2,137	2,137
Hayter Mower (2018)	535	535
Trimax Snake Mower	19,950	19,950
Hayter Pro Rotary Mower	1,149	1,149
Pro Virtue SVP Mower x 2	748	748
Verti-Cutter	1,329	1,329
Harrier Grass Cutter x 2	1,400	1,400
Honda Tractor Rotavator	4,300	4,300
Stihl AR300L	1,320	1,320
Stihl RMA765 Mower	1,037	1,037
Kubota Mower LR21 HKO	17,000	17,000

Houghton Regis Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2024

	2024	2023
Sissis Autorake	5,209	5,209
Bomford Kestrel Arm Mower	24,600	24,600
Stihl Battery Brushcutters (6)	6,445	-
Kubota Flail Deck	7,104	7,104
Tomlin Harrows	4,229	4,229
Mitsubishi truck KY64BGK	15,000	15,000
Exac Post Hole Borer	1,500	1,500
Dump Trailer 12' x 6'	4,650	4,650
JCB Mini Excavator	3,476	3,476
Kubota K15 DXU	14,116	14,116
Kubota F3890 (KX68 BDZ)	18,368	18,368
Kubota F3890 (KX68 BEJ)	18,368	18,368
Kubota XL300 Spreader	1,888	1,888
Rotowash	7,176	7,176
CCTV Equipment	25,041	25,041
Anti-Ram Bollards	5,592	5,592
Gazebos	905	905
Cemetery Earth Augur	670	670
Hot Water Pressure Cleaner	18,219	18,219
Mobile Steam Cleaner	17,999	-
Shibarua Tractor LK 17 KTD	19,755	19,755
Sports Equipment (Village Green)	69,999	69,999
Outdoor Gym	4,100	4,100
Kubota RTV KX20 CCJ	15,250	15,250
Defibrillators	10,092	10,092
	<hr/> <hr/> 1,153,926	<hr/> <hr/> 1,121,221
<u>Infrastructure Assets</u>		
Gates and Fencing	92,569	92,569
Bowls Irrigation System	7,290	7,290
Speed Activated Signs	9,226	9,226
Town Signs & Noticeboards	12,157	12,157
Litter Bins	9,970	9,970
Bollards - Village Green Grnd	7,192	7,192
Benches	5,990	5,990
Flame Beacon	2,204	2,204
Flag Poles	5,875	5,875
Memorial Hall Planter	3,720	3,720
Floodlights (Tithe Farm Skate Park)	15,844	15,844
Bedford Rd Wall (All Saints Gate)	20,018	20,018
Village Green Play Area Resurfacing	48,000	48,000
Resurface Orchard Close Play Area	21,081	21,081
Parkside Family Picnic Area	10,180	10,180
Allotment Shed Bases	6,502	6,502
	<hr/> <hr/> 277,818	<hr/> <hr/> 277,818

Houghton Regis Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2024

6 Fixed Assets (cont'd)	2024	2023
<u>Community Assets</u>		
Civic Regalia	4,779	4,779
War Memorial	9,363	9,363
Village Green	1	1
Tithe Farm Recreation Ground	1	1
Land rear of Orchard Close	1	1
Houghton Regis Cemetery	104,305	104,305
New Cemetery Development	41,461	24,850
Orchard Close Recreation Ground	1	1
Land rear of Houghton Court	1	1
Land rear of Village Green Pavilion	1	1
Land Adj Chapel Path	1	1
Land off Townsend Farm Road	1	1
All Saints Churchyard	1	1
Land at Moore Crescent	1	1
Land at The Baulk	1	1
Land at Orchard Close	1	1
Parcels within Dog Kennel Down Area	1	1
Parkside Recreation Ground	1	1
Part of The Paddocks	1	1
Former Railway Line	1	1
	<hr/> 159,924	<hr/> 143,313
	<hr/> <hr/> 6,273,900	<hr/> <hr/> 3,596,414

The basis of valuation of the above assets is set out in the Statement of Accounting Policies.

7 Fixed Assets - Additions and Disposals

	2024	2023
	£	£
	Cost	Cost
During the year the following assets were purchased:		
Operational Land and Buildings	2,628,170	265,134
Vehicles and Equipment	49,205	76,018
Infrastructure Assets	-	7,927
Community Assets	16,611	19,520
	<hr/> 2,693,986	<hr/> 368,599
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
	Proceeds	Proceeds
During the year the following assets were disposed of:		
Vehicles and Equipment	8,000	31,300
	<hr/> 8,000	<hr/> 31,300
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

Houghton Regis Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2024

8 Investments

	Investments Other Than Loans £
Cost	
At 01 April 2023	600,000
At 31 March 2024	<u>600,000</u>
Amounts Written Off	
At 31 March 2024	<u>-</u>
Net Book Value	
At 31 March 2024	<u>600,000</u>
	<u>600,000</u>
At 01 April 2023	<u>600,000</u>
	<u>600,000</u>

9 Current Asset Investments

	2024 £	2023 £
L A Deposit Fund Account	469,500	554,500
	<u>469,500</u>	<u>554,500</u>

10 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade Debtors	14,533	195,926
VAT Recoverable	179,576	56,569
Other Debtors	8,459	1,450
Prepayments	17,280	17,566
Accrued Income	11,308	9,655
	<u>231,156</u>	<u>281,166</u>

Houghton Regis Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2024

11 Creditors and Accrued Expenses

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade Creditors	166,083	5,553
Other Creditors	4,299	126
Payroll Taxes and Social Security	12,121	-
Accruals	35,398	17,265
Income in Advance	200	320
Capital Creditors	47,341	9,157
Capital Receipts in Advance	25,776	260,575
	291,218	292,996

12 Agency Work

During the year the Council undertook the following agency work on behalf of other authorities:

Commissioning Authority and Nature of Work	2024	2023
	£	£
Central Bedfordshire Council - Dog Bin Emptying	1,200	1,200
	1,200	1,200

A final claim for reimbursement to 31 March 2024 has been made.

