



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, LU5 5EY

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

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24th February 2025

To: Members of the Corporate Services Committee

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

(Copies to other Councillors for information)

Notice of Meeting

You are hereby summoned to a Meeting of the **Corporate Services Committee** to be held at the Council Offices, Peel Street on **Monday 3rd March 2025 at 7.00pm.**

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 RECORDED *

Agenda

- 1. APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS**
- 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. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

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

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

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 - 12

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

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

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

Pages 13 - 19

Personnel Sub-Committee: 8th July 2024 and 25th November 2024.

Recommendation: To receive the Minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meetings of the 8th July 2024 and 25th November 2024.

6. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Pages 20 - 24

Members will find attached, for information, the income and expenditure report, highlighting significant variances, for Corporate Services Committee to date.

7. BANK AND CASH RECONCILIATION STATEMENTS

Pages 25 - 27

Members are requested to receive the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements for November and December 2024 and January 2025.

Recommendation:

- 1. To approve the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements for November and December 2024 and January 2025;**
- 2. For these along with the original bank statements to be signed by the Chair of Corporate Services Committee and the Council's RFO.**

8. LIST OF CHEQUE PAYMENTS

Pages 28 - 66

Members will find a list of payments for the period November and December 2024 and January 2025 (inclusive).

This report is provided for information.

9. INVESTMENT REPORT

Pages 67 - 83

This report is provided in accordance with the approved Committee Functions, Financial Regulation 8 and Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements.

The Corporate Services Committee are to oversee and manage the financial obligations of the Council, including:

To receive quarterly reports on investments containing a forecast of capital expenditure, investment opportunities and a recommendation for further investment including where length and amount.

Recommendation: To approve the investment of £250,000, held in the Town Councils CCLA Deposit Fund, with Flagstones cash deposit platform.

10. BANKING & SIGNING ARRANGEMENTS

At the Town Council meeting held on the 15th May 2024 the banking arrangements for the council's bank accounts were approved as follows (minute number 12837).

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

Following receipt of the Interim Internal Auditors report, under the observation made under number B1, it was recommended that the Council formally review and approve the mandate to apply for making online payments. At the Town Council meeting held on the 16th December 2024 it was agreed to support the comments made in response to the Interim Internal Audit Observations/Recommendations (minute number 13074). The comment in response to this observation/recommendation was:

This is noted and will be presented for consideration and approval to Corporate Services Committee at its meeting on 3rd March 2025.

Therefore, Members are requested to recommend to Town Council the following revision to the banking arrangements.

Officers on the approved bank mandate have delegated responsibility for electronically approving online payments and transfers between bank accounts and investments, on behalf of the Council.

Recommendation: To recommend to Town Council the inclusion of the following, officers on the approved bank mandate have delegated responsibility for electronically approving online payments

and transfers between bank accounts and investments, on behalf of the Council.

11. REVIEW OF CHARGES 2025/2026

Pages 84 - 85

In accordance with Financial Regulation 13.2 Members will find attached a list of charges for 2024/25 which are under the control of this Committee. In order to support users of these facilities, it is suggested that Members consider applying the same charges for 2025/26.

Members will note under section 2 of the Fee Schedule that the officer determining has been changed from the Town Clerk to the Head of Corporate Services.

Recommendation: To approve the charges for 2025/26 as attached.

12. VAT RETURN

Pages 86 - 88

In accordance with Financial Regulation 13.6 - The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted from the software by the due date.

Members will find attached, at Appendix A, B and C, for information, a copy of the VAT Returns for quarters 1, 2 and 3 for financial year 2024/2025.

This report is provided for information.

13. SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT WORK LEGISLATION – POLICY UPDATES

Pages 89 – 180

Following the introduction of the new Sexual Harassment at Work legislation a number of the Town Councils policies have been revised.

Members will find a report and copies of the revised policies attached.

Recommendation: To recommend to Town Council, the adoption of the following updated policies:

- a) Bullying and Harassment Policy**
- b) IT Policy**
- c) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**
- d) Disciplinary Policy**
- e) Social Media Policy**

14. HOLIDAYS AND OTHER ABSENCES POLICY

Pages 181 – 191

Members are informed that following an enquiry by a member of staff, in regard to the Town Councils Policy on Reservists, the Town Councils Holidays and Other Absences Policy has been revised.

Members will find a report and revised Holidays and Other Absences Policy attached.

Recommendation: To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Town Councils Holidays and Other Absences Policy.

15. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

- Staff Salaries

Recommendation: 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.

16. PAY SCALES 2025/26

Pages 192

At the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on the 3rd February 2025, 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 resolved to recommend to Corporate Services (minute number PE347 that these be noted and signed by the Chair of Corporate Services at its meeting to be held on the 3rd March 2025.

Members will find a list attached, Appendix A, as presented to the Personnel Sub-Committee.

Recommendation: To note the 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 for this list to be signed by the Chair of Corporate Services.

0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
Corporate Services Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
2nd December 2024 7.00pm.

Present:	Councillors:	D Jones	Chairman
		E Billington	
		P Burgess	(Sub)
		J Carroll	
		C Rollins	
		C Slough	(Sub)
	Officers:	Debbie Marsh	Head of Corporate Services
		Amanda Samuels	Administration Officer
	Public:	0	
Apologies:	Councillor:	E Costello	
		M Herber	
		W Henderson	

13038 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Costello, Cllr Henderson (Cllr Slough substituted) and Cllr Herber (Cllr Burgess substituted).

13039 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

13040 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Cllr Carroll declared an interest as a recipient of the Bedfordshire Pension Plan.

13041 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meetings held on 9th September 2024

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 9th September 2024 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

13042 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Members were provided with the income and expenditure report, highlighting significant variances, for Corporate Services Committee to date.

Regarding the property fund redemption, there was an objection to the internal auditor's statement 'the value of the general reserve is significantly understated', which took into account the proceeds from the disposal but not the original cost. The

internal auditor's recommendation had not included that the full value of the investments sold should be recorded in the accounts.

The advice submitted by DCK was that the redemption had been treated correctly and an adjustment would be made in the AGAR at year end.

13043 BANK AND CASH RECONCILIATION STATEMENTS

Members were requested to receive the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements for August, September and October 2024.

Resolved:

- 1. To approve the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements for August, September and October 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.**

13044 LIST OF CHEQUE PAYMENTS

Members were provided with a list of payments for the period August to October 2024 (inclusive)

13045 INVESTMENT REPORT

In accordance with Committee Functions, Financial Regulation 8 and Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements.

The Corporate Services Committee are to oversee and manage the financial obligations of the Council, including:

To receive quarterly reports on investments containing a forecast of capital expenditure, investment opportunities and a recommendation for further investment including where, length and amount.

The Chair reported that it had been suggested at the Corporate Peer Challenge Review that HRTC consider a special reserve account. Based on Monetary Policy Committee base rate predictions for 2025, it was felt HRTC had sufficient time to research investment options while the CCLA Deposit Fund continued to provide a good return. A report outlining investment options could be presented to Members at the March meeting and the Head of Corporate services was requested to carry out further research to this end.

Members suggested that the investment sum was likely to be the minimum amount of general reserves, plus the majority of the balance in the CCLA account, minus payments for the remainder of the year and that funds should be easily accessible. A sum of £500,000 was proposed.

The savings platform Flagstone had been suggested by the internal auditor but further investigation into this – and other options - was needed. It was noted that Flagstone would enable HRTC to spread investments and manage these in-house.

It was suggested that a decision regarding investment was deferred until the next meeting when further investigations had been made.

Proposed by: Cllr Carroll

Seconded by: Cllr Billington

Members agreed unanimously to defer the decision until the next meeting.

Resolved: To defer consideration of an appropriate investment opportunity for CCLA Property Fund monies until the next meeting on 3rd March 2025.

13046 WORKER PROTECTION (AMENDMENT OF EQUALITY ACT 1010) ACT 2023

Members were advised that a new Act came into effect on 26th October 2024 which introduced a new legal duty on employers to prevent sexual harassment during the course of employment.

The Town Councils HR provider informed the Head of Corporate Services that they had carried out a review of their employment policies that would be impacted by this new duty. Those policies affected would be sent to the Town Council, most notably the Bullying and Harassment Policy. This policy had been scheduled to be reviewed at this meeting; however, in light of the new duty, it was considered prudent to defer the review until a revised policy had been received. Members were advised that it was also likely that the Whistleblowing policy would be affected by the new duty. This policy was similarly scheduled to be reviewed at this meeting but would be deferred until it was ascertained whether there would be any revisions.

Furthermore, employers would also need to show that they had provided meaningful training to all staff and managers. Training opportunities on this topic, i.e. Protection from Sexual Harassment at Work, were currently being researched and it was hoped that this could also be offered out to members.

13047 REVIEW OF TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP TO OTHER BODIES

In accordance with the approved Committee Functions and Terms of Reference the Corporate Services Committee was required to annually review the Council's and/or employees' memberships of other bodies.

<i>Membership</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Annual Subscription 2025/26</i>
Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)	Annual	£480
Bedfordshire Association of Town & Parish Councils (NALC)	Annual	£2,295
Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management	Annual April to March	£105
Information Commissioners Officer (ICO)	Annual	£60
National Allotment Association	Annual	£58
Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)	Annual	£60
LGA Associate Membership (fee paid via NALC)	Annual	£580

It was highlighted that the NALC rate would be increasing by 3% but it was confirmed that an increase had been incorporated into the figures.

13048 REVIEW EXISTING CONTRACTS

In accordance with the approved Committee Functions and Terms of Reference the Corporate Services Committee was required to annually review existing contracts.

Members were provided with a report for information.

Regarding CCTV redeployable cameras, it was highlighted that an additional camera had been agreed recently and the figures would require amendment.

13049 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Members were informed that one freedom of information request was received, 9th October 2024, and responded to within the timescale as per the Town Councils Freedom of Information Policy.

13050 RETIREMENT POLICY

Members were requested to recommend to Town Council, the adoption of the Town Council's Retirement Policy.

Members were provided with a report.

Members questioned the implications if several members of staff wanted to retire early under the new policy. The Head of Corporate Services advised members that

staff have always had a right to request to flexibly retire but by adopting this revised policy there would no longer be a requirement for an employee to reduce their working hours/pay by 40% to have their request considered. In submitting a flexible working request each request would be considered individually, regardless of the persons circumstances, and the council would consider, very carefully, the impact on the business when considering such requests.

Following a request from Members, it was agreed that the policy would be reviewed after one year. Members were happy to accept the recommendation on this basis.

Resolved: To recommend to Town Council, the adoption of Houghton Regis Town Council's Retirement Policy.

13051 HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME (LGPS) EMPLOYER POLICY STATEMENT

The current LGPS regulations, which came into effect from 1 April 2014, required each scheme employer within the LGPS to formulate, publish and keep under review a statement which set out their policy on certain discretions which they had the power to exercise under the LGPS regulations.

Following information received from Bedfordshire Pension Fund, Members were advised that the Town Council's Discretionary Statement needed reviewing to ensure it reflected the current regulations.

Members requested the Head of Corporate Services to give a brief description of the changes proposed. It was explained that the wording would be tightened up to mitigate certain appeals and would state that consideration would be given to certain exceptions at certain times.

The Chair went through the amendments to establish Members agreement with these each point. Members accepted the proposed changes, but the following points were highlighted:

- References were made to the Leader of the Council, which no longer applied.
- References to the Chief Executive should be substituted with Town Clerk
- Pg 97 – HRTC email address needed amending
- Pg 106 – Amend wording to 'this rationale is further strengthened'; reference was made to the current Flexible Retirement Policy which should read Flexible Working Policy.

Members were happy to adopt the policy with the amendments noted.

Resolved: To recommend to Town Council, the adoption of Houghton Regis Town Councils Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Discretion Statement

13052 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

A new Model Financial Regulations template had been produced by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) for the purpose of its member councils and county associations.

Officers felt it was important to highlight to Members one new section of the updated regulations. Financial Regulation 4.8 (extract below) which was in bold text and therefore referred to a statutory obligation the council could not change.

4.8 Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.

The following items were raised by the Chair for further clarification

- Pg 120 - It was agreed to remove the brackets from 'Unspent funds for partially completed projects...'.
- Pg 127 – Payment of Salaries – It was agreed that the reference to Finance Committee be changed to Corporate Services. This item could be presented at meetings of the Corporate Services Committee under 'exclusion of the press and public'.

Members agreed to the adoption of the Financial Regulations with the above amendments.

Resolved: To recommend to Town Council, at the meeting to be held on the 16th December 2024, the adoption of Financial Regulations based on the 2024 model version as provided by NALC (National Association of Local Councils)

13053 FLEXI-TIME SCHEME

Houghton Regis Town Council operated a Flexi-Time scheme. Flexible working was one element which helped to increase employee motivation, reduce sickness absence, promote employee wellbeing and also served to promote recruitment and retention.

Members were presented with the Town Council Flexi-Time Scheme policy. This policy was last reviewed 14th September 2020. There had been no updates to this operational policy and therefore was fit for purpose.

It was highlighted that this was not a new policy but one that had been separated from the Flexible Working Policy.

Resolved: To recommend to Town Council the re-adoption of the Town Councils Flexi-Time Scheme policy.

13054 CEREMONIAL ROBES POLICY

Houghton Regis Town Council adopted a Ceremonial Robes policy at the Town Council meeting held on the 9th December 2019.

Resolved: To recommend to Town Council the re-adoption of the Town Councils Ceremonial Robes policy.

13055 TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES

At the special meeting of the Corporate Services committee, held on the 23rd July 2024, it was agreed (minute number 12923) to obtain quotes from design architects for the development of comprehensive remodelling options aimed at:

1. Enhancing the functionality and aesthetics of the main foyer
2. Expanding office and administrative spaces, including the potential relocation of the council chamber if necessary
3. Improving the external visibility and public presence of the council

The Head of Corporate Services informed Members that three quotes had been received. When questioned, the Head of Corporate Services confirmed that Company 'A' had been used previously and were known to carry out work to a satisfactory level. It was emphasised that this was simply a feasibility exercise to explore how the offices could be reconfigured and to provide costings. The viability of expending funds on the offices was debated; however, it was highlighted that this had already been agreed at the meeting in July and followed CPC recommendations to improve areas of the current offices.

Members were invited to move on the recommendation:

Proposed by: Cllr Billington

Seconded by: Cllr Slough

In favour: Cllr Billington, Cllr Slough, Cllr Jones

Against: Cllr Carroll, Cllr Rollins

Abstained: Cllr Burgess

Members agreed by a majority to proceed with the appointment of Company 'A'.

Resolved: To appoint PCH Associates as the Town Councils design architect.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.43pm

Dated this 3rd day of March 2025

Chairman

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Personnel Sub-Committee Minutes of the meeting held on 8th July 2024 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: W Henderson Chairman
M Herber
Y Farrell Substitution
D Jones
T McMahon

Officers: Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillor: E Costello

PE315 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Members were invited to elect a Chair for Personnel Sub-Committee for 2024/25.

Nomination:	Cllr Henderson	Nominated by:	Cllr Jones
		Seconded by:	Cllr Farrell
Nomination:	Cllr McMahon	Nominated by:	Cllr Herber
		Seconded by:	Cllr McMahon

A recorded vote was requested.

Members in favour of Cllr Henderson: Cllrs: Henderson, Farrell and Jones.
Members in favour of Cllr McMahon: Cllrs: Herber and Cllr McMahon.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Henderson was duly appointed as Chair of Personnel Sub-Committee for the municipal year of 2024/2025.

PE316 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

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

PE317 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

PE318 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Members were invited to elect a Vice-Chair for Personnel Sub-Committee for 2024/25.

Nomination:	Cllr Jones	Nominated by:	Cllr Farrell
		Seconded by:	Cllr Henderson

WGH

Nomination:	Cllr McMahon	Nominated by:	Cllr Herber
		Seconded by:	Cllr McMahon

A recorded vote was requested.

Members in favour of Cllr Jones: Cllrs Farrell, Henderson and Jones.

Members in favour of Cllr McMahon: Cllrs Herber and McMahon.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Jones was duly appointed as Vice-Chair of Personnel Sub-Committee for the municipal year of 2024/2025.

PE319 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

PE320 MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 7th May 2024 for consideration.

Resolved: That the minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 7th May 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed accordingly.

PE321 COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS & TERMS OF REFERENCE

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

Members received the extract from the approved Committee Functions & Terms of Reference which related to this sub-committee.

Members received this report for information.

PE322 APPOINTMENT OF APPOINTED PERSON

As part of the Committees Functions one member of the Sub-Committee is to be appointed to act as contact for the clerk for day-to-day matters, to provide support, handle leave requests, absence from work and to feed matters to Committee where any decision/action is needed and to undertake the Clerk's appraisal. Often this position has been taken by the Chair of the Sub-Committee, but this is not a requirement.

Nomination:	Cllr Jones	Nominated by:	Cllr Farrell
		Seconded by:	Cllr Henderson

Nomination:	Cllr McMahon	Nominated by:	Cllr Herber
		Seconded by:	Cllr McMahon

WGM

A recorded vote was requested.

Members in favour of Cllr Jones: Cllrs Farrell, Henderson and Jones.

Members in favour of Cllr McMahon: Cllrs Herber and McMahon.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Jones was duly appointed as the Clerks Appointed Person for the municipal year of 2024/2025.

Resolved: To appoint Cllr Jones as the Clerk's Appointed Person.

PE323 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

For the period of April to June 1 Freedom of Information request had been received. It was confirmed that this request had been responded to within the statutory timeframe.

Members requested that it be looked into whether the subject matter of any freedom of information requests could be included on the agenda to determine whether there was a pattern which could be considered vexatious. It was suggested that this could be placed on the agenda after the exclusion of the press and public.

It was confirmed that this would be investigated and feedback to members at the next meeting.

Resolved: To note the information.

PE324 TOWN CLERK'S ANNUAL LEAVE, OVERTIME WORKING AND SICKNESS

Annual leave

From April to June the Clerk has had 12 days' leave and 3 days' Flexi-leave. There were no outstanding leave requests.

Overtime

The Clerk has attended 3 meetings or events outside of the normal working day within the period April to June (compared with 5 meetings in the previous quarter).

Resolved: To note the information.

PE325 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Members voted on the exclusion of the press and public:

Proposed by: Cllr Jones, Seconded by: M Herber
All in favour

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

WGM

grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the general interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

PE326 STAFF SICKNESS

Members received a rolling twelve-month record of sickness absence for all members of staff.

Members were advised that these figures go to the date of 24th June 2024.

Members discussed the value of keeping this item on the agenda, it was agreed that it provided valuable information and could flag up details of a pattern of illness.

Resolved: To note the information.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.18 pm

Dated this 25th day of November 2024

Chairman



WGY.

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Personnel Sub-Committee Minutes of the meeting held on 25th November 2024 at 7pm

Present: Councillors: W Henderson Chairman
E Cooper (Substitution)
M Herber
D Jones
T McMahon

Officers: Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillor: E Costello

PE327 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Costello, Cllr Cooper substituted.

PE328 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

PE329 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

PE330 MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 8th July 2024 for consideration.

Resolved: That the minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 8th July 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed accordingly.

PE331 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

For the period July to September 1 Freedom of Information request had been received. It was confirmed that this request was responded to within the statutory timeframe.

Members were advised that the request was made by another council regarding SCPs for senior staff members.

Resolved: To note the information.

WCH

PE332 TOWN CLERK'S ANNUAL LEAVE, OVERTIME WORKING AND SICKNESSAnnual leave

From July to September the Clerk had 13 day's leave and 3 Flexi days leave.

The following leave was requested:

- 27th – 31st December 2024
- 20th – 21st February 2025

Overtime

The Clerk had attended 6 meetings or events outside of the normal working day within the period July to September (compared with 5 meetings in the previous quarter).

Resolved: To approve the Town Clerks annual leave requests.

PE333 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Members voted on the exclusion of the press and public:

Proposed by: Cllr Jones Seconded by: Cllr Herber

Members in favour: 5

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.

PE334 STAFF SICKNESS

Members received a rolling twelve-month record of sickness absence for all members of staff.

~~Members are advised that these figures go to the date of 24th June 2024.~~

Resolved: To note the information

PE335 FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT REQUEST

Members were advised that the council had received a flexible retirement request for an eligible member of staff.

Resolved: To note the information

PE336 STAFF SALARIES

WCM

Members received the list of spinal point range, spinal point number, the salary equivalent (as per April 2024), for all staff, along with overtime rates, additional payments, and employee pension contribution rates.

Resolved: To receive the 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 recommend to Corporate Services on 3rd March 2025 that these be noted and signed by the Chair.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.16pm

Dated this 3rd day of February 2025

Chairman





CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 6

Date:	3rd March 2025
Title:	Income & Expenditure Report
Purpose of the Report:	To provide members with the Income & Expenditure report highlighting significant variances, for Corporate Services Committee to date.
Contact Officer:	Debbie Marsh, Head of Corporate Services

1. BACKGROUND

In accordance with the committee functions a review of the income and expenditure of the committee should be undertaken periodically. Accordingly, this report is provided to members highlighting significant variances, for the Corporate Services Committee to date.

The income and expenditure report is provided for reference.

2. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

102-4020 Misc. Establishment Costs

Expenditure incurred to cover D Skinner retirement refreshments and Honorary Freeman Scrolls and Frames.

190-4012 Water Rates

It is anticipated this budget will continue to be overspent by the end of the financial year.

190-4015 Gas

Members are reminded that the supplier was slow in repairing the reported faulty meter therefore, the Town Council has not been charged for gas consumption for a number of months this is reflected in the low expenditure figure.

190-4020 Misc. Est Costs

Expenditure incurred for various items, including paper towels and toilet tissues. It is anticipated this budget will be further overspent before the end of the financial year.

However, there is some adjustment to be made by way of a journal. £210 to be journaled from this budget heading to 190-4036 (Property Maintenance) for drain unblocking.

190-4021 Communications Costs

Members are reminded that notice has been given to BT to remove redundant phone lines that are now out of contract. Following these changes and cost savings members are advised that the Town Council has entered into a 3 year contract with BT to upgrade the broadband line that currently serves the town council offices. An internet connection of 100Mbps as a minimum is being commissioned on the 24th February, to ensure users experience an acceptable level of speed and connection. Broadband costs were £195 per month for 18Mbps, the new connection for 100Mbps is £285 per month.

190-4026 Computer Costs

Members are advised this budget code covers all software and licences, for phones, laptop, app's and server.

190-4036 Property Maintenance

Costs from this budget have covered, for example, repairs to the automatic door, draining the fixing the heating system and replacement of uPVC window.

The committed sum of £850 (design architects costs) is to come from EMR Office Improvements, once the invoice is received. Until then, this sum will remain on the nominal ledger as committed.

3. **HRTC CORPORATE PLAN**

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

4. **IMPLICATIONS**

Corporate Implications

- There are no corporate implications arising from this report

Legal Implications

- There are no legal implications arising from this report

Financial Implications

- There are no financial implications arising from this report

Risk Implications

- There are no risk implications arising from this report

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 this report.

5. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Proactive monitoring of the budget will set the council in good stead going forwards and will help to ensure that expenditure and income targets are met. Whilst there are a number of budget codes overspent, as detailed above, this does not have an impact on the overall cost centre budgets.

6. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Income and Expenditure cost centre report

12/02/2025

Houghton Regis Town Council Current Year

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Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 12/02/2025

Month No: 11

Cost Centre Report

	Actual Current Mth	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
101 Corporate Management								
1076 Precept received	0	1,363,800	1,363,800	0			100.0%	
1096 Interest & Dividends Received	4,510	64,045	50,000	(14,045)			128.1%	
1101 Investments Realised	0	580,209	0	(580,209)			0.0%	
Corporate Management :- Income	4,510	2,008,054	1,413,800	(594,254)			142.0%	0
4051 BANK & LOAN CHARGES	0	583	1,000	417		417	58.3%	
4056 AUDIT FEES	0	399	3,200	2,801		2,801	12.5%	
4057 ACCOUNTANCY & SOFTWARE	0	4,145	7,250	3,105		3,105	57.2%	
4061 Financial Management Fees	0	1,820	4,000	2,180		2,180	45.5%	
Corporate Management :- Indirect Expenditure	0	6,947	15,450	8,503	0	8,503	45.0%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	4,510	2,001,108	1,398,350	(602,758)				
102 Democratic Rep'n & Mgmt								
4008 TRAINING/COURSES	35	185	1,100	915		915	16.8%	
4009 TRAVEL	26	306	350	44		44	87.4%	
4020 MISC. ESTABLISH.COST	0	489	400	(89)		(89)	122.3%	
4024 SUBSCRIPTIONS	0	3,594	3,600	6		6	99.8%	
4059 OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES	0	119	1,000	881		881	11.9%	
4104 HOSPITALITY ALLNCE	0	13	250	237		237	5.0%	
4131 ELECTION COSTS	0	0	6,000	6,000		6,000	0.0%	
Democratic Rep'n & Mgmt :- Indirect Expenditure	61	4,706	12,700	7,994	0	7,994	37.1%	0
Net Expenditure	(61)	(4,706)	(12,700)	(7,994)				
190 Central Services								
1091 Income Miscellaneous	0	21	130	109			15.9%	
1099 Insurance Claims	0	65	0	(65)			0.0%	
Central Services :- Income	0	85	130	45			65.5%	0
4007 CONFERENCE COSTS	0	663	1,300	637		637	51.0%	
4008 TRAINING/COURSES	0	2,938	5,000	2,062		2,062	58.8%	
4009 TRAVEL	0	344	350	6		6	98.2%	
4011 RATES	0	8,213	7,800	(413)		(413)	105.3%	
4012 WATER RATES	0	551	500	(51)		(51)	110.2%	
4014 ELECTRICITY	0	1,616	2,000	384		384	80.8%	
4015 GAS	59	410	900	490		490	45.5%	
4017 HEALTH & SAFETY	0	248	1,000	752	60	692	30.8%	
4020 MISC. ESTABLISH.COST	0	1,421	300	(1,121)		(1,121)	473.5%	
4021 COMMUNICATIONS COSTS	0	6,514	11,700	5,186		5,186	55.7%	
4022 POSTAGE	0	800	1,000	200		200	80.0%	

Continued over page

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 12/02/2025

Month No: 11

Cost Centre Report

	Actual Current Mth	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
4023 STATIONERY	0	241	700	459		459	34.4%	
4025 INSURANCE	0	15,896	17,000	1,104		1,104	93.5%	
4026 COMPUTER COSTS	92	10,110	8,000	(2,110)	1,319	(3,428)	142.9%	
4027 PHOTOCOPIER CHARGES	5	1,420	1,600	180		180	88.8%	
4031 ADVERTISING	0	75	500	425		425	15.0%	
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	0	970	1,000	30	850	(820)	182.0%	
4038 MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS	26	361	600	239		239	60.1%	
4042 Equipment Repairs & Maintenance	0	0	1,000	1,000	955	45	95.5%	
4059 OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES	0	2,333	15,000	12,667		12,667	15.6%	
Central Services :- Indirect Expenditure	182	55,123	77,250	22,127	3,183	18,944	75.5%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(182)	(55,038)	(77,120)	(22,082)				
<u>191 Personnel/Staff Costs</u>								
4059 OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES	0	10,804	0	(10,804)		(10,804)	0.0%	
Personnel/Staff Costs :- Indirect Expenditure	0	10,804	0	(10,804)	0	(10,804)		0
Net Expenditure	0	(10,804)	0	10,804				
<u>192 Corp Serv Staff Costs</u>								
4001 STAFF SALARIES	0	184,017	262,000	77,983		77,983	70.2%	
4002 EMPLOYERS N.I	0	18,185	36,000	17,815		17,815	50.5%	
4003 EMPLOYERS SUPERANN.	0	40,535	70,000	29,465		29,465	57.9%	
4005 STAFF OVERTIME	0	1,222	3,000	1,778		1,778	40.7%	
4059 OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES	394	5,600	7,400	1,800	280	1,520	79.5%	
Corp Serv Staff Costs :- Indirect Expenditure	394	249,559	378,400	128,841	280	128,561	66.0%	0
Net Expenditure	(394)	(249,559)	(378,400)	(128,841)				
Grand Totals:- Income	4,510	2,008,140	1,413,930	(594,210)			142.0%	
Expenditure	637	327,139	483,800	156,661	3,463	153,198	68.3%	
Net Income over Expenditure	3,874	1,681,001	930,130	(750,871)				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	3,874	1,681,001	930,130	(750,871)				

Houghton Regis Town Council Current Year

Bank - Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 30 November 2024

		<u>Account Description</u>	<u>Balance</u>	
<u>Bank Statement Balances</u>				
1	30/11/2024	Liquidity Manager Account	103,895.41	
1	30/11/2024	NatWest Current Account	1,000.00	
2	30/11/2024	Business Reserve Account	273.92	
3	30/11/2024	Natwest Youth Council	457.62	
				105,626.95
<u>Other Cash & Bank Balances</u>				
		CLERKS IMPREST ACCOUNT	200.00	
		L A Deposit Fund Account	1,469,500.00	
		PETTY CASH FLOAT	20.96	
				1,469,720.96
				1,575,347.91
<u>Receipts not on Bank Statement</u>				
0	30/11/2024	All Receipts Cleared	0.00	
				0.00
Closing Balance				1,575,347.91
<u>All Cash & Bank Accounts</u>				
1		NATWEST CURRENT/RESERVE	104,895.41	
2		NATWEST ONLINE ac 41172051	273.92	
3		Natwest Yth Council	457.62	
		Other Cash & Bank Balances	1,469,720.96	
		Total Cash & Bank Balances		1,575,347.91