During the year the Council commissioned the following agency work to be performed by other authorities:

Performing Authority and Nature of Work	2024	2023
	£	£
Central Bedfordshire Council - CCTV Monitoring	4,122	2,700
Central Bedfordshire Council - Bulk Waste Collections	(3,600)	3,600
Police & Crime Commissioner Beds - OP HANA	36,978	24,792
	37,500	31,092

A final claim to 31 March 2024 has been made.

13 Hire Purchase and Lease Obligations

At 31 March the following hire purchase agreement(s) and lease(s) were in operation:

Hire/Lessor	Purpose	Annual Lease/Hire Payable	Year of Expiry
		£	
Grenke Leasing Ltd	Photocopier (5 Years Lease)	2,079	2024

14 Loans

At the close of business on 31 March 2024 the following loans to the council were outstanding:

Lender	Loan Period	Amount	Years Remaining
		£	
Public Works Loan Board	24 Years from 19 th October 2009	86,895	10
Public Works Loan Board	24 Years from 5 th February 2010	99,659	10
Public Works Loan board	24 Years from 22 nd November 2023	500,000	24

Houghton Regis Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2024

15 Usable Capital Receipts Reserve

	2024	2023
	£	£
Capital receipts (asset sales) during the year	8,000	31,300
<i>Less:</i>		
Capital used to fund expenditure	(8,000)	(31,300)
Balance at 31 March	-	-

The Usable Capital Receipts Reserve represents capital receipts available to finance capital expenditure in future years.

16 Earmarked Reserves

	Balance at 01/04/2023	Contribution to reserve	Contribution from reserve	Balance at 31/03/2024
	£	£	£	£
Other Earmarked Reserves	736,404	54,502	(69,367)	721,539
Total Earmarked Reserves	736,404	54,502	(69,367)	721,539

The Other Earmarked Reserves are credited with amounts set aside from revenue to fund specific known commitments of the council.

The Other Earmarked Reserves at 31 March 2024 are set out in detail at Appendix A.

17 Capital Commitments

The council had no capital commitments at 31 March 2024 not otherwise provided for in these accounts.

18 Contingent Liabilities

The council is not aware of any contingent liabilities at the date of these accounts.

Houghton Regis Town Council

Appendices

31 March 2024

Appendix A

Schedule of Earmarked Reserves

	<u>Balance at</u> <u>01/04/2023</u>	<u>Contribution</u> <u>to reserve</u>	<u>Contribution</u> <u>from reserve</u>	<u>Balance at</u> <u>31/03/2024</u>
	£	£	£	£
All Saints Churchyard Wall	4,616	1,000		5,616
Pavilion Renovation	244,301			244,301
Street Furniture	4,251	7,000		11,251
Grounds Machinery Renewal	0	1,920		1,920
Play Areas	145,651	25,000		170,651
Community Development	15,868	11,000	(6,375)	20,493
Elections	12,777		(11,080)	1,697
Website Development	6,000			6,000
Cemetery Provision	77,491		(6,611)	70,880
Allotments	32,960			32,960
Former Railway Line	27,489		(3,000)	24,489
CBC Bulk Waste Reserve	-	3,600		3,600
Office Provision	165,000		(42,301)	122,699
Houghton Hall Park Project	-	4,982		4,982
 TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES	 736,404	 54,502	 (69,367)	 721,539

2024/25							
Committee	Schedule of Earmarked Reserves		Predicted Opening Balance	Transfer In	Transfer Out	Predicted Closing Balance	Notes
			01.04.24			31.03.25	
			£	£	£	£	
Town Council	310	General Reserves - Predicted	429,251	0	0	429,251	
E&L	320	All Saints Churchyard Wall	5,616	0	0	5,616	To be used to fund repairs as required.
E&L	322	Pavilion Renovation	244,301	0	0	244,301	This EMR will be used to help fund Tithe Farm Sports project.
E&L	324	Street Furniture	11,251	0	0	11,251	
E&L	326	Grounds Machinery renewal	1,920	0	0	1,920	
E&L	327	Play Areas	170,651	0	0	170,651	Typically this fund gets built up over time to fund major improvements to play areas.
Comm Serv	330	Community Development	20,493		0	20,493	To be used to fund the Neighbourhood Plan process and production. TBC all NHP invoices received and settled.
Corp Serv	332	Elections	1,697	0	0	1,697	Typically this fund gets built up over time to fund any by-election or main election.
Comm Serv	338	Website	6,000		6,000	0	To be used in 2024/25 to fund website update completed March / April 2024
E&L	348	Cemetery	70,880	0	0	70,880	To be used to fund the environmental assessment of the land at Grendall Lane.
E&L	351	Allotments	32,960	0	0	32,960	To be used to fund enhancements to any allotment provision.
E&L	352	Former Railway Line	24,489	0	3,000	21,489	This has to date been an annual transfer out to help fund the ongoing maintenance of this land in accordance with the s106 agreement. To be transferred to 281-4992
Comm Serv	354	Bulk Waste	3,600	0	3,600	0	CBC invoices expected for removals carried out in 2023/24.
E&L	358	Houghton Hall Park Project	4,982	0	4,982	0	Reduced financial contribution required in 23/24, agreed to hold surplus budget in an EMR to assist in funding upkeep of Visitors Centre.
Town Council	355	New Office Provision	122,699	0	0	122,699	
TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES			721,539	0	17,582	703,957	
E&L	S106	Deferred Income	25,776	0	0	25,776	To be used to help fund Tithe Farm Sports project