Houghton Regis Town Council Current Year

Bank - Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 31 December 2024

	<u>Account Description</u>	<u>Balance</u>	
<u>Bank Statement Balances</u>			
1	31/12/2024 Liquidity Manager Account	85,257.10	
1	31/12/2024 NatWest Current Account	1,000.00	
2	31/12/2024 Business Reserve Account	274.24	
3	31/12/2024 Natwest Youth Council	904.77	
			87,436.11
<u>Other Cash & Bank Balances</u>			
	CLERKS IMPREST ACCOUNT	200.00	
	L A Deposit Fund Account	1,169,500.00	
	PETTY CASH FLOAT	31.93	
			1,169,731.93
Closing Balance			1,257,168.04
<u>All Cash & Bank Accounts</u>			
1	NATWEST CURRENT/RESERVE	86,257.10	
2	NATWEST ONLINE ac 41172051	274.24	
3	Natwest Yth Council	904.77	
	Other Cash & Bank Balances	1,169,731.93	
	Total Cash & Bank Balances		1,257,168.04

Houghton Regis Town Council Current Year

Bank - Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 31 January 2025

		<u>Account Description</u>	<u>Balance</u>	
<u>Bank Statement Balances</u>				
1	31/01/2025	Liquidity Manager Account	34,373.86	
1	31/01/2025	NatWest Current Account	1,000.00	
2	31/01/2025	Business Reserve Account	274.55	
3	31/01/2025	Natwest Youth Council	820.41	
				36,468.82
<u>Other Cash & Bank Balances</u>				
		CLERKS IMPREST ACCOUNT	200.00	
		L A Deposit Fund Account	1,169,500.00	
		PETTY CASH FLOAT	42.02	
				1,169,742.02
				1,206,210.84
<u>Receipts not on Bank Statement</u>				
0	31/01/2025	All Receipts Cleared	0.00	
				0.00
Closing Balance				1,206,210.84
<u>All Cash & Bank Accounts</u>				
1		NATWEST CURRENT/RESERVE	35,373.86	
2		NATWEST ONLINE ac 41172051	274.55	
3		Natwest Yth Council	820.41	
		Other Cash & Bank Balances	1,169,742.02	
		Total Cash & Bank Balances	1,206,210.84	

19/02/2025

Houghton Regis Town Council Current Year

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List of Purchase Ledger Payments for Month 8

User: 6740.D.MARSH

Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
EE01 EE Limited							
724-mobile phone charges	24/10/2024	V02280384912	1	387.03	0.00	387.03	0.00
					0.00	387.03	
Above paid on 01/11/2024 by Cheque DDR							
BRI02 BT Payment Services Ltd							
677-Fixed line rental Office	20/10/2024	M033 19	1	234.00	0.00	234.00	0.00
					0.00	234.00	
Above paid on 04/11/2024 by Cheque DDR							
TEC01 Techies Limited							
564-M/Soft 365/Backup	07/10/2022	INV-3222	1	-288.38	0.00	0.01	-288.39
775-M'soft Annual Sub	04/10/2023	INV-4591	1	399.67	0.00	399.67	0.00
					0.00	399.68	
Above paid on 04/11/2024 by Cheque SO1							
TEC01 Techies Limited							
560-Managed Silver Contract	06/09/2024	INV-6104	1	2,110.78	0.00	191.89	1,918.89
					0.00	191.89	
Above paid on 04/11/2024 by Cheque SO2							
WAV04 Anglian Water							
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/11/2024	ON ACC 725	1	0.00	0.00	23.00	-23.00
					0.00	23.00	
Above paid on 04/11/2024 by Cheque DDR1							
WAV06 Anglian Water							
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/11/2024	ON ACC 726	1	0.00	0.00	126.00	-126.00
					0.00	126.00	
Above paid on 04/11/2024 by Cheque DDR2							
WAV07 Anglain Water							
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/11/2024	ON ACC 727	1	0.00	0.00	170.00	-170.00
					0.00	170.00	
Above paid on 04/11/2024 by Cheque DDR3							

Continued over page

Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
CLO02 Cloudy Group							
728-App Hosting Package	01/11/2024	INV-D-05424	1	110.19	0.00	110.19	0.00
					0.00	110.19	
Above paid on 06/11/2024 by Cheque DDR1							
YU001 Yu Energy							
741-Electricity P/side Drive	01/11/2024	02080503	1	33.78	0.00	33.78	0.00
					0.00	33.78	
Above paid on 08/11/2024 by Cheque DDR							
YU001 Yu Energy							
733-Electricity Depot	01/11/2024	02080197	1	449.93	0.00	449.93	0.00
					0.00	449.93	
Above paid on 08/11/2024 by Cheque DDR2							
YU001 Yu Energy							
734-Electricity O'/Close Pav	01/11/2024	02080325	1	109.91	0.00	109.91	0.00
					0.00	109.91	
Above paid on 08/11/2024 by Cheque DDR3							
YU001 Yu Energy							
735-Electricity Moore Cresc	01/11/2024	02080415	1	151.80	0.00	151.80	0.00
					0.00	151.80	
Above paid on 08/11/2024 by Cheque DDR4							
YU001 Yu Energy							
737-Electricity P/side Drive	01/11/2024	02080450	1	11.97	0.00	11.97	0.00
					0.00	11.97	
Above paid on 08/11/2024 by Cheque DDR5							
YU001 Yu Energy							
740-Electricity Office	01/11/2024	02080502	1	207.65	0.00	207.65	0.00
					0.00	207.65	
Above paid on 08/11/2024 by Cheque DDR6							

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
YU001 Yu Energy							
736-Electricity Tithe Farm	01/11/2024	02080504	1	244.90	0.00	244.90	0.00
					0.00	244.90	
Above paid on 08/11/2024 by Cheque DDR7							
YU001 Yu Energy							
738-Electricity Depot	01/11/2024	02080505	1	19.47	0.00	19.47	0.00
					0.00	19.47	
Above paid on 08/11/2024 by Cheque DDR8							
YU001 Yu Energy							
739-Electricity Village Gn Pav	01/11/2024	02080506	1	151.60	0.00	151.60	0.00
					0.00	151.60	
Above paid on 08/11/2024 by Cheque DDR9							
BIC001 BICESTER TURF CARE LTD							
742-Autumn Treatment MCrescent	01/10/2024	SI-2058	1	5,070.00	0.00	5,070.00	0.00
					0.00	5,070.00	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP1							
BLA01 Blain's Trailers & Tyres Ltd							
743-Tyre repair	07/10/2024	SI-84037	1	18.00	0.00	18.00	0.00
					0.00	18.00	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP2							
CAS02 Castle Water							
730-Water chgs Townsend Farm	01/11/2024	TE00717612	1	8.57	0.00	8.57	0.00
					0.00	8.57	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque DDR1							
DUN04 Dunstable Town Council							
746-Licence food vendors Firew	31/10/2024	GEN15833	1	15.00	0.00	15.00	0.00
					0.00	15.00	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP5							

Continued over page

Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
FAL001 Falconeye Security Ltd							
747-Security Fireworks	04/11/2024	10	1	1,560.00	0.00	1,560.00	0.00
748-Security Remembrance W/End	12/11/2024	11	1	432.00	0.00	432.00	0.00
					0.00	1,992.00	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP6							
GBI01 Geo Browns Implements Ltd							
744-assembly tank	13/11/2024	108892	1	187.73	0.00	187.73	0.00
					0.00	187.73	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP3							
HAY02 Ian Haynes							
752-HRTC expenses	13/11/2024	HRTC EXPENSES	1	21.00	0.00	21.00	0.00
					0.00	21.00	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP11							
HEN03 Henderson Management							
750-QE2 Tribute Band deposit	08/11/2024	HMI-31772	1	449.28	0.00	449.28	0.00
					0.00	449.28	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP8							
HMR001 HMRC							
719-PAYE/NI October 2024	31/10/2024	PAYE/NI OCT 2024	1	12,328.22	0.00	12,328.22	0.00
					0.00	12,328.22	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP9							
HRS01 HR Solutions							
751-HR Retainer	01/11/2024	INV-042170	1	270.30	0.00	270.30	0.00
					0.00	270.30	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP10							
LAM01 Lamps & Tubes Illuminations Ltd							
754-replace7 lights C'mas disp	31/10/2024	INV-71816	1	1,440.00	0.00	1,440.00	0.00
					0.00	1,440.00	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP13							

Continued over page

Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
LAN03 Latent Digital Solutions Ltd							
755-Photocopying charge	31/10/2024	306063	1	35.97	0.00	35.97	0.00
					0.00	35.97	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP14							
LAW001 John Lawson's Circus Ltd							
756-9 popcorns at circus	08/11/2024	POPCORN CIRCUS	1	27.00	0.00	27.00	0.00
					0.00	27.00	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP15							
LOC01 Dunstable Lock & Safe Co							
745-20 tags / 1 key	06/11/2024	35536	1	20.34	0.00	20.34	0.00
					0.00	20.34	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP4							
MAZ01 Mazars LLP							
749-Audit Fees 23/24	31/10/2024	2431787	1	3,528.00	0.00	3,528.00	0.00
					0.00	3,528.00	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP7							
ORI001 Origin Amenity Solutions							
757-10 green cone nozzles	06/11/2024	OASI0129172	1	42.00	0.00	42.00	0.00
					0.00	42.00	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP16							
PER01 Perfect Print							
758-10,500 Town Criers	31/10/2024	24/5800	1	1,860.00	0.00	1,860.00	0.00
					0.00	1,860.00	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP17							
PRB01 Pete Rowe Building Services							
763-Replacement uPVC window	30/10/2024	079	1	648.00	0.00	648.00	0.00
764-install defib Windsor Dr	11/11/2024	079A	1	318.00	0.00	318.00	0.00
					0.00	966.00	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP21							

Continued over page

Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
PRE04	Prestige Design & Workwear Ltd						
759-8 waterproof trousers	24/10/2024	126612	1	177.60	0.00	177.60	0.00
760-Grey gloves (medium/large)	05/11/2024	126836	1	24.00	0.00	24.00	0.00
					0.00	201.60	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP18							
PRI05	Priory Press Ltd						
761-1000 Mayor's C'mas cards	31/10/2024	INV-2977	1	324.00	0.00	324.00	0.00
					0.00	324.00	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP19							
RTM01	R T Machinery Ltd						
765-LK09 EPL number plate	06/08/2024	154198	1	33.78	0.00	33.78	0.00
					0.00	33.78	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP22							
SCR02	Trade UK Account						
771-Apache Arizona boots 9	30/10/2024	1554720842	1	52.99	0.00	52.99	0.00
					0.00	52.99	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP27							
SJS01	S J S Irrigation						
766-HR Bowls Club - drain down	07/11/2024	19991	1	504.00	0.00	504.00	0.00
					0.00	504.00	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP23							
SLC01	SLCC						
767-Cemetery/Churchyard Cse HB	29/10/2024	BK218335-1	1	42.00	0.00	42.00	0.00
768-Cemetery/Churchyard Cse RK	29/10/2024	BK218336-1	1	42.00	0.00	42.00	0.00
					0.00	84.00	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP24							

Continued over page

Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
SPA01 Spaldings Limited							
769-Grease gun,cable, bag	06/11/2024	SI-2994469	1	341.34	0.00	341.34	0.00
					0.00	341.34	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP25							
SUD01 Jacob Sudeesh							
753-Deposit refund MCrescent	05/11/2024	REFUND DEPOSIT	1	50.00	0.00	50.00	0.00
					0.00	50.00	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque 1							
TOO02 William Tookey							
770-Host for Firework Display	03/11/2024	445	1	300.00	0.00	300.00	0.00
					0.00	300.00	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP26							
TOT01 Right Fuelcard Company Ltd							
762-Fuel for vehicles	31/10/2024	6019520	1	119.53	0.00	119.53	0.00
					0.00	119.53	
Above paid on 15/11/2024 by Cheque FP20							
CAS09 Castle Water - 2597769							
732-Water chgs Cemetery Road	04/11/2024	10003885288	1	39.47	0.00	39.47	0.00
					0.00	39.47	
Above paid on 18/11/2024 by Cheque DDR2							
CAS10 Castle Water - 2597749							
731-Water chgs P/side Drive	04/11/2024	10003876463	1	83.61	0.00	83.61	0.00
					0.00	83.61	
Above paid on 18/11/2024 by Cheque DDR3							
BRI01 British Gas							
775-Electricitychgs Tithe Farm	05/11/2024	806716877	1	2,119.51	0.00	2,119.51	0.00
					0.00	2,119.51	
Above paid on 19/11/2024 by Cheque DDR							

Continued over page

Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
DUN02 Biffa Waste Services Ltd							
720-Skip Hire	25/10/2024	614C68425	1	60.82	0.00	60.82	0.00
721-Waste disposal	25/10/2024	614C68426	1	2,509.87	0.00	2,509.87	0.00
					0.00	2,570.69	
Above paid on 25/11/2024 by Cheque DDR							
BADGEMASTE Badgemaster Ltd							
778-ID badges for YouthCouncil	19/11/2024	0000090743	1	168.18	0.00	168.18	0.00
					0.00	168.18	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP1							
BED02 Bedfordshire Pension Fund							
779-Added Years October 2024	20/11/2024	757611	1	62.60	0.00	62.60	0.00
					0.00	62.60	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP2							
BED07 Police & Crime Commissioner for Beds							
781-Op Hana - October 2024	19/11/2024	B0004732	1	3,600.00	0.00	3,600.00	0.00
780-Op Hana - September 2024	19/11/2024	B0004734	1	3,458.72	0.00	3,458.72	0.00
					0.00	7,058.72	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP3							
BOA01 B R Boatwright							
782-green waste removal O/Clos	31/10/2024	1566	1	600.00	0.00	600.00	0.00
					0.00	600.00	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP4							
BUB01 Bubbles Lighting Ltd							
783-Lighting/Sound Fireworks	25/11/2024	8871	1	7,479.60	0.00	7,479.60	0.00
					0.00	7,479.60	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP5							

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
CAL02 Caldecotte Xperience							
784-Residential Trip- deposit	25/11/2024	9007002 PO160	1	576.00	0.00	576.00	0.00
					0.00	576.00	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP6							
CHI04 The Children's Society							
785-Project Grant Funding	27/11/2024	PROJECT GRANT	1	719.00	0.00	719.00	0.00
					0.00	719.00	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP7							
DES01 D E Signs							
786-Update dates/times	19/11/2024	19719	1	48.00	0.00	48.00	0.00
787-Boxing banner / stickers	22/11/2024	19726	1	54.00	0.00	54.00	0.00
					0.00	102.00	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP8							
DUN13 Dunstable Hunters Pickleball Club							
788-Project Grant Funding	27/11/2024	PROJECT GRANT	1	512.00	0.00	512.00	0.00
					0.00	512.00	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP9							
DWF01 DWF Law LLP							
789-Vat invoice prof charges	28/10/2024	157-0588574	1	3,744.14	0.00	3,744.14	0.00
					0.00	3,744.14	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP10							
FAR03 Cllr Y Farrell							
800-Rock of Ages concert trvl	19/11/2024	CAR MILEAGE	1	8.37	0.00	8.37	0.00
					0.00	8.37	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP21							
FIV01 5 Star Loos Ltd							
790-Toilets for Fireworks	19/11/2024	24/1114	1	888.00	0.00	888.00	0.00
					0.00	888.00	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP11							

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
HER04 Cllr Michelle Herber							
791-Road VictimsService travel	18/11/2024	CAR MILEAGE	1	17.19	0.00	17.19	0.00
					0.00	17.19	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP12							
HOS001 Hospice at Home Volunteers							
792-Project Grant Funding	27/11/2024	PROJECT GRANT	1	310.41	0.00	310.41	0.00
					0.00	310.41	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP13							
HOU18 Houghton Regis Ladies Group							
793-Project Grant Funding	27/11/2024	PROJECT GRANT	1	800.00	0.00	800.00	0.00
					0.00	800.00	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP14							
JAM02 Jam on Toast Marketing							
794-Communications Strategy	22/11/2024	COMM STRATEGY	1	3,000.00	0.00	3,000.00	0.00
					0.00	3,000.00	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP15							
KEN01 Kensworth Sawmills Ltd							
795-Wood rail fencing T/Farm	28/11/2024	44028	1	74.52	0.00	74.52	0.00
					0.00	74.52	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque 16							
PAR05 Parkside 50 Plus Club							
796-Project Grant Funding	27/11/2024	PROJECT GRANT	1	700.00	0.00	700.00	0.00
					0.00	700.00	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP17							
PAYROLL Payroll Options							
729-Payroll processing Oct 24	31/10/2024	153577	1	192.05	0.00	192.05	0.00
					0.00	192.05	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque DD							

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
ROG02 GI Rogers & Son							
799-Christmas Tree Bedford Sq	19/11/2024	INV-0035	1	2,100.00	0.00	2,100.00	0.00
					0.00	2,100.00	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP20							
STE003 Nigel Steele							
797-Organist Fee Carol Service	27/11/2024	ORGANIST FEE	1	60.00	0.00	60.00	0.00
					0.00	60.00	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP18							
STR04 Strong Soul Fitness CIC							
798-Boxing/mentoring Nov-Jan	22/11/2024	109	1	720.00	0.00	720.00	0.00
					0.00	720.00	
Above paid on 29/11/2024 by Cheque FP19							
Total Purchase Ledger Payments for Month 8					0.00	68,019.51	

Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
EE01 EE Limited							
815-mobile phone chgs	24/11/2024	V02290818978	1	375.29	0.00	375.29	0.00
					0.00	375.29	
Above paid on 02/12/2024 by Cheque DDR1							
FRA02 Francotyp Postalia Ltd							
816-P'copier lease to Feb 2025	01/12/2024	361673	1	90.00	0.00	90.00	0.00
					0.00	90.00	
Above paid on 02/12/2024 by Cheque DDR2							
POZ02 Pozitive Energy 135118							
808-Gas charges Parkside Dr	26/11/2024	13511820246834740	1	15.13	0.00	15.13	0.00
					0.00	15.13	
Above paid on 03/12/2024 by Cheque DDR4							
POZ03 Pozitive Energy 135116							
806-Gas charges Depot	26/11/2024	13511620246834660	1	10.87	0.00	10.87	0.00
					0.00	10.87	
Above paid on 03/12/2024 by Cheque DDR5							
POZ04 Pozitive Energy 135119							
809-Gas charges Moore Crescent	26/11/2024	13511920246834739	1	102.51	0.00	102.51	0.00
					0.00	102.51	
Above paid on 03/12/2024 by Cheque DDR6							
POZ05 Pozitive Energy 135117							
807-Gas charges Office	26/11/2024	13511720246834659	1	111.81	0.00	111.81	0.00
					0.00	111.81	
Above paid on 03/12/2024 by Cheque DDR7							
TEC01 Techies Limited							
560-Managed Silver Contract	06/09/2024	INV-6104	1	1,918.89	0.00	191.89	1,727.00
					0.00	191.89	
Above paid on 03/12/2024 by Cheque DDR3							

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
TEC01 Techies Limited							
833-Microsoft 365 charge	15/10/2024	INV-6306	1	4,799.60	0.00	400.04	4,399.56
					0.00	400.04	
Above paid on 03/12/2024 by Cheque SO							
WAV04 Anglian Water							
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/12/2024	ON ACC 814	1	0.00	0.00	23.00	-23.00
					0.00	23.00	
Above paid on 03/12/2024 by Cheque DDR3							
WAV06 Anglian Water							
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/12/2024	ON ACC 813	1	0.00	0.00	126.00	-126.00
					0.00	126.00	
Above paid on 03/12/2024 by Cheque DDR2							
WAV07 Anglian Water							
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/12/2024	ON ACC 812	1	0.00	0.00	170.00	-170.00
					0.00	170.00	
Above paid on 03/12/2024 by Cheque DDR							
BRI02 BT Payment Services Ltd							
777-Fixed line rental Office	20/11/2024	M034 5W	1	234.00	0.00	234.00	0.00
					0.00	234.00	
Above paid on 04/12/2024 by Cheque DDR8							
CLO02 Cloudy Group							
832-App Hosting Package	01/12/2024	INV-D-05742	1	110.19	0.00	110.19	0.00
					0.00	110.19	
Above paid on 05/12/2024 by Cheque DDR1							
YU001 Yu Energy							
818-Gas charges Depot	03/12/2024	02200957	1	68.47	0.00	68.47	0.00
					0.00	68.47	
Above paid on 09/12/2024 by Cheque DDR11							

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
YU001 Yu Energy							
817-Gas charges Parkside Dr	03/12/2024	02219399	1	11.42	0.00	11.42	0.00
					0.00	11.42	
Above paid on 09/12/2024 by Cheque DDR12							
YU001 Yu Energy							
827-Electricity Office	01/12/2024	02155450	1	209.46	0.00	209.46	0.00
					0.00	209.46	
Above paid on 09/12/2024 by Cheque DDR2							
YU001 Yu Energy							
819-Gas charges Moore Cresc	03/12/2024	02219398	1	286.01	0.00	286.01	0.00
					0.00	286.01	
Above paid on 09/12/2024 by Cheque DDR20							
YU001 Yu Energy							
826-Electricity Village Green	01/12/2024	02155454	1	215.37	0.00	215.37	0.00
					0.00	215.37	
Above paid on 09/12/2024 by Cheque DDR3							
YU001 Yu Energy							
825-Electricity Parkside	01/12/2024	02155451	1	37.34	0.00	37.34	0.00
					0.00	37.34	
Above paid on 09/12/2024 by Cheque DDR4							
YU001 Yu Energy							
824-Electricity Parkside Drive	01/12/2024	02155410	1	12.47	0.00	12.47	0.00
					0.00	12.47	
Above paid on 09/12/2024 by Cheque DDR5							
YU001 Yu Energy							
823-Electricity Moore Crescent	01/12/2024	02155382	1	156.79	0.00	156.79	0.00
					0.00	156.79	
Above paid on 09/12/2024 by Cheque DDR6							

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
YU001 Yu Energy							
822-Electricity Orchard Close	01/12/2024	02155315	1	111.43	0.00	111.43	0.00
					0.00	111.43	
Above paid on 09/12/2024 by Cheque DDR7							
YU001 Yu Energy							
821-Electricity Depot	01/12/2024	02155215	1	547.02	0.00	547.02	0.00
					0.00	547.02	
Above paid on 09/12/2024 by Cheque DDR8							
YU001 Yu Energy							
820-Gas charges Office	03/12/2024	02219400	1	30.16	0.00	30.16	0.00
					0.00	30.16	
Above paid on 09/12/2024 by Cheque DDR9							
POZ06 Pozitive Energy							
874-Gas Bidwell (recharge)	06/12/2024	48540020246889848	1	9.72	0.00	9.72	0.00
					0.00	9.72	
Above paid on 12/12/2024 by Cheque DDR1							
AME02 Amethyst Horticulture Ltd							
834-Winter plants	26/11/2024	26433	1	1,042.56	0.00	1,042.56	0.00
					0.00	1,042.56	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP1							
AMR001 AMRO Catering & Events Ltd							
835-Refreshments for CPC	03/12/2024	INV-0300	1	28.62	0.00	28.62	0.00
836-various baps	03/12/2024	INV-0306	1	108.00	0.00	108.00	0.00
					0.00	136.62	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP2							
BOA01 B R Boatwright							
858-waste disposal Orchard Cl	30/11/2024	1569	1	600.00	0.00	600.00	0.00
					0.00	600.00	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP20							

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
BRU001 Bruck Payne Associates Ltd							
859-Coaching/Mentoring DM & LS	02/12/2024	6072	1	2,040.00	0.00	2,040.00	0.00
					0.00	2,040.00	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP21							
DUN04 Dunstable Town Council							
838-Licences Market and HRocks	28/11/2024	GEN15842	1	38.00	0.00	38.00	0.00
					0.00	38.00	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP4							
FAL001 Falconeye Security Ltd							
860-Security Carol Service	09/12/2024	12	1	72.00	0.00	72.00	0.00
					0.00	72.00	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP22							
GBI01 Geo Browns Implements Ltd							
837-hose	06/12/2024	110524	1	4.96	0.00	4.96	0.00
					0.00	4.96	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP3							
HAR02 Harpenden Town Council							
868-Tickets Mayor Carol Svce	10/12/2024	MAYOR CAROL SVCE	1	12.00	0.00	12.00	0.00
					0.00	12.00	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP26							
HAY02 Ian Haynes							
839-Land Registry searches	22/11/2024	LAND REGISTRY NOV 24	1	12.00	0.00	12.00	0.00
					0.00	12.00	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP5							
HER01 Hertfordshire County Council							
840-Copier paper/paper clips	30/11/2024	H112407837	1	90.34	0.00	90.34	0.00
					0.00	90.34	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP6							

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
HIL001 Hillside Market Garden							
841-Wreath making workshop	02/12/2024	HMG00566	1	384.00	0.00	384.00	0.00
842-Wreath making workshop	02/12/2024	HMG00566A	1	96.00	0.00	96.00	0.00
					0.00	480.00	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP7							
HOU08 Houghton Regis Baptist Church							
843-Hall Hire Nov 2024	01/12/2024	HALL HIRE NOV 2024	1	150.00	0.00	150.00	0.00
861-Hire of Church Hall Dec 24	06/12/2024	HIRE HALL	1	150.00	0.00	150.00	0.00
					0.00	300.00	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP8							
HRS01 HR Solutions							
844-HR Retainer	01/12/2024	INV-042670	1	270.30	0.00	270.30	0.00
					0.00	270.30	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP9							
IAC001 IAC Audit and Consultancy Ltd							
862-Interim Audit 2024-25	29/11/2024	INV-1903	1	478.80	0.00	478.80	0.00
					0.00	478.80	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP23							
ICCM01 Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Mgmt							
845-ICCM Exhumationtraining HB	03/12/2024	18723	1	108.00	0.00	108.00	0.00
					0.00	108.00	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP10							
KFI002 Kings Fire							
846-Fire equipment service	21/11/2024	3377	1	504.60	0.00	504.60	0.00
					0.00	504.60	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP11							

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
LAN03 Latent Digital Solutions Ltd							
847-P'copier charges	29/11/2024	306178	1	256.85	0.00	256.85	0.00
					0.00	256.85	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP12							
MCS01 MCS Contract Cleaning Limited							
848-Toilet cleaning BSquare	29/11/2024	103	1	2,220.00	0.00	2,220.00	0.00
					0.00	2,220.00	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP13							
ORI001 Origin Amenity Solutions							
849-service 2 line marking mac	02/12/2024	OASI0131455	1	420.00	0.00	420.00	0.00
863-Stainless stell nozzle	06/12/2024	OASI0132062	1	30.00	0.00	30.00	0.00
					0.00	450.00	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP14							
PRB01 Pete Rowe Building Services							
851-Drain heating change TRV	20/11/2024	090	1	126.00	0.00	126.00	0.00
					0.00	126.00	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP16							
PRE09 Preston Bissett Nurseries & Country Shop							
hanging baskets/barrier plants	22/11/2024	INV-3445	1	10,839.75	0.00	10,839.75	0.00
					0.00	10,839.75	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP15							
SCR02 Trade UK Account							
854-Paving slabs and sand	19/11/2024	2000232503	1	134.88	0.00	134.88	0.00
853-keys,paint,saw horses	19/11/2024	2000237738	1	64.97	0.00	64.97	0.00
852-shoe laces	28/11/2024	2000493775	1	14.95	0.00	14.95	0.00
870-various items	04/12/2024	2000637371	1	295.51	0.00	295.51	0.00
					0.00	510.31	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP17							

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
SLC01 SLCC							
872-FILCA fee - DM	11/12/2024	QL206351-3A	1	-144.00	0.00	-144.00	0.00
873-FILCA fee - DM	11/12/2024	QL206351-3B	1	144.00	0.00	144.00	0.00
					0.00	0.00	
No payment due as Credit Notes have been applied							
SLC01 SLCC							
855-ILCA fee - HB	03/12/2024	QL206315-1	1	144.00	0.00	144.00	0.00
864-FILCA fee - AG	09/12/2024	QL206343-1	1	144.00	0.00	144.00	0.00
869-FILCA fee - DM	10/12/2024	QL206351-3	1	144.00	0.00	144.00	0.00
					0.00	432.00	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP18							
ST0002 Stockton Bradley Ltd							
865-Asset PMS Inspection fee	10/12/2024	7272/8656/01	1	3,234.00	0.00	3,234.00	0.00
					0.00	3,234.00	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP24							
TEC01 Techies Limited							
866-T4 SIP Line	06/12/2024	INV-6572	1	144.00	0.00	144.00	0.00
867-Domain Renewal 1 year	11/12/2024	INV-6602	1	74.40	0.00	74.40	0.00
					0.00	218.40	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP25							
WAV03 Anglian Water							
856-Water chgs Moore Cresc	24/11/2024	14345318	1	52.45	0.00	52.45	0.00
					0.00	52.45	
Above paid on 13/12/2024 by Cheque FP19							
CAS02 Castle Water							
828-Water chags Townsend Farm	02/12/2024	TE00735168	1	8.29	0.00	8.29	0.00
					0.00	8.29	
Above paid on 16/12/2024 by Cheque DDR1							