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY & SCHEDULE

Date of Approval:	Town Council 28 th September 2015
Date of Review:	26 th September 2016; 25 th September 2017; 24 th September 2018; 23 rd September 2019; 14 th September 2020; 21 st September 2021; 28 th November 2022. No longer reviewed by Corporate Services, as per IA recommendation.
Date of Re-approval Town Council	5 th December 2016; 11 th December 2017; 8 th October 2018; 9 th December 2019; 14 th December 2020; 13 th December 2021; 20 th March 2023; 18 th March 2024, 15 th May 2024

Risk Management Strategy

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Scope
- 3.0 Strategy Outcomes
- 4.0 Risk Management Overview
- 5.0 Risk Appetite
- 6.0 Embedding Risk Management
- 7.0 Roles and Responsibilities
- 8.0 Risk Management Processes
- 9.0 Monitoring and Review
- 10.0 Glossary of Terms

Appendix 1 - Impact and Likelihood Descriptors and Risk Scoring Matrix

Risk Management Schedule

- Corporate Services
- Environment & Leisure
- Planning
- Community Services

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Effective risk management is essential if Houghton Regis Town Council is to deliver its key outcomes and achieve its goals. It supports continuous improvement and good governance.
- 1.2 Risk management is about us: identifying the things that could happen to prevent the delivery of our key outcomes (our risks); assessing how likely it is that these things might happen and what their impact might be; and determining what can be done to reduce the likelihood of those unwanted events or mitigate their impact. Effective risk management requires us to identify our most important risks; record those risks and the actions we plan to take to deal with them; and review, regularly the impact of our actions on our risks.
- 1.3 We cannot avoid risk entirely and it would be impracticable to try to manage away entirely the risks that we are exposed to. What we must do is: decide what level of risk we are prepared, and can afford, to accept; take action that is proportionate and affordable to reduce to an acceptable level as many risks as possible; and keep under review and actively manage those risks that remain unacceptably high.
- 1.4 The Risk Management Strategy has been adopted to help us to manage our risks effectively.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 The Strategy provides an overview of risk management before examining in more detail the elements critical to successful risk management, i.e.:
- determining our risk appetite
 - the integration of risk management into our decision making
 - linking service planning and performance management with risk management
 - defining responsibilities for risk management
 - processes for identifying, assessing and managing risk

3.0 Strategy Outcomes

- 3.1 The outcomes to be delivered by this strategy are within the approved Town Council Plan:

4.0 Risk Management - Overview

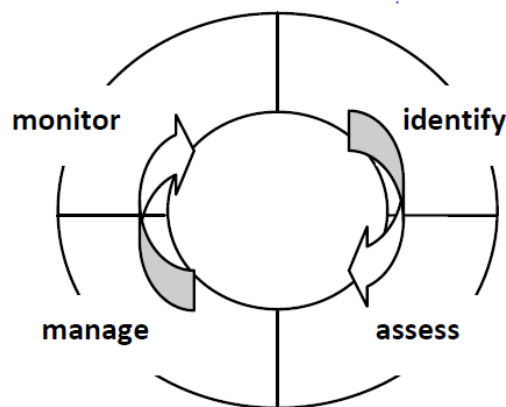
- 4.1 Risk management is the process by which the organisation seeks to identify, assess and manage key risks which might prevent it from achieving its corporate outcomes and goals or from doing so in an effective and efficient manner.
- 4.2 Risk management should not be treated as a standalone process. It should be treated just like budgeting and financial management or service planning and performance management – something that any good manager does as a matter of course. It should be linked to the service and financial planning and management as managers identify both the risks to their plans as they develop them and the risks associated with subsequent actions to keep those plans on track.
- 4.3 Risk management is a continuous process. For known risks, it should operate from the time that each risk is first identified until such time as it no longer represents a significant risk to the organisation. Recorded risks and the controls used to mitigate them should be reviewed on

a regular basis: the frequency of review for each risk should reflect the impact the risk might have and the degree of confidence placed on the controls in place to manage it. In addition, there is a need for constant and ongoing vigilance to ensure that any new risks that may arise are recognised and dealt with before they can impact on the organisation.

4.4 There are a number of benefits of having an effective risk management process in place and these include:

- Alerting management and other accountable persons to the key risks which might prevent the achievement of the organisation's corporate outcomes and service plan objectives, in order that timely mitigation can be developed to either prevent the risks occurring, or to manage them effectively if they do occur.
- Contributing to better decision making and the process of achieving corporate outcomes and service plan objectives. When embedded within existing business processes such as planning, performance management, project management and budgeting, it provides a basis for ensuring that the implications of decisions are thought through; that the impact of any decision on other decisions, initiatives and projects is considered; and that conflicts within planning and decision making balanced. It also helps managers to design mitigations that are proportionate to the degree of risk faced.
- Providing assurance to accountable persons and managers on the adequacy of arrangements for the conduct of business. It demonstrates openness and accountability to various regulatory bodies and to all other stakeholders.
- Greater risk awareness and an improved control environment, which should mean fewer incidents and other control failures and better service outcomes.