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
BRI01 British Gas							
875-Electricity T/Farm	03/12/2024	809958169	1	2,557.00	0.00	2,557.00	0.00
					0.00	2,557.00	
Above paid on 17/12/2024 by Cheque DDR2							
CAS10 Castle Water - 2597749							
829-Water charges Parkside Dr	03/12/2024	10004512305	1	31.84	0.00	31.84	0.00
					0.00	31.84	
Above paid on 17/12/2024 by Cheque DDR2							
TB001 T&B Contractors Ltd							
871-Valuation 12	26/11/2024	35361	1	198,332.46	0.00	198,332.46	0.00
					0.00	198,332.46	
Above paid on 17/12/2024 by Cheque FP							
CAS09 Castle Water - 2597769							
876-Water chgs Cemetery Road	04/12/2024	10004573715	1	24.49	0.00	24.49	0.00
					0.00	24.49	
Above paid on 18/12/2024 by Cheque DDR3							
YU001 Yu Energy							
900-Electricity Townsend	18/12/2024	02155215A	1	-547.02	0.00	-547.02	0.00
901-Electricity Townsend	18/12/2024	02227069	1	547.02	0.00	547.02	0.00
					0.00	0.00	
No payment due as Credit Notes have been applied							
YU001 Yu Energy							
879-Electricity Parkside	11/12/2024	02155451A	1	43.29	0.00	43.29	0.00
878-Electricity Parkside	11/12/2024	02209211	1	-37.34	0.00	-37.34	0.00
					0.00	5.95	
Above paid on 18/12/2024 by Cheque DDR1							

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
YU001 Yu Energy							
880-Electricity Parkside Drive	11/12/2024	02155410A	1	-12.47	0.00	-12.47	0.00
881-Electricity Parkside Drive	11/12/2024	02199119	1	13.45	0.00	13.45	0.00
					0.00	0.98	
Above paid on 18/12/2024 by Cheque DDR2							
BAN01 B & S Chains							
886-repair links for swings	13/12/2024	36607	1	29.28	0.00	29.28	0.00
					0.00	29.28	
Above paid on 20/12/2024 by Cheque FP3							
BED02 Bedfordshire Pension Fund							
884-Added Years - November 24	11/12/2024	758683	1	62.60	0.00	62.60	0.00
					0.00	62.60	
Above paid on 20/12/2024 by Cheque FP1							
GBI01 Geo Browns Implements Ltd							
885-Flail	13/12/2024	111580	1	75.17	0.00	75.17	0.00
					0.00	75.17	
Above paid on 20/12/2024 by Cheque FP2							
GRE06 Greenbridge Designs Ltd							
887-Rectangular urns	09/12/2024	INV-1222	1	1,062.00	0.00	1,062.00	0.00
					0.00	1,062.00	
Above paid on 20/12/2024 by Cheque FP4							
HER04 Cllr Michelle Herber							
889-Speaker of Bedford Carol S	08/12/2024	CAR MILEAGE	1	16.47	0.00	16.47	0.00
888-Car mileage to Sandy	06/12/2024	CAR MILEAGE	1	19.62	0.00	19.62	0.00
891-Harpenden Carol Service	18/12/2024	CAR TRAVEL	1	10.89	0.00	10.89	0.00
890-LLTC Council Carol Service	16/12/2024	CAR TRAVEL	1	9.36	0.00	9.36	0.00
					0.00	56.34	
Above paid on 20/12/2024 by Cheque FP5							

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
HMR001 HMRC							
776-PAYE/NI November 2024	30/11/2024	PAYE/NI NOV 2024	1	19,376.21	0.00	19,376.21	0.00
					0.00	19,376.21	
Above paid on 20/12/2024 by Cheque FP8							
KEM001 Kempston Town Council							
892-2 x tickets Charity Bingo	12/12/2024	MAYOR CHARITY BINGC	1	20.00	0.00	20.00	0.00
					0.00	20.00	
Above paid on 20/12/2024 by Cheque FP6							
KEN01 Kensworth Sawmills Ltd							
893-fencing for Cemetery	16/12/2024	44089	1	196.08	0.00	196.08	0.00
					0.00	196.08	
Above paid on 20/12/2024 by Cheque FP7							
LAM01 Lamps & Tubes Illuminations Ltd							
894-C'mas light installation	11/12/2024	INV-71882	1	10,261.50	0.00	10,261.50	0.00
					0.00	10,261.50	
Above paid on 20/12/2024 by Cheque FP9							
MAN03 Ian Manly							
895-Magic and Balloon modellin	28/11/2024	001/NOV2024	1	350.00	0.00	350.00	0.00
					0.00	350.00	
Above paid on 20/12/2024 by Cheque FP10							
PER03 Perfect Personalised Parties							
896-Face Painter Santa'sGrotto	14/12/2024	INV-0667	1	200.00	0.00	200.00	0.00
					0.00	200.00	
Above paid on 20/12/2024 by Cheque FP11							
SCR02 Trade UK Account							
899-Various tools	12/12/2024	2000849831	1	209.38	0.00	209.38	0.00
					0.00	209.38	
Above paid on 20/12/2024 by Cheque FP14							

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
SLC01 SLCC							
897-SLCC Membership Fee2025 CE	16/12/2024	MEM251305-1	1	565.00	0.00	565.00	0.00
					0.00	565.00	
Above paid on 20/12/2024 by Cheque FP12							
THR03 Three Star (Luton) Ltd							
898-Coach for Adrenaline Alley	23/10/2024	35815	1	695.00	0.00	695.00	0.00
					0.00	695.00	
Above paid on 20/12/2024 by Cheque FP13							
YU001 Yu Energy							
883-Electricity Depot	13/12/2024	02226189	1	17.99	0.00	17.99	0.00
					0.00	17.99	
Above paid on 20/12/2024 by Cheque DDR							
YU001 Yu Energy							
882-Electricity Tithe Farm	13/12/2024	02225957	1	459.94	0.00	459.94	0.00
					0.00	459.94	
Above paid on 20/12/2024 by Cheque DDR3							
DUN02 Biffa Waste Services Ltd							
801-Skip hire	22/11/2024	614C71216	1	60.82	0.00	60.82	0.00
802-Waste disposal	22/11/2024	614C71217	1	2,413.87	0.00	2,413.87	0.00
					0.00	2,474.69	
Above paid on 23/12/2024 by Cheque DDR1							
PAYROLL Payroll Options							
831-Payroll processing	30/11/2024	154026	1	192.05	0.00	192.05	0.00
					0.00	192.05	
Above paid on 31/12/2024 by Cheque DDR2							
YOU01 Your NRG Ltd							
904-2000 litres white diesel	10/12/2024	1278077	1	2,909.76	0.00	2,909.76	0.00
					0.00	2,909.76	
Above paid on 31/12/2024 by Cheque DDR							
Total Purchase Ledger Payments for Month 9					0.00	268,360.33	

Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
WAV02 Anglian Water							
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/07/2024	ON ACC 917	1	0.00	0.00	-23.00	23.00
					0.00	-23.00	
Above paid on 03/07/2024 by Cheque DDR							
WAV04 Anglian Water							
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/07/2024	ON ACC 918	1	0.00	0.00	23.00	-23.00
					0.00	23.00	
Above paid on 03/07/2024 by Cheque DDR1							
BRI02 BT Payment Services Ltd							
902-Fixed line rental Office	18/12/2024	M035 9I	1	234.00	0.00	234.00	0.00
					0.00	234.00	
Above paid on 02/01/2025 by Cheque DDR2							
EE01 EE Limited							
905-mobile phone chgs Dec 2024	24/12/2024	V02300671546	1	392.83	0.00	392.83	0.00
					0.00	392.83	
Above paid on 02/01/2025 by Cheque DDR1							
WAV02 Anglian Water							
261-Water chgs depot	24/05/2024	13594464	1	23.24	0.00	23.24	0.00
915-Water chgs Depot	24/05/2024	13594464A	1	-23.24	0.00	-23.24	0.00
337-Water chgs Depot	24/06/2024	13715507	1	27.20	0.00	27.20	0.00
914-Water chgs Depot	24/06/2024	13715507A	1	-27.20	0.00	-27.20	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/07/2024	ON ACC 350	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/07/2024	ON ACC 917	1	23.00	0.00	23.00	0.00
					0.00	0.00	
No payment due as Credit Notes have been applied							
POZ06 Pozitive Energy							
924-Gas charges Bidwell	06/12/2024	48540020246889848A	1	-9.72	0.00	-9.72	0.00
925-Gas charges Bidwell	06/12/2024	48540020246889848B	1	9.72	0.00	9.72	0.00
					0.00	0.00	
No payment due as Credit Notes have been applied							

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
TEC01 Techies Limited							
560-Managed Silver Contract	06/09/2024	INV-6104	1	1,727.00	0.00	191.89	1,535.11
					0.00	191.89	
Above paid on 03/01/2025 by Cheque SO1							
TEC01 Techies Limited							
833-Microsoft 365 charge	15/10/2024	INV-6306	1	4,399.56	0.00	399.96	3,999.60
					0.00	399.96	
Above paid on 03/01/2025 by Cheque SO2							
GRE05 Grenke Leasing Ltd							
959-Photocopier lease to Mar25	01/01/2025	0000075047/2025	1	153.36	0.00	153.36	0.00
					0.00	153.36	
Above paid on 06/01/2025 by Cheque DDR							
BRI02 BT Payment Services Ltd							
927-BT quarter chgs to Feb 25	24/12/2024	Q041 ZW	1	135.20	0.00	135.20	0.00
					0.00	135.20	
Above paid on 07/01/2025 by Cheque DDR1							
CLO02 Cloudy Group							
928-App Hosting Package	01/01/2025	INV-D-06068	1	110.19	0.00	110.19	0.00
					0.00	110.19	
Above paid on 07/01/2025 by Cheque DDR2							
WAV03 Anglian Water							
907-Water chgs Moore Crescent	24/12/2024	14472121	1	52.25	0.00	52.25	0.00
					0.00	52.25	
Above paid on 08/01/2025 by Cheque DDR1							
WAV04 Anglian Water							
686-Depot water charges	16/09/2022	11039616	1	50.85	0.00	50.85	0.00
687-Depot water charges	26/09/2022	11071169	1	26.07	0.00	26.07	0.00
688-Depot water charges	24/10/2022	11183347	1	25.80	0.00	25.80	0.00

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
698-Depot water charges	24/11/2022	11304400	1	26.07	0.00	26.07	0.00
1063-Depot water charges	24/12/2022	11432767	1	25.80	0.00	25.80	0.00
1064-Depot water charges	24/01/2023	11540520	1	26.07	0.00	26.07	0.00
1065-Depot water charges	24/02/2023	11670672	1	-25.07	0.00	-25.07	0.00
260-Depot water charges	16/03/2023	11767598	1	11.19	0.00	11.19	0.00
261-Depot water charges	24/03/2023	11796562	1	5.08	0.00	5.08	0.00
262-Depot water charges	24/04/2023	11930473	1	18.21	0.00	18.21	0.00
263-Depot Water charges	24/05/2023	12059011	1	18.36	0.00	18.36	0.00
264-Depot water charges	24/06/2023	12190850	1	18.63	0.00	18.63	0.00
786-Water charges Depot	24/07/2023	12333146	1	42.12	0.00	42.12	0.00
787-Water charges Depot	24/08/2023	12461215	1	22.01	0.00	22.01	0.00
788-Water charges Depot	16/09/2023	12555383	1	9.66	0.00	9.66	0.00
789-Water charges Depot	24/09/2023	12584238	1	5.57	0.00	5.57	0.00
790-Water charges Depot	24/10/2023	12708850	1	18.36	0.00	18.36	0.00
826-Water Charges Depot	24/11/2023	12832140	1	18.63	0.00	18.63	0.00
949-Water Charges - Depot	24/12/2023	12950015	1	18.36	0.00	18.36	0.00
1060-Water Charges Depot	24/01/2024	13066275	1	8.45	0.00	8.45	0.00
1146-Water chgs - Depot	24/02/2024	13195771	1	25.42	0.00	25.42	0.00
1220-Water chgs depot	16/03/2024	13299249	1	15.90	0.00	15.90	0.00
1251-Water chgs Depot	24/03/2024	13334870	1	5.57	0.00	5.57	0.00
181-Water chgs Depot	24/04/2024	13466456	1	23.13	0.00	23.13	0.00
916-Water chgs Depot	24/05/2024	13594464B	1	23.24	0.00	23.24	0.00
919-Water chgs Depot	24/06/2024	13715507	1	27.20	0.00	27.20	0.00
426-Water chgs Depot	24/07/2024	13835694	1	19.56	0.00	19.56	0.00
539-Water chgs Depot	24/08/2024	13962437	1	16.19	0.00	16.19	0.00
926-Water chgs	16/09/2024	14057849	1	13.90	0.00	13.90	0.00
591-Water charges Tithe Farm	24/09/2024	1408757 5	1	-8.84	0.00	-8.84	0.00
588-Water charges Tithe Farm	24/09/2024	14087575	1	8.84	0.00	8.84	0.00
587-Water charges Depot	24/09/2024	14087726	1	5.95	0.00	5.95	0.00
592-Water chgs Village Green	24/09/2024	1408792 4	1	-148.39	0.00	-148.39	0.00
589-Water chgs Village Green	24/09/2024	14087924	1	148.39	0.00	148.39	0.00
593-Water charges Office	24/09/2024	1408794 9	1	-122.69	0.00	-122.69	0.00
590-Water charges Office	24/09/2024	14087949	1	122.69	0.00	122.69	0.00
690-Water charges Depot	24/10/2024	14217617	1	15.90	0.00	15.90	0.00

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
805-Water Charges Depot	24/11/2024	14345919	1	19.84	0.00	19.84	0.00
912-Water chgs Depot	24/12/2024	14472672	1	15.90	0.00	15.90	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	06/02/2023	ON ACC 1054	1	-18.00	0.00	-18.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	05/02/2024	ON ACC 1109	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	06/03/2023	ON ACC 1162	1	-18.00	0.00	-18.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/03/2024	ON ACC 1173	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/04/2023	ON ACC 119	1	-18.00	0.00	-18.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	17/05/2024	ON ACC 203	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/05/2023	ON ACC 275	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/06/2024	ON ACC 275	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	06/06/2023	ON ACC 321	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	05/08/2024	ON ACC 435	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/07/2023	ON ACC 471	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/08/2023	ON ACC 530	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/09/2024	ON ACC 552	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/10/2024	ON ACC 623	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	05/09/2023	ON ACC 657	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/10/2022	ON ACC 710	1	-18.00	0.00	-18.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/11/2024	ON ACC 725	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/10/2023	ON ACC 730	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/11/2022	ON ACC 805	1	-18.00	0.00	-18.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/11/2023	ON ACC 809	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/12/2024	ON ACC 814	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/04/2024	ON ACC 85	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	06/12/2022	ON ACC 880	1	-18.00	0.00	-18.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/12/2023	ON ACC 887	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/07/2024	ON ACC 918	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/01/2023	ON ACC 932	1	-18.00	0.00	-18.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/01/2024	ON ACC 992	1	-23.00	0.00	-23.00	0.00
					0.00	11.92	

Above paid on 08/01/2025 by Cheque DDR

WAV06 Anglian Water

692-V/Green water charges	26/09/2022	11071197	1	41.23	0.00	41.23	0.00
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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
693-V/Green water charges	26/09/2022	11071221	1	132.50	0.00	132.50	0.00
694-V/Green water charges	16/10/2022	11155444	1	93.76	0.00	93.76	0.00
695-V/Green water charges	24/10/2022	11183762	1	32.45	0.00	32.45	0.00
699-V/Green water charges	24/11/2022	11304721	1	132.50	0.00	132.50	0.00
1066-V/Green water charges	24/12/2022	11432409	1	126.21	0.00	126.21	0.00
1067-V/Green water charges	24/01/2023	11540649	1	132.50	0.00	132.50	0.00
1068-V/Green water charges	24/02/2023	11671418	1	129.50	0.00	129.50	0.00
265-V/Green water charges	24/03/2023	11796933	1	119.59	0.00	119.59	0.00
266-V/Green water charges	16/04/2023	11899299	1	104.91	0.00	104.91	0.00
267-V/Green water charges	24/04/2023	11931094	1	39.87	0.00	39.87	0.00
268-V/Green water charges	24/05/2023	12059313	1	141.96	0.00	141.96	0.00
269-V/Green water charges	24/06/2023	12191842	1	149.07	0.00	149.07	0.00
781-Water charges V/Green Pav	24/07/2023	12332742	1	141.96	0.00	141.96	0.00
782-Water charges V/Green Pav	24/08/2023	12460947	1	149.07	0.00	149.07	0.00
783-Water charges V/Green Pav	24/09/2023	12584432	1	149.07	0.00	149.07	0.00
784-Water charges V/Green Pav	16/10/2023	12678344	1	105.46	0.00	105.46	0.00
785-Water charges V/Green Pav	24/10/2023	12709579	1	36.49	0.00	36.49	0.00
828-Water Charges V/Green Pav	24/11/2023	12832410	1	149.07	0.00	149.07	0.00
951-Water Charges V/Green Pav	24/12/2023	12950113	1	141.96	0.00	141.96	0.00
1064-Water Charges V/Green	24/01/2024	13067166	1	-47.73	0.00	-47.73	0.00
1148-Water chgs - V/Green Pav	24/02/2024	13196130	1	135.51	0.00	135.51	0.00
1253-Water chgs V/Green Pav	24/03/2024	13334977	1	128.06	0.00	128.06	0.00
183-Water chgs Village Gn Pav	16/04/2024	13437791	1	106.94	0.00	106.94	0.00
184-Water chgs Village Gn Pav	24/04/2024	13466561	1	39.02	0.00	39.02	0.00
263-water chgs VG Pavilion	24/05/2024	13594628	1	140.77	0.00	140.77	0.00
336-Water chgs V/Green Pav	24/06/2024	13715594	1	144.72	0.00	144.72	0.00
431-Water chgs 24 Jun - 23 Jul	24/07/2024	13835769	1	236.24	0.00	236.24	0.00
541-Water chgs Village Green	24/08/2024	13962651	1	133.70	0.00	133.70	0.00
595-Water chgs Village Green	24/09/2024	14087924	1	148.39	0.00	148.39	0.00
674-Water chgs Village Gn Pav	16/10/2024	14187685	1	101.74	0.00	101.74	0.00
692-Water charges Village Gn	24/10/2024	14217778	1	90.43	0.00	90.43	0.00
804-Water charges Village Gn	24/11/2024	14346015	1	159.42	0.00	159.42	0.00
910-Water chgs Village Green	24/12/2024	14473081	1	74.66	0.00	74.66	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	06/02/2023	ON ACC 1055	1	-120.00	0.00	-120.00	0.00

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
Purchase Ledger Payment	05/02/2024	ON ACC 1110	1	-173.00	0.00	-173.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	06/03/2023	ON ACC 1163	1	-120.00	0.00	-120.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/03/2024	ON ACC 1174	1	-173.00	0.00	-173.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/04/2023	ON ACC 120	1	-120.00	0.00	-120.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/05/2024	ON ACC 204	1	-173.00	0.00	-173.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/05/2023	ON ACC 276	1	-103.00	0.00	-103.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/06/2024	ON ACC 277	1	-173.00	0.00	-173.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	06/06/2023	ON ACC 322	1	-103.00	0.00	-103.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/07/2024	ON ACC 349	1	-173.00	0.00	-173.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/07/2024	ON ACC 393	1	173.00	0.00	173.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/07/2024	ON ACC 396	1	-126.00	0.00	-126.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	05/08/2024	ON ACC 436	1	-126.00	0.00	-126.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/07/2023	ON ACC 472	1	-103.00	0.00	-103.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/08/2023	ON ACC 531	1	-103.00	0.00	-103.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/09/2024	ON ACC 553	1	-126.00	0.00	-126.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/10/2024	ON ACC 624	1	-126.00	0.00	-126.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	05/09/2023	ON ACC 656	1	-103.00	0.00	-103.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/10/2022	ON ACC 711	1	-120.00	0.00	-120.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/11/2024	ON ACC 726	1	-126.00	0.00	-126.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/10/2023	ON ACC 729	1	-103.00	0.00	-103.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/11/2022	ON ACC 806	1	-120.00	0.00	-120.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/11/2023	ON ACC 808	1	-103.00	0.00	-103.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/12/2024	ON ACC 813	1	-126.00	0.00	-126.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/04/2024	ON ACC 86	1	-173.00	0.00	-173.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	06/12/2022	ON ACC 881	1	-120.00	0.00	-120.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/12/2023	ON ACC 888	1	-173.00	0.00	-173.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/01/2023	ON ACC 933	1	-120.00	0.00	-120.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/01/2024	ON ACC 993	1	-173.00	0.00	-173.00	0.00

0.00 313.00

Above paid on 08/01/2025 by Cheque DDR2

WAV07	Anglain Water						
1057-Office water charges	26/01/2023	11551151	1	41.23	0.00	41.23	0.00
1058-Office water charges	26/01/2023	11551165	1	39.56	0.00	39.56	0.00

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
1059-Office water charges	24/02/2023	11671438	1	92.23	0.00	92.23	0.00
250-Office water charges	24/03/2023	11796963	1	22.29	0.00	22.29	0.00
251-Office water charges	24/04/2023	11931102	1	24.80	0.00	24.80	0.00
252-Office water charges	24/05/2023	12059330	1	21.74	0.00	21.74	0.00
253-Office water charges	24/06/2023	12191854	1	25.42	0.00	25.42	0.00
750-Office Water charges	24/07/2023	12332794	1	86.22	0.00	86.22	0.00
751-Office Water charges	24/08/2023	12460961	1	35.60	0.00	35.60	0.00
752-Office Water charges	24/09/2023	12584443	1	35.60	0.00	35.60	0.00
753-Office Water charges	24/10/2023	12709596	1	35.33	0.00	35.33	0.00
829-Office Water Charges	24/11/2023	12832426	1	35.60	0.00	35.60	0.00
952-Office Water Charges	24/12/2023	12950117	1	31.93	0.00	31.93	0.00
1062-Water Charges Office	24/01/2024	13066501	1	530.99	0.00	530.99	0.00
1149-Water chgs - Office	24/02/2024	13196138	1	113.63	0.00	113.63	0.00
1254-Water chgs Office	24/03/2024	13334982	1	106.30	0.00	106.30	0.00
185-Water chgs Office	24/04/2024	13466566	1	120.34	0.00	120.34	0.00
262-Water chgs Office	24/05/2024	13594638	1	118.73	0.00	118.73	0.00
338-Water chgs Office	24/06/2024	13715602	1	122.69	0.00	122.69	0.00
432-Water chgs Office	24/07/2024	13836528	1	-160.39	0.00	-160.39	0.00
542-Water chgs Office	24/08/2024	13962666	1	144.72	0.00	144.72	0.00
596-Water charges Office	24/09/2024	14087949	1	122.69	0.00	122.69	0.00
693-Water charges Office	24/10/2024	14217790	1	118.73	0.00	118.73	0.00
803-Water charges Office	24/11/2024	14346024	1	122.69	0.00	122.69	0.00
911-Water chgs Office	25/12/2024	14477291	1	-120.00	0.00	-120.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	06/02/2023	ON ACC 1051	1	-22.00	0.00	-22.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	05/02/2024	ON ACC 1111	1	-37.00	0.00	-37.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	06/03/2023	ON ACC 1159	1	-22.00	0.00	-22.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/04/2023	ON ACC 116	1	-22.00	0.00	-22.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/03/2024	ON ACC 1175	1	-37.00	0.00	-37.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/05/2024	ON ACC 205	1	-37.00	0.00	-37.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	04/05/2023	ON ACC 244	1	-22.00	0.00	-22.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/06/2024	ON ACC 276	1	-170.00	0.00	-170.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	06/06/2023	ON ACC 319	1	-22.00	0.00	-22.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	03/07/2024	ON ACC 351	1	-170.00	0.00	-170.00	0.00
Purchase Ledger Payment	05/08/2024	ON ACC 437	1	-170.00	0.00	-170.00	0.00

Continued over page

Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
<i>Purchase Ledger Payment</i>	04/07/2023	ON ACC 469	1	-22.00	0.00	-22.00	0.00
<i>Purchase Ledger Payment</i>	04/08/2023	ON ACC 528	1	-22.00	0.00	-22.00	0.00
<i>Purchase Ledger Payment</i>	03/09/2024	ON ACC 554	1	-170.00	0.00	-170.00	0.00
<i>Purchase Ledger Payment</i>	03/10/2024	ON ACC 622	1	-170.00	0.00	-170.00	0.00
<i>Purchase Ledger Payment</i>	05/09/2023	ON ACC 659	1	-22.00	0.00	-22.00	0.00
<i>Purchase Ledger Payment</i>	04/10/2022	ON ACC 707	1	-22.00	0.00	-22.00	0.00
<i>Purchase Ledger Payment</i>	04/11/2024	ON ACC 727	1	-170.00	0.00	-170.00	0.00
<i>Purchase Ledger Payment</i>	03/10/2023	ON ACC 732	1	-22.00	0.00	-22.00	0.00
<i>Purchase Ledger Payment</i>	04/11/2022	ON ACC 802	1	-22.00	0.00	-22.00	0.00
<i>Purchase Ledger Payment</i>	03/11/2023	ON ACC 810	1	-37.00	0.00	-37.00	0.00
<i>Purchase Ledger Payment</i>	03/12/2024	ON ACC 812	1	-170.00	0.00	-170.00	0.00
<i>Purchase Ledger Payment</i>	03/04/2024	ON ACC 87	1	-37.00	0.00	-37.00	0.00
<i>Purchase Ledger Payment</i>	06/12/2022	ON ACC 877	1	-22.00	0.00	-22.00	0.00
<i>Purchase Ledger Payment</i>	04/12/2023	ON ACC 886	1	-37.00	0.00	-37.00	0.00
<i>Purchase Ledger Payment</i>	04/01/2023	ON ACC 929	1	-22.00	0.00	-22.00	0.00
<i>Purchase Ledger Payment</i>	03/01/2024	ON ACC 994	1	-37.00	0.00	-37.00	0.00
					0.00	133.67	

Above paid on 09/01/2025 by Cheque DDR3

ACT001	ACT						
929-safety workwear	02/12/2024	INV-7097	1	337.20	0.00	337.20	0.00
					0.00	337.20	

Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP1

AMF01	AMF Services (Bedford) Ltd						
930-Tomlin Trailer works	17/12/2024	32580	1	387.94	0.00	387.94	0.00
932-Works to Dennis mower	18/12/2024	32583	1	509.49	0.00	509.49	0.00
931-Works to Allett	18/12/2024	INV-32582	1	497.63	0.00	497.63	0.00
					0.00	1,395.06	

Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP2

BED07	Police & Crime Commissioner for Beds						
934-Op Hana - Nov 23 (10p owed	25/01/2023	B0003489A	1	0.10	0.00	0.10	0.00
933-Op Hana - November 2024	07/01/2025	B0004821	1	4,115.78	0.00	4,115.78	0.00
					0.00	4,115.88	

Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP3

Continued over page

Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
BLA01 Blain's Trailers & Tyres Ltd							
935-Stronghold Eye Lock	12/11/2024	SI-84509	1	90.00	0.00	90.00	0.00
					0.00	90.00	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP4							
CEN04 Central Bedfordshire Council							
937-HHP Contribution (Apr-Dec)	20/12/2024	1800229552	1	15,327.24	0.00	15,327.24	0.00
938-Westbury Close rent to Mar	25/12/2024	7100020586	1	3,875.00	0.00	3,875.00	0.00
					0.00	19,202.24	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP6							
DUN04 Dunstable Town Council							
939-Kubota G26 mower	23/12/2024	GEN15862	1	2,400.00	0.00	2,400.00	0.00
					0.00	2,400.00	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP7							
GBI01 Geo Browns Implements Ltd							
936-Stay (Muffler,R,1)	06/01/2025	112704	1	25.01	0.00	25.01	0.00
					0.00	25.01	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP5							
HAL01 Halo Advertising Ltd							
940-HR Community Video	02/12/2024	1064	1	24,000.00	0.00	24,000.00	0.00
					0.00	24,000.00	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP8							
HEN03 Henderson Management							
941-Band for HRocks 2025	08/11/2024	HMI-31773	1	1,950.72	0.00	1,950.72	0.00
					0.00	1,950.72	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP9							
HMR001 HMRC							
877-PAYE/NI December 2024	31/12/2024	PAYE/NI DEC 2024	1	12,379.31	0.00	12,379.31	0.00
PAYE/NI Dec 2024 (2)	31/12/2024	PAYE/NI DEC 2024 (2)	1	342.17	0.00	342.17	0.00
					0.00	12,721.48	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP1							