4.5 The organisation's risk management approach is based on the standard management cycle of:



5.0 Risk Appetite

5.1 Risk appetite or risk tolerance are two terms that mean the same thing – how much risk the organisation is prepared to live with to achieve service goals and reach its strategic objectives. Using the language of the risk management professional, the organisation may be risk averse, risk neutral or risk loving. The organisation's risk appetite may vary depending on which aspect of its activities it is considering but for risk management purposes, it must be capable of expressing its appetite objectively – and numerically.

5.2 Houghton Regis Town Council has determined that it will use a scoring model based on impact and likelihood and will set a single risk tolerance level: any risk that scores 9 or more, using the model will be considered "primary" risks and will be subject to positive action

designed to mitigate the risk and bring its score within the tolerance level. Appendix 1 to the Strategy provides guidance for scoring the impact and likelihood of each risk.

- 5.3 To provide full assurance, those risks scoring less than 9 will also be recorded in the Risk Register – as will be the controls and other mitigations that resulted in a within-tolerance risk score. They will also be subject to monitoring designed to give assurance that controls are operating as expected to keep them within tolerance.

6.0 Embedding Risk Management

- 6.1 Embedding risk management is defined as building risk consistently and uniformly into all operations at every level so that it becomes part of ‘the way we do things’ as a matter of routine.

- 6.2 The key factors for successfully embedding risk management are:

- Sponsorship;
- Ownership;
- Developing linkages with service plans and corporate priorities
- Developing the appropriate knowledge and skills to identify, assess and manage risks

- 6.3 How we will seek to achieve these success factors – and embed risk management - is outlined in sections 7 and 8 of the Strategy and the accompanying appendices and guidance notes.

7.0 Roles and Responsibilities

- 7.1 Houghton Regis Town Council will only succeed in managing its risks if everyone understands their responsibilities in this area. The key message for all of us is that we share responsibility for our risks – and we can’t afford to have anyone shirking their responsibility.

- 7.2 The Town Clerk is specifically responsible for:

- Producing and reviewing the Risk Management Strategy
- Reporting to those charged with governance on the effectiveness of risk management arrangements
- Providing (or obtaining via competent specialists) advice, guidance, support and training to employees and Councillors or other accountable persons
- Reviewing committee reports to ensure risks relating to recommendations /decisions are clearly stated in the report
- Promoting effective risk management across the organisation
- Assisting officers in maintaining the corporate Risk Register

- 7.3 Every risk in the Risk Register will be made the responsibility of a specific employee, manager or Town Clerk. That person will be the Risk Owner.

- 7.4 The organisation’s Corporate Services Committee is responsible for oversight of the risk management processes. The Committee receives 6 monthly reports on overdue risk actions. *Those charged with governance* are involved in the preparation and review of the Annual Governance Statement (*Statement of Internal Control*) which includes reference to the organisation’s risk management arrangements.

- 7.5 The following table identifies other specific roles and responsibilities.

Who	Responsibilities
Accountable persons – those charged with governance (<i>Town Clerk & elected members</i>)	<p>To hold management team (or equivalent) accountable for effective risk management across the organisation</p> <p>To ensure effective risk management arrangements are in place</p> <p>To consider risks when making decisions</p> <p>To raise risk issues and concerns with management team or Risk Manager</p>
Senior management / Clerk (risk manager in this context)	<p>To identify and assess risks to service delivery and instigate actions to mitigate those risks</p> <p>To identify corporate risks and ensure identified actions to mitigate are completed</p> <p>To champion risk management and lead by example</p> <p>Horizon scanning to identify emerging risks</p> <p>To ensure appropriate risk owners are designated for each risk or action</p>
Project Managers (for projects)	<p>To identify and manage project risks</p> <p>To ensure high level project risks are recorded on the Risk Register</p>
Partnership Lead officers	<p>To identify and manage partnership risks from the organisation's perspective</p> <p>To identify and manage risks from the partnership's perspective (where the organisation is the lead authority)</p> <p>To ensure partnership risks are recorded on the Risk Register and in accordance with any partnership agreement.</p>
Clerk and other employees	<p>To identify opportunities or threats to service delivery</p> <p>To take reasonable action to minimise risks in service delivery</p> <p>To report events (materialising of identified risks) to management team</p> <p>To seek advice from the Risk Manager on risk management issues</p>

8.0 Risk Management Processes

8.1 Houghton Regis Town Council uses its Town Council Plan to identify its aims, objectives and desired outcome. Houghton Regis Town Council has determined that, for all outcomes identified in this Plan, Risk Owners must consider the risks that may materialise to prevent delivery of a desired outcome and determine what should be done about them. The following steps are to be followed:

- **Risk identification** – the Risk Owner will determine what might happen that could impact on delivery and establish when, how and why such an event might occur.
- **Risk assessment** – the Risk Owner will apply the guidance set out in Appendix 1 to determine the relevant risk score: if the risk score is outside the tolerance level action will be required. At this point the Risk Owner is assessing the “inherent risk”, that is the risk that the organisation would be exposed to if no mitigating actions were taken.

- **Initial risk mitigation** – the Risk Owner will identify what controls are already in place to reduce the chance of a risk materialising
 - **Initial risk response** – the Risk Owner will determine what to do about a risk in terms of treating, tolerating, transferring or terminating the risky activity in order to reduce the potential impact on the organisation. Alternatively, you might take the risk in order to get an outcome that would not be achievable without taking the risk.
 - **Risk review** – the Risk Owner will review the scoring with the responses and controls in place to come up with the residual risk score.
 - **Future risk mitigation** – the Risk Owner will identify actions that need to be taken to reduce the residual risk score to within the risk appetite.
- 8.2 These steps may be undertaken by officers during a group workshop, or individually with the assistance of the Risk Manager or an external facilitator. Risks, controls and actions can then be recorded in the Risk Register. Risks can be classified as:
- Corporate – cross cutting and affecting all services in the organisation
 - Operational – related to a specific service or activity
 - Strategic – may affect the strategic direction of the organisation
 - Project – time limited and specific to finite projects
- 8.3 Implementation of risk actions are monitored as part of the organisation's regular reporting of budgets, performance and risk management (where such reporting exists). Where actions have not been taken in a timely manner to mitigate risks, this shall be reported to the appropriate committee charged with governance.
- 8.4 Emerging risks identified through regular horizon scanning will be assessed, analysed and recorded on the Risk Register with suitable responses as soon as they are identified.
- 8.5 Risks relating to committee decisions are recorded in each committee report. The Risk Manager provides advice and guidance and will identify if the Risk Register requires updating with any corporate or service risks emerging from report recommendations.
- 8.6 Project risks will be identified at the outset of any project and recorded in the organisation's Project Management approach. Any project risks that have an inherent risk score of 9 or above will be recorded on the Risk Register in a sub-section for the appropriate service area. This will enable monitoring of controls and actions.
- 8.7 Once the project is completed, project risks will be removed from the Risk Register.
- 9.0 Monitoring and Review**
- 9.1 The Strategy will be reviewed annually by Corporate Services Committee and reported to Town Council.
- 9.2 Progress with actions designed to mitigate primary risks will be reported to those charged with governance.
- 9.3 Risk Owners will review their risks on the Risk Register every six months and give assurance that controls are still operating as recorded.
- 9.4 Where appropriate, Internal Audit will review the organisation's risk management processes at least once every two years.

10.0 Glossary of terms

Term	Definition
Risk	The threat that an event or action will adversely affect the organisation's ability to deliver its objectives. The threat is measured in terms of impact and likelihood.
Risk strategy	How the organisation plans to achieve good risk management
Risk appetite	The level of risk the organisation is prepared to accept
Risk averse	A low appetite for risk taking
Risk positive	A high appetite for risk taking to potentially achieve a more favourable outcome
Upside risk	Opportunity to exploit a situation for a positive advantage
Inherent risk	The impact and likelihood of an event occurring before any controls haven been applied
Residual risk	The impact and likelihood of an event occurring when controls are operating as designed
Controls	Processes or actions taken to address risks by reducing the likelihood. Usually referred to as treating the risk. Cost of controls should be proportional to the risk
Mitigation	Actions taken or to be taken to reduce the chance of a risk materialising or the impact if it does.
Treat the risk	Operate processes to reduce the risk e.g. password security, spot checks, regular monitoring or reporting
Tolerate the risk	Agree not to take action, usually due to minimal likelihood of occurrence, or cost of controls is disproportional to the risk
Transfer the risk	Often through insurance, where the impact of a risk materialising is reduced. May also occur through outsourcing if a third party takes on the risk.
Terminate the risk	Stop doing the activity / service to which the risk relates
Take the risk	View the risk as an upside risk / opportunity to improve an outcome or deliver an even better service and take the chance

APPENDIX 1

IMPACT DESCRIPTORS (scores) – how big could the impact be?

The following descriptors are designed to assist the scoring of the impact of a risk if it were to occur:

Score	Low (1)	Medium (2)	High (3)	Very High (4)
Legal	Minor civil litigation	Major civil litigation and/or local public enquiry	Major civil litigation setting precedent and/or national public enquiry	Section 151 or government intervention or criminal charges
Financial	Up to £25k	Up to £50k	Up to £100k	Over £100k
Performance / Service Quality	Low level of minor complaints	Material level of minor complaints Service quality impaired	Unacceptable level of complaints. Adequate service level cannot be maintained	Complete failure to deliver service Government intervention
Health and safety of people	Low level of minor injuries	High level of minor injuries	Serious injury	Death of an individual for whom the organisation has a responsibility
Reputation	Little or no impact outside of the organisation	Minimal negative local media reporting	Significant negative front page reports or editorial comment in the local media	Questions raised in Parliament and/or reported in the national media

Financial risk impact levels should be adjusted to fit with the budget of the organisation. As a guide, Very High impact would be 10% of the organisation's net expenditure for the year (or precept and other income if applicable)

LIKELIHOOD DESCRIPTORS (scores) – how soon might it happen?

Low (1)	Once every two to five years or more
Medium (2)	This year or next year
High (3)	Within six months to a year
Very High (4)	Immediate or within a month

RISK SCORING MATRIX

VERY HIGH (4)	4	8	12	16
HIGH (3)	3	6	9	12
MEDIUM (2)	2	4	6	8
LOW (1)	1	2	3	4
IMPACT / LIKELIHOOD	LOW (1)	MEDIUM (2)	HIGH (3)	VERY HIGH (4)

Scores are mapped on the matrix above.