Continued over page

Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
IWN01	Independent Water Networks						
920-Water chgs recharge	07/11/2024	27895472	1	-58.60	0.00	-58.60	0.00
921-Water chgs - recharge	11/12/2024	28480994	1	30.71	0.00	30.71	0.00
942-Water Bidwell (recharge)	07/01/2025	29113050	1	31.32	0.00	31.32	0.00
					0.00	3.43	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP10							
JEW02	Jewson						
943-Gold Stone Chippings	17/12/2024	3401/01082734	1	128.40	0.00	128.40	0.00
Authorised: 943-							
					0.00	128.40	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP11							
KFI002	Kings Fire						
944-Bi Annual Fire Alarm Maint	20/12/2024	3462	1	238.80	0.00	238.80	0.00
					0.00	238.80	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP12							
LAN03	Latent Digital Solutions Ltd						
945-Photocopier charges	23/12/2024	306285	1	149.46	0.00	149.46	0.00
					0.00	149.46	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP13							
MCS01	MCS Contract Cleaning Limited						
946-Toilet Cleaning BSquare	31/12/2024	119	1	2,220.00	0.00	2,220.00	0.00
					0.00	2,220.00	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP14							
PRO01	Proludic Ltd						
947-parts Village Gn play area	18/12/2024	SIN010267	1	568.11	0.00	568.11	0.00
					0.00	568.11	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP15							

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
RPM01 Reids Playground Maintenance Ltd							
948-T/Farm rebound fencing	19/12/2024	INV-6745	1	7,674.00	0.00	7,674.00	0.00
949-Add. fencing costs T/Farm	19/12/2024	INV-6746	1	966.00	0.00	966.00	0.00
					0.00	8,640.00	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP16							
SPA01 Spaldings Limited							
952-Function Basic helmet set	03/01/2025	SI-3002979	1	115.20	0.00	115.20	0.00
					0.00	115.20	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP18							
TEC01 Techies Limited							
953-Microsift 365 Bus Standard	20/12/2024	INV-6653	1	121.61	0.00	121.61	0.00
					0.00	121.61	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP19							
TOT01 Right Fuelcard Company Ltd							
950-Fuel for vehicles	30/11/2024	6066406	1	128.28	0.00	128.28	0.00
951-Fuel for vehicles	31/12/2024	6118470	1	146.70	0.00	146.70	0.00
					0.00	274.98	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP17							
WEL01 Wellers Law Group LLP							
954-Prof chgs tfr of Pavilion	31/05/2024	826556	1	1,080.00	0.00	1,080.00	0.00
					0.00	1,080.00	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque FP20							
YU001 Yu Energy							
955-Gas chgs Moore Crescent	03/01/2025	02245265	1	476.23	0.00	476.23	0.00
					0.00	476.23	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque DDR1							

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
YU001 Yu Energy							
956-Gas chgs Parkside Drive	03/01/2025	02294515	1	33.88	0.00	33.88	0.00
					0.00	33.88	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque DDR2							
YU001 Yu Energy							
957-Gas charges Depot	03/01/2025	02294516	1	13.45	0.00	13.45	0.00
					0.00	13.45	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque DDR3							
YU001 Yu Energy							
958-Gas charges Office	03/01/2025	02294517	1	41.55	0.00	41.55	0.00
					0.00	41.55	
Above paid on 10/01/2025 by Cheque DDR4							
POZ06 Pozitive Energy							
965-Gas charges Bidwell	07/01/2025	48540020257090720	1	13.20	0.00	13.20	0.00
					0.00	13.20	
Above paid on 13/01/2025 by Cheque DDR							
CAS02 Castle Water							
960-Water chgs Townsend Farm	02/01/2025	TE00746867	1	8.57	0.00	8.57	0.00
					0.00	8.57	
Above paid on 16/01/2025 by Cheque DDR1							
BRI01 British Gas							
961-Electricity Tithe Farm	03/01/2025	800605448	1	2,570.24	0.00	2,570.24	0.00
					0.00	2,570.24	
Above paid on 17/01/2025 by Cheque DDR2							
SCO02 Scottish Power							
993-Electricity Parkside Drive	05/01/2025	608004259262	1	41.41	0.00	41.41	0.00
					0.00	41.41	
Above paid on 20/01/2025 by Cheque DDR1							

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Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
SCO02 Scottish Power							
992-Electricity Tithe Farm	05/01/2025	608004259263	1	778.27	0.00	778.27	0.00
					0.00	778.27	
Above paid on 20/01/2025 by Cheque DDR2							
SCO02 Scottish Power							
991-Electricity Village Green	05/01/2025	608004259264	1	233.46	0.00	233.46	0.00
					0.00	233.46	
Above paid on 20/01/2025 by Cheque DDR3							
SCO02 Scottish Power							
990-Electricity Depot	05/01/2025	608004259265	1	594.92	0.00	594.92	0.00
					0.00	594.92	
Above paid on 20/01/2025 by Cheque DDR4							
SCO02 Scottish Power							
996-Electricity Parkside Drive	05/01/2025	608004259274	1	18.90	0.00	18.90	0.00
					0.00	18.90	
Above paid on 20/01/2025 by Cheque DDR5							
SCO02 Scottish Power							
995-Electricity Office	05/01/2025	608004259275	1	205.68	0.00	205.68	0.00
					0.00	205.68	
Above paid on 20/01/2025 by Cheque DDR6							
SCO02 Scottish Power							
994-Electricity M/Crescent	05/01/2025	608004259276	1	161.97	0.00	161.97	0.00
					0.00	161.97	
Above paid on 20/01/2025 by Cheque DDR7							
CAS09 Castle Water - 2597769							
962-Water charges Cemetery	07/01/2025	10005090552	1	26.22	0.00	26.22	0.00
					0.00	26.22	
Above paid on 21/01/2025 by Cheque DDR3							

Continued over page

Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
CAS10 Castle Water - 2597749							
963-Water charges Parkside Dri	07/01/2025	10005083890	1	33.58	0.00	33.58	0.00
					0.00	33.58	
Above paid on 21/01/2025 by Cheque DDR4							
YGP01 Yorkshire Gas and Power							
964-Electricity chgs Bidwell	11/01/2025	917057	1	754.65	0.00	754.65	0.00
					0.00	754.65	
Above paid on 21/01/2025 by Cheque DDR5							
BED02 Bedfordshire Pension Fund							
974-Added Years December 2024	01/01/2025	759021	1	62.60	0.00	62.60	0.00
					0.00	62.60	
Above paid on 24/01/2025 by Cheque FP6							
HOG01 The Hogsty End Handbook							
971-Advert in HogstyEnd H/book	14/01/2025	INV-4408	1	90.00	0.00	90.00	0.00
					0.00	90.00	
Above paid on 24/01/2025 by Cheque FP3							
HOU03 Houghton Regis Helpers Community Org A/C							
970-Donation Rem. Sun. serving	07/01/2025	DONATION HRTC	1	50.00	0.00	50.00	0.00
					0.00	50.00	
Above paid on 24/01/2025 by Cheque FP2							
HOU08 Houghton Regis Baptist Church							
972-Hire of Hall January 2025	15/01/2025	JAN 2025	1	250.00	0.00	250.00	0.00
					0.00	250.00	
Above paid on 24/01/2025 by Cheque FP4							
HRS01 HR Solutions							
973-HR Retainer	01/01/2025	INV-043187	1	270.30	0.00	270.30	0.00
					0.00	270.30	
Above paid on 24/01/2025 by Cheque FP5							

Continued over page

Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
JCURL01 John Curl							
969-LC69 HCL check and MOT	08/01/2025	248312	1	114.00	0.00	114.00	0.00
					0.00	114.00	
Above paid on 24/01/2025 by Cheque FP1							
LEI001 Leighton-Linslade Town Council							
975-2 tickets for Quiz Night	09/01/2025	LLTC QUIZ NIGHT	1	10.00	0.00	10.00	0.00
					0.00	10.00	
Above paid on 24/01/2025 by Cheque FP7							
NAL01 NALC							
976-Study Tour Braunstone TC	09/01/2025	INV-00077	1	264.00	0.00	264.00	0.00
					0.00	264.00	
Above paid on 24/01/2025 by Cheque FP8							
PRB01 Pete Rowe Building Services							
978-Hearting reps MCresc	17/01/2025	101	1	1,410.00	0.00	1,410.00	0.00
					0.00	1,410.00	
Above paid on 24/01/2025 by Cheque FP10							
PRE04 Prestige Design & Workwear Ltd							
977-Workwear	07/01/2025	127675	1	188.40	0.00	188.40	0.00
					0.00	188.40	
Above paid on 24/01/2025 by Cheque FP9							
RTM01 R T Machinery Ltd							
979-new cylinder mower	07/11/2024	155432	1	5,580.00	0.00	5,580.00	0.00
					0.00	5,580.00	
Above paid on 24/01/2025 by Cheque FP11							
SCR02 Trade UK Account							
985-Batten, Hang strips, Bracket	14/01/2025	2001400940	1	48.52	0.00	48.52	0.00
					0.00	48.52	
Above paid on 24/01/2025 by Cheque FP15							

Continued over page

Supplier and Invoice Details	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Ledger	Amount Due	Discount	Amount Paid	Balance
SLC01 SLCC							
980-Public Speaking - MHerber	20/01/2025	BK219486-1	1	42.00	0.00	42.00	0.00
					0.00	42.00	
Above paid on 24/01/2025 by Cheque FP12							
STR04 Strong Soul Fitness CIC							
981-6 x boxing mentoring	15/01/2025	110	1	720.00	0.00	720.00	0.00
					0.00	720.00	
Above paid on 24/01/2025 by Cheque FP13							
TEC01 Techies Limited							
982-3CX PRO - 8 calls	07/01/2025	INV-6719	1	318.00	0.00	318.00	0.00
983-3CX Telephone support	08/01/2025	INV-6727	1	298.08	0.00	298.08	0.00
984-Fujitsu Support Pack - 1yr	15/01/2025	INV-6754	1	354.00	0.00	354.00	0.00
					0.00	970.08	
Above paid on 24/01/2025 by Cheque FP14							
DUN02 Biffa Waste Services Ltd							
967-Skip hire	27/12/2024	614C74166	1	76.02	0.00	76.02	0.00
966-Waste disposal	27/12/2024	614C74167	1	3,017.34	0.00	3,017.34	0.00
					0.00	3,093.36	
Above paid on 27/01/2025 by Cheque DDR							
PAYROLL Payroll Options							
968-Payroll processing Dec 24	27/12/2024	154455	1	202.55	0.00	202.55	0.00
					0.00	202.55	
Above paid on 31/01/2025 by Cheque DDR							
Total Purchase Ledger Payments for Month 10					0.00	101,277.84	



CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 9

Date:	3rd March 2025
Title:	Investment Report
Purpose of the Report:	To provide to members a report on investments to date and the opportunity to further invest.
Contact Officer:	Debbie Marsh, Head of Corporate Services

1. RECOMMENDATION

To approve the investment of £250,000, currently held in the Town Councils CCLA Deposit Fund, with Flagstones cash deposit platform.

2. BACKGROUND

In accordance with Committee Functions & Terms of Reference, Financial Regulations and Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements Policy, it is a requirement that the Corporate Services Committee receive quarterly reports on investments.

The Council currently has funds deposited in NatWest and in the Churches, Charities and Local Authorities Investment Management Company (CCLA) Public Sector Deposit Fund.

3. CURRENT INVESTMENT

Commencement of the short-term investment (Public Sector Deposit Fund) was during Financial Year 2014 - 2015.

In accordance with Minutes AC1113 and AC1121, two officers administrate both these accounts for supervision and audit trail purposes.

Funds can be transferred into and out of the Deposit account without notice and only into the Council's designated bank account.

4. SHORT-TERM INVESTMENT – PUBLIC SECTOR DEPOSIT ACCOUNT

Commencement of the Public Sector Deposit Fund was September 2014.

This is a pooled, qualified money market fund created by and for the public sector which has a low level of risk. Shares are bought and the dividend is paid at the end of each month (in accordance with IAS 18 – Revenue) less management fees but without deduction of tax.

At the Corporate Services meeting held on the 4th March 2024 members resolved (minute number 12731) to withdraw the Town Councils funds from the Town Councils CCLA Property fund account and to subsequently invest these funds in the CCLA Deposit account as it was a AAA rated investment. Members were informed via email that the funds from this account had been received on the 2nd October 2024 and had been placed in the CCLA Deposit account.

Members can find more details on this fund by following this link [The Public Sector Deposit Fund | CCLA](#) In addition at Appendix A Members will find attached The Public Sector Deposit Fund Fact Sheet – 31st December 2024

The declared yield rate as at:

31st December 2024 – 4.75%

31st October 2024 – 4.94%

31st July 2024 – 5.18%

30th April 2024 – 5.23%

Accessibility of funds is almost immediate (within 24 hours) making this a highly liquid Current Asset investment. Activity is a fluctuation of withdrawals when required to meet the council's expenditure costs for the period and deposits of investing surplus funds (namely Precept) in accordance with the Trustee Investment Act 1961 S.11 and recommendations.

Further detail is provided in the Chronological report attached at Appendix B. Members will find, for additional information, in the other details column, figures have been included to show how much interest this account has achieved, prior to and since the Property Funds have been added.

Members will see that the Town Council held a sum of £1,169,500 as of the 31st January 2025 however, it is expected that £200,000 will be drawn down from this account for the rest of the 2024/25 financial year, to cover the councils average expenditure costs. The predicted balance as at the 31st March 2025, in the CCLA Deposit Account, is £969,500.

As members are aware, the council should hold 3 to 12 months net revenue expenditure as a general reserve to cover unexpected expenditure or emergencies. As advised during the budget setting process, 3 month net revenue expenditure equates to £406,000.

As the CCLA Deposit Fund is a high liquidity account it is suggested that the £406,000 remains in the CCLA Deposit Fund account. The balance available for alternative investment equates to £563,500. There would be the opportunity for further funds to be invested following receipt of the 2025-2026 precept however, being mindful of the balance between liquidity, security and investment return.

5. INFORMATION

Members requested, following receipt of funds from the Town Councils CCLA Property Fund, that research be undertaken to ascertain what potential investment opportunities were available to the town council.