Red scores – Primary risk that exceeds the organisations risk appetite – action needed to redress, monthly monitoring

Amber scores – likely to cause the organisation some difficulties – quarterly monitoring

Green scores – monitor as necessary

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RISK MANAGEMENT SCHEDULE

Corporate Services

Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likeli- hood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likeli- hood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
Finance											
• Banking	Failure of banking set up to meet legal, policy & administration requirements	Loss of funds Short term loss of bank services (telephone / internet banking)	1	3	3	Use of national bank Spread of investments Internal controls	1	3	3	RFO	Ongoing
• Borrowing	Failure of borrower to honour loan agreement Failure of lender to honour loan agreement	Financial penalties Damage to reputation	1	3	3	Use of recognised public sector lender Set up for BACS repayments	1	3	3	RFO	Ongoing

Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likeli- hood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likeli- hood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Audit – external	Failure of audit to provide appropriate assurance and give unqualified opinion	Financial penalties Damage to reputation	1	2	2	Use of national auditors as required by Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd Preparation of accounts by professional accountants	1	2	2	RFO	Ongoing
• Audit – internal	Failure of audit to identify failings Unsuitability of internal audit service	Financial penalties Damage to reputation	1	2	2	Internal auditor is suitably qualified and independent of the Council. Appt made and scope set by Council	1	2	2	RFO	Ongoing

Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likeli- hood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likeli- hood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Software	Loss of data Failure of software Protection of data from breach of confidentiality	Unable to undertake council functions Unlawful access to data Damage to reputation	2	3	6	Use of qualified IT support Up to date premise security Up to date IT security Off site secure data storage Up to date equipment	2	3	6	Town Clerk	Ongoing
• Investments	Failure of investment company	Loss of funds Restricted access to funds	2	4	8	Good track record Nationally renown	2	4	8	RFO	Ongoing

Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likeli- hood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likeli- hood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Financial management	Poor financial decisions Non compliance with legislation & policy	Damage to reputation Unable to meet financial commitments	3	3	9	Financial policy controls in place Council appoints an RFO Staff and Councillor training provided Internal and external audit undertaken Use of professional accountancy support Use of council specific accounts software	3	3	9	RFO	Ongoing

Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likeli- hood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likeli- hood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Income generation	Predicted income doesn't match budgeted income Threat to service provision	Damage to reputation Unable to meet service commitments	3	2	6	Council sets balanced budget 3-9 months general reserves maintained Regular budget monitoring Main income from Precept and is governed by Legislation	3	2	6	RFO	Ongoing
• Tax base changes	Reduce income from precept arising from reduction in parish area	Reduced income	1	3	3	Active engagement by HRTC in governance reviews	1	3	3	RFO	Ongoing
	Slower than predicted increase in tax base arising from slower build out	Reduced income	1	3	3	None	1	3	3	RFO	Ongoing

Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likeli- hood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likeli- hood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
Democracy											
• Elections	Not contested Insufficient Cllr's Suitability of candidates Not run according to statute	Damage to reputation Reduced democratic mandate Poor decisions	2	2	4	Elections promoted Information provided Elections run by principal authority	2	2	4	Head of Democratic Services	Ongoing
• Councillors	Cllr vacancies though resigning, leaving or disqualification Suitability of skills and experience Quality of guidance / decisions	Insufficient numbers to support the democratic process Damage to reputation Financial costs	2	3	6	Cllr training and support provided Cllr's agree to Code of Conduct Cllr complete Declarations of Interest forms and declare interests at meetings	2	3	6	Head of Democratic Services	Ongoing

						<p>Cllr workload shared among 14 Cllr's</p> <p>Council staff provide guidance, knowledge and support</p> <p>Council and Cllr's work under approved policies</p>					
Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likelihood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likelihood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Subscriptions	<p>Loss of outside professional bodies who provide guidance and support</p> <p>Withdrawal of budget to fund subscriptions</p>	<p>Poor actions</p> <p>Damage to reputation</p>	2	2	4	<p>Long history of subscriptions</p> <p>Budget provision made annually</p> <p>Cllr's aware of benefits of subscriptions</p>	2	2	4	Town Clerk	Ongoing

Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likeli- hood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likeli- hood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
Central services											
• Utilities	Supply fails Cut off Supplier fails	Operation of council services ceases Damage to reputation	2	2	4	Use of national suppliers Accounts settled promptly	2	2	4	Town Clerk	Ongoing
• Unplanned work	Unbudgeted costs / use of general reserves Non compliance with council policy	Damage to reputation Financial costs	2	3	6	Council policies guide for unplanned financial decisions Special mtgs can be held as required	2	3	6	Town Clerk	Ongoing
• Non compliance with legislation	Council acting unlawfully	Damage to reputation Financial costs Legal proceedings	3	3	9	Trained staff Cllr training offered Use of outside professional services to	2	2	4	Promotion of training to cllrs - Head of Democratic Services Council to consider if training	Ongoing

						support council				should / could be mandatory – Town Clerk	
						Membership of professional bodies					
Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likelihood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likelihood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Communication systems inc. email, post, telephone, social media	Failure of systems Council uncontactable	Damage to reputation Financial costs Cessation of work of council	2	2	4	Variety of communication methods available Use of nationally recognised suppliers	2	2	4	Town Clerk	Ongoing
• Insurance	Failure of insurance company Insufficient insurance cover	Damage to reputation Financial costs	1	4	4	Use of nationally recognised provider Annual review of insurance arrangements	1	4	4	Town Clerk	Ongoing
• Contracts	Company failure	Damage to reputation	2	3	6	Use of recognised &	2	3	6	Town Clerk	Ongoing

	Termination of contract Insufficient / unsuitable monitoring	Financial costs Cessation / disruption of service Dissatisfied customers				competent providers Annual review of contracts All contracts are signed Financial statements provided					
Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likelihood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likelihood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Professional support inc legal, hr, occ health, payroll, accounts / year end	Insufficient cover Incorrect advice	Damage to reputation Financial costs Dissatisfied customers / staff / contractors etc	2	3	6	Use of competent providers	2	3	6	Town Clerk	Ongoing
• IT & copier / equipment	Security Failure	Damage to reputation Financial costs	1	2	2	Routine maintenance provided	1	2	2	Town Clerk	Ongoing

	Replacement Maintenance contracts fail	Cessation / disruption of service Dissatisfied customers				Up to date equipment & security					
Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likeli- hood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likeli- hood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Staff	Competence Resignation Unplanned extended leave Fraud Misconduct Policy compliance	Poor / disrupted service delivery Damage to reputation Financial costs Dissatisfied customers	2	2	4	Qualified staff Ongoing training provided Contracts of employment Policy guidance Staff aware of colleagues work and processes Cllr monitor Appraisals Insurance in place	2	2	4	Town Clerk	Ongoing Develop a succession plan for key members of staff – Dec 24

Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likeli- hood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likeli- hood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Health & Safety	Non compliance with legislation Accidents, injury & death	Damage to reputation Financial costs	2	2	4	H&S policy in place Trained staff inc NEBOSH Day to day H&S practices completed Insurance in place Use of first aiders at events H&S equipment provided Employee Assistance Programme provided	2	2	4	Town Clerk	Ongoing

Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likeli- hood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likeli- hood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Service continuity	Disruption to / cessation of services	Damage to reputation Financial costs	2	3	6	Premises security measures in place Data backed up off site Remote working available Staff and Cllr training to be provided	2	3	6	Town Clerk	Ongoing
• Senior Staff and Member leadership	Disruption to / cessation of services Failure to meet statuary requirements	Damage to reputation Financial costs	2	3	6	Senior leadership team with breadth of knowledge and expertise Availability of external support	2	2	4	Share external support options - Town Clerk	Ongoing

						Regular leadership meetings held					
						Availability of political group leaders					
Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likelihood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likelihood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• General risk management	Poor controls	Damage to reputation Financial costs Accidents and emergencies	2	2	4	Risk assessments completed for all areas of work and events Staff aware Staff training May 2017 Member training and briefing programme summer 2019 completed.	2	2	4	Town Clerk	Ongoing

Environment & Leisure

Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likelihood (x)	Impact (=)	Total	Existing controls	Likelihood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
Public open spaces / recreation grounds / pavilions / play areas / sport provision	Service delivery	Poor / disrupted service delivery	2	3	6	Competent staff	2	3	6	Head of Grounds	Ongoing
	Health & safety					Insurance in place					
	Equipment suitability / safety	Damage to reputation				Regular checks					
	Replacement	Financial costs									
	Vandalism	Dissatisfied customers				Up to date and maintained equipment					
	Lease expiring	Liability claims				Process in place to manage illegal traveller encampments					
	Land needed for other purposes										
	Unauthorised access (trespass, travellers)	Non compliance with relevant legislation									
	Adequate maintenance										
Acts of God	Harm to person	Poor / disrupted	1	3	3	Good management	1	3	3	Clerk	Ongoing

	Removal of service or facility	service delivery				and maintenance					
	Environmental damage	Damage to reputation				Engagement in local authority disaster recover planning					
		Financial costs									
		Dissatisfied customers									
		Liability claims									
		Non compliance with relevant legislation									
Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likeli-hood (x)	Impact (=)	Total	Existing controls	Likeli-hood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Allotments	Service delivery	Poor / disrupted service delivery	2	3	6	Insurance in place	2	3	6	Head of Grounds	Ongoing
	Health & safety					Access codes provided to allotment holders only					
	Vandalism	Damage to reputation									
	Unauthorised access (trespass, travellers)	Financial costs				Allotment Agreement (contracts) Regular inspections					

		Dissatisfied customers				Land registered					
		Liability claims									
		Non compliance with relevant legislation									
Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likelihood (x)	Impact (=)	Total	Existing controls	Likelihood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Cemetery	Service delivery	Poor / disrupted service delivery	2	3	6	Competent staff	2	3	6	Head of Grounds	Ongoing
	Health & safety					Insurance in place					
	Equipment suitability / safety	Damage to reputation				Regular checks					
	Vandalism	Financial costs				Up to date and maintained equipment					
	Unauthorised access (trespass, travellers)	Dissatisfied customers				Active work taking place to extend useful working life					
	Lack of space	Liability claims									
		Non compliance									

		with relevant legislation				of current cemetery. Active work taking place to identify site for a new cemetery.					
Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likelihood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likelihood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• All Saints churchyard	Service delivery	Poor / disrupted service delivery	2	3	6	Competent staff	2	3	6	Head of Grounds	Ongoing
	Health & safety					Insurance in place					
	Equipment suitability / safety	Damage to reputation				Regular checks					
	Vandalism	Financial costs				Up to date and maintained equipment					
	Unauthorised access (trespass, travellers)	Dissatisfied customers				Work completed on wall repairs re stability					
	Wall stability	Liability claims									
	Not the land owner (church)	Non compliance with relevant legislation									

Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likeli- hood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likeli- hood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Street furniture	Health & safety	Lack of facility	2	2	4	Competent staff	2	2	4	Head of Grounds	Ongoing
	Equipment suitability / safety / replacement	Damage to reputation				Insurance in place					
		Financial costs				Regular checks					
	Vandalism	Dissatisfied customers				Up to date and maintained equipment					
	Land needed for other purposes	Liability claims									
		Non compliance with relevant legislation									
Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likeli- hood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likeli- hood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Machinery and equipment	Failure	Poor / disrupted service delivery	2	2	4	Competent staff	2	2	4	Head of Grounds	Ongoing
	Replacement					Insurance in place					
	Suitability	Damage to reputation				Regular checks					
	Competence of staff to use										
		Financial costs									

		Dissatisfied customers				Up to date and maintained equipment					
		Liability claims									
		Non compliance with relevant legislation									
Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likelihood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likelihood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Unregistered land	Evidence of right to manage Right of ownership challengeable False claim of ownership by a third party Insurance claims	Legal challenge: Ownership Injury Responsibilities	2	1	2	On work programme to check and complete where needed	2	1	2	Corporate Services Manager	Ongoing
• Tithe Farm Sports Project	Financial affordability Contractor financial stability	Poor / disrupted delivery Damage to reputation	2	2	4	Tender process followed Grants secured	2	2	4	Town Clerk	Ongoing until build complete and facility up and running

	Future site management	Increase in financial costs				Contingency included					
		Liability claims									

Community Services

Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likelihood (x)	Impact (=)	Total	Existing controls	Likelihood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Provision of services to young people	Cessation of services	Poor service delivery	2	2	4	Regular reports to committee	2	2	4	Town Clerk	Ongoing
	Disruption to services	Damage to reputation				Disclosure and Barring checks					
	Suitability of contractor or staff	Financial costs				Trained staff					
		Dissatisfied customers				Reliable staff					
		Liability claims									
		Non-compliance with relevant legislation									

Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likeli- hood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likeli- hood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Provision of community events	Cessation of events	Poor service delivery	2	2	4	Regular reports to committee	2	2	4	Town Clerk	Ongoing
	Disruption to events	Damage to reputation				Monitoring of contracts					
	Suitability of contractor or staff	Financial costs				Insurance in place					
		Dissatisfied customers				Risk assessments undertaken and checked					
		Liability claims				Calendar of events agreed at the beginning of a new Council year					
		Non compliance with relevant legislation									
		Impact on staff capacity				Sufficient budget provision to cover staff overtime costs					

Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likeli- hood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likeli- hood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Provision of town centre public toilets	Cessation of services	Poor service delivery	1	3	3	Use of reputable contractor	1	3	3	Town Clerk	Ongoing
	Disruption to services	Damage to reputation				Annual monitoring					
	Suitability of contractor or staff	Financial costs				Contract in place					
		Dissatisfied customers									
		Liability claims									
		Non compliance with relevant legislation									
• Christmas lights	Cessation of services	Poor service delivery	1	2	2	Use of reputable contractor	1	2	2	Town Clerk	Ongoing
	Disruption to services	Damage to reputation				Annual monitoring					
	Installation/ Maintenance/ Removal	Financial costs				Insurance					
	Vandalism	Dissatisfied customers				Up to date equipment					
	Weather	Liability claims				Agreement in place					

Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likelihood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likelihood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Communications inc town crier, town guide, website, social media	Cessation of services	Poor service delivery	2	2	4	Compiled by all staff	2	2	4	Head of Democratic Services	Ongoing
	Disruption to services	Damage to reputation				Delivered by various distributors					
	Quality of communications	Financial costs				Use of reputable print & design company					
	Suitability of contractors	Dissatisfied customers									
		Non compliance with relevant legislation									
• Civic events	Absence of mayor	Damage to reputation	3	1	3	Provision of established events	3	1	3	Town Clerk	Ongoing
	Absence of support staff	Poor quality event				Use of regular providers & venues					
	Health & safety issues	Personal injury				Availability of deputy mayor / cllrs					
	Event not financially viable	Financial implications									
	Not supported by attendees					Supported by staff					

• Corporate events	Absence of support staff	Damage to reputation	3	1	3	Provision of established events	3	1	3	Town Clerk	Ongoing
	Health & safety issues	Poor quality event				Use of regular providers & venues					
	Not supported by attendees	Personal injury				Availability of deputy mayor / cllrs / other staff					
	Weather	Financial implications									
	Disaster / terrorism etc	Reduce value for money / low community benefit									
	Poor attendance										
• Community grants	Failure to provide appropriate support to Community Groups	Damage to reputation	2	1	2	Budget provision	2	1	2	Town Clerk	Ongoing
		Lack of service delivery				Cllr support					
	Public perception					Advertising availability					
	Service delivery	Insufficient funds				Robust application process					
	Poor uptake					Budget advice provided					

	Excessive uptake										
Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likeli-hood (x)	Impact (y)	Total (=)	Existing controls	Likeli-hood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Community safety	Community support Public perception Service delivery	Damage to reputation Lack of community support	2	2	4	Monthly contract review Use of Beds Police Budget provision Cllr support Regular Combating Crime meetings attended by the police	2	2	4	Town Clerk	Ongoing
Mayor and deputy mayor	Civic face of Council Resignation from position	Damage to reputation	2	1	2	Cllr and staff support Regular reviews	2	1	2	Town Clerk	Ongoing

Planning

Activity	Risk area	Risk event	Likelihood (x)	Impact (=)	Total	Existing controls	Likelihood	Impact	Total	Actions (who)	Review date
• Consultation responses	In house expertise Professional advice	Damage to reputation Poor / ineffective response	2	2	4	Use of consultant to guide on more significant applications	2	2	4	Corporate Services Manager	Ongoing