Members are reminded of the following when considering potential investment opportunities:

- How the town council has assessed the market that it is/will be competing in, the nature and level of competition, how it thinks that the market/customer needs will evolve over time, barriers to entry and exit and any ongoing investment requirements.
- Whether and, if so how, the town council uses external advisors be they treasury management advisors, property investment advisors or any other relevant persons.
- How the town council monitors and maintains the quality of advice provided by external advisors.
- To what extent, if at all, any risk assessment is based on credit ratings issued by credit ratings agencies.
- Where credit ratings are used, how frequently they are monitored and the procedures for taking action if credit ratings change.
- What other sources of information are used to assess and monitor risk.
- It is highlighted to members that none of the council staff team hold qualifications in treasury management, in addition there is also only very limited work-based experience of treasury management.

At the previous Corporate Services meeting, members considered the outcome of a light touch research exercise. Members requested that officers research the option of investing up to £500k in either Government Bonds or a financial investment organisation.

1) Government Bonds

In the UK, government-issued bonds are known as gilts. While all investment incurs risk, government bonds from established and stable economies are regarded as being comparatively low-risk investments.

UK gilts are British government bonds issued by HM Treasury, listed on the London Stock Exchange (LSE). They're also known as 'gilt-edged securities' because of their reliability as an investment – the UK government has never defaulted on its coupon and principal payments, so UK gilts make for a secure investment.

Gilts are actively traded securities, and the price of a gilt can change continually whilst the capital markets are trading. The title of a gilt does not tell the investor its price in the market today, nor does it reveal how much the investor would have to pay to buy it or how much they would receive if they sold it (rather than waiting for repayment of the principal at maturity).

It is not just the comparison with today's interest rates that matters for gilt prices. The price of a gilt with many years left until it reaches its maturity date reflects the collective assessment of the market about the present value of the flow of coupon payments that

will be made over the remaining years until the gilt reaches maturity together with the repayment of principal. That assessment will be affected by many factors, including the market's collective view of what will happen to interest rates over future years; of both the level of and uncertainty about inflation in the future; and of other issues, such as the levels of outright supply and the strength and nature of demand from investors.

Gilt prices will fluctuate from day-to-day in the market, depending on the outlook for interest rates but investors who buy at par (face value) or below, and hold the bonds to maturity can be almost certain that interest and principal will be repaid in full, whereas those bought above par and are held to maturity will suffer a capital loss despite the government backing.

When the base interest rate changes, the price of a gilt tends to change too. Gilt prices and interest rates have an inverse (opposite or contrary in position) relationship:

- If interest rates go up, gilt prices usually fall, but that means the yield, goes up. This is because the interest on offer is no longer as attractive as when rates were lower.
- If interest rates go fall, gilt prices usually rise. This is because newly issued gilts will offer lower yields than existing gilts. This will increase demand for the existing higher-yield gilts, raising their price.

Therefore, if the investor needs to sell the asset before maturity to raise funds, there is a risk of capital loss.

Investing in UK gilts

In order for the Town Council to purchase Government Gilts an application to join an approved group of investors needs to be completed. Once accepted the Gilts can then be purchased and issued in the name of the Town Council.

The Purchase and Sale Service is administered by the HM Treasury appointed registrar, Computershare Investor Services PLC. From information gained from Computershare and from the information on the DMO's (the government's Debt Management Office) website (screens shot as appendix C) it appears that Gilts are not issued for less than 12 months.

The following is an extract from the guidance issued by the Secretary of State under Section 15(1) (a) of the Local Government Act 2003:

The investment is not a long term investment. This means that the local authority has contractual right to repayment within 12 months, either because that is the expiry term of the investment or through a non-conditional option.

Members can find information via the following link:

[Guidance on local government investments.pdf](#)

The majority of Gilts pay a fixed coupon (generally twice a year) and mature at a set date. The most popular Gilts for investors are maturities between two and ten years. Some Gilts have more complex features such as "calls", which enable the government to pay off the debt ahead of time. Before purchasing a Gilt, full details of the issue. Prospectuses for Gilt issues can be obtained via the website of the government's Debt Management Office.

More information can be found here <https://www.dmo.gov.uk/responsibilities/gilt-market/>

Members can see under section 8 of the attached Computershare Purchase and Sale Terms and Conditions (appendix D), the general provisions relating to buying and selling gilts. Section 14 details the settlement date, from the sale of gilts and this will normally occur 3 business days following the date of the trade.

2) Flagstone

Flagstone is a deposit platform system that allows account holders to manage deposits and allows them to spread risk amongst a group of accounts and take advantage of changing interest rates rather than having a standard “savings account” (and without going down the investments route). The system allows deposits to be placed in a range of savings accounts based on interest rate, notice period (i.e. instant access or fixed term accounts) and credit risk - at the click of a button. Savers can open and manage an entire savings portfolio in one place, with one password. Banks/building societies list their accounts on Flagstones platform.

Flagstone have confirmed the Town Council would be able to open a holding account via their Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) partnership.

Members are advised that three town and parish councils, who currently use this platform, have been contacted. All three have provided positive feedback. One has been using this platform for a number of years.

This type of account would need to be monitored and administered regularly but this could be managed in house.

Important information:

- No management fees.
- No hidden fees. Rates published are the rates savers receive Flagstone will have already revised the rate to include their ‘commission’. Flagstone take up to 0.3% off the interest rate before it is published and available to investors.
- No need to keep opening savings accounts with individual banks. Browse and choose from multiple banks and deposit accounts
- Credit ratings for banks are displayed on this platform, allowing clients to make more informed decisions when selecting accounts. The Town Council has an investment risk appetite comparable to at least a AA-rating or higher (minute number 12731). The credit ratings are provided by the following three companies, these companies are listed in the guidance issued by the Secretary of State under Section 15(1) (a) of the Local Government Act 2003 and are:
 - Standard and Poor’s;
 - Moodys Investors Service Ltd; and
 - Fitch Ratings Ltd
- Allows the Town Council to spread savings over a number of different financial organisations.
- There is an initial minimum deposit of £150,000, however this balance does not need maintaining. The balance can reduce to zero.

- As stated above, the Town Council would be able to apply for an account via the CAF pathway and as such would only be able to access fixed term or notice period investment opportunities. Instant access savings accounts are not available via this pathway.
- Confirmation has been received from the Town Councils Internal Auditor that as the Town Council would simply be getting a reduced interest rate. The Town Council would only need to record the interest received.
- Officers managing the accounts within the platform will be mindful of maturity dates and, as far as possible, will ensure that interest is received within the same financial year as the opening of an investment.
- Officers would manage the account the same way as they do with the CCLA Deposit Fund. Any monies going into and out of the account would be transferred via the Town Councils nominated bank account (NatWest).

Members might find the following link of interest. This allows members to access information that gives an overview of the simplicity of the use of the platform.

[Flagstone Guide](#)

6. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS, INVESTMENT STRATEGY & INVESTMENT ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

Members are advised that the Town Councils Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements Policy, is in line with the guidance issued by the Secretary of State under Section 15(1) (a) of the Local Government Act 2003 which states that all investments will be short term investments and to not exceed a maximum of twelve months.

Members are reminded that this policy was revised at the Corporate Services meeting held on the 9th September 2024 (minute number 12972) however, members recommended these amendments be only noted as this policy could need further consideration following any outcome of potential investment decisions before being presented to Town Council for ratification.

Should members be minded to support the recommendation this policy will require updating.

A copy of the Town Councils Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements Policy is attached as appendix E

7. HRTC CORPORATE PLAN

Aspirations 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.

8. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Implications

- Risk Management Strategy

- Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements Policy

Legal Implications

- Compliance with the guidance issued by the Secretary of State under Section 15(1) (a) of the Local Government Act 2003

Financial Implications

- There are no financial implications of this report.

Risk Implications

- As with any type of investment there is always an element of risk. Officers' supervision of the accounts and monitoring their environments as well as the UK's economy climate, helps to regulate and assess any potential risks.
- Reputation should not be lost from poor investment decisions.
- The Town Council has an investment risk appetite comparable to at least an AA-rating or higher (minute number 12731)
- Although there is a national Financial Services Compensation Scheme which provides compensation should a bank or investment company fail. An individual is covered up to an investment level of £85k. For councils, this compensation is only available if your income is under £500k per year. Therefore, Houghton Regis Town Council is not eligible to compensation under this scheme.
- The spread of investments supports one of the existing controls as detailed in the Town Councils Risk Management Schedule, Finance Section.

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

- There are no press implications.

9. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

As the Town Councils Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements Policy states that all investments will be short term investments which will not exceed a maximum of twelve months, in accordance with the guidance issued by the Secretary of State under Section 15(1) (a) of the Local Government Act 2003, investing in Government Gilts would conflict with this legislation. Government Bonds,

if short term, may not provide as much yield as conventional savings accounts and liquidity cannot be assured.

The Town Council is looking to balance liquidity, security and investment return.: they are committed to ensuring their investment is placed within a stable investment portfolio which is at least AA rated. Government Gilts are not rated in this manner however, Flagstone deposit platform does publish AA ratings. It is recommended that the Council seeks to invest through Flagstone £250,000 (as their minimum deposit) and to review its functionality in 12 months' time with the view to further investment through this platform should it be desirable at that time.

Extract from this committees Committee Functions:

- To oversee and manage the financial obligations of the Council, including:
- To receive quarterly reports on investments containing a forecast of capital expenditure, investment opportunities and a recommendation for further investment including where, length and amount.

10. APPENDICES

Appendix A - The Public Sector Deposit Fund Fact Sheet – 31st December 2024.

Appendix B - Chronological Report

Appendix C - Debt Management Office screenshot

Appendix D - Computershare Purchase and Sale Terms and Conditions

Appendix E - Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements Policy

The Public Sector Deposit Fund

Fund fact sheet – 31 December 2024

Investment objective

To maximise the current income consistent with the preservation of principal and liquidity.

Investment policy

The fund will be invested in a diversified portfolio of high-quality sterling denominated deposits and instruments. All investments at the time of purchase will have the highest short-term credit rating or an equivalent strong long-term rating. The fund is actively managed, which means the authorised corporate director uses their discretion to pick investments, in pursuit of the investment objective.

The weighted average maturity of the investments will not exceed 60 days. The fund will not invest in derivatives or other collective investment schemes.

Who can invest?

Any public sector organisation can invest in the fund, but it may be marketed to any retail or professional client. Share class 4 is reserved for public sector organisation investment only.

Sustainability approach

We believe that the primary role of sustainable investment is to drive positive change and this is best achieved by pushing companies to do more to address the major challenges facing us today. The fund is managed in line with our sustainability approach for cash funds available at: www.ccla.co.uk/about-us/policies-and-reports/policies/sustainability-approach-cash-funds.

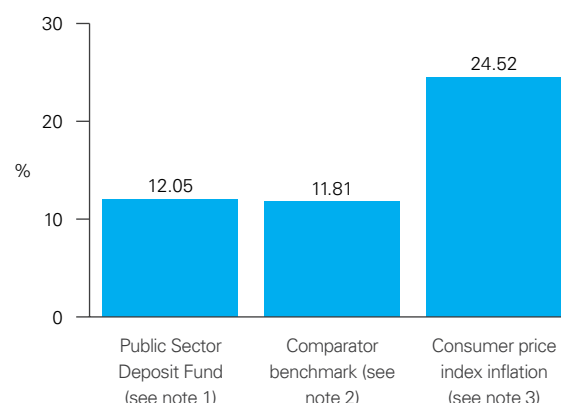
The FCA has introduced sustainable investment labels to help investors find products that have a specific sustainability goal. This product does not have a UK sustainable investment label because it does not have a sustainability goal.

Read our summary of SDR, the investment labels and our overall approach at: www.ccla.co.uk/sustainability. Fund-level information can be found at: www.ccla.co.uk/funds/public-sector-deposit-fund.

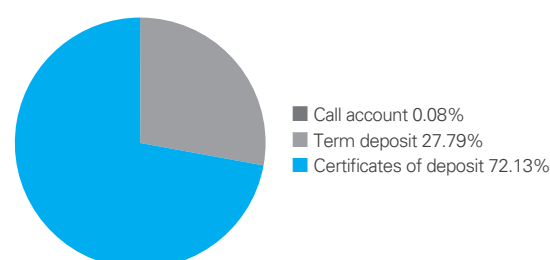
Share class 4 yield as at 31 December 2024

4.75%

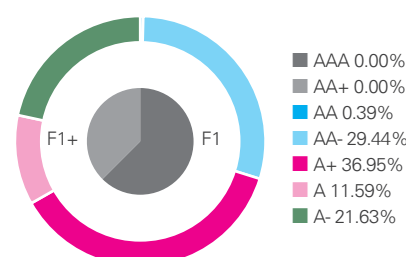
5 years performance



Asset type (%)



Credit rating (%) see note 4



Top 10 counterparty exposures (%)

9.11%	National Bank of Canada
7.72%	Landesbank Baden-Wuerttemberg
7.72%	Yorkshire Building Society
4.25%	MUFG Bank
4.25%	Royal Bank of Canada
4.25%	Toronto Dominion Bank (The)
4.06%	UBS AG
3.86%	Credit Agricole Corporate and Investment Bank
3.86%	Leeds Building Society
3.86%	Lloyds Bank Corporate Markets plc

Top 10 country exposures (%)

20.01%	UK
21.47%	Canada
15.84%	Japan
9.66%	Germany
9.39%	France
6.95%	Singapore
4.06%	Switzerland
3.86%	Finland
3.67%	United States
3.48%	Netherlands

Note 1: Source: CCLA - Performance shown after management fees and other expenses, with the income reinvested. The daily yield on the fund will fluctuate, and past performance is not a reliable indicator of future results. Note 2: From 1 January 2021, the comparator benchmark is the Sterling Overnight Index Average. Before 1 January 2021, the comparator benchmark was the 7-Day Sterling London Interbank Bid Rate. Note 3: consumer price index inflation is lagged one month. Note 4: Using Fitch Ratings methodology.

Income

Average yield over the month	4.75%
Yield at the month-end shown	4.75%

Total return performance by year

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
12 months to 31 December					
The Public Sector Deposit Fund	+0.31%	+0.04%	+1.32%	+4.72%	+5.24%
Comparator benchmark	+0.04%	+0.05%	+1.40%	+4.69%	+5.23%
Relative (difference)	+0.27%	-0.01%	-0.08%	+0.03%	+0.01%

Annualised total return performance

	1 year	3 years	5 years
Performance to 31 December			
The Public Sector Deposit Fund	+5.24%	+3.75%	+2.30%
Comparator benchmark	+5.23%	+3.76%	+2.26%
Relative (difference)	+0.01%	-0.01%	+0.04%

Performance shown after management fees and other expenses, with the income reinvested. From 1 January 2021, the comparator benchmark is the Sterling Overnight Index Average. Before 1 January 2021, the comparator benchmark was 7-Day Sterling London Interbank Bid Rate. **Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future results.** Source: CCLA

Market update

As expected, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) held the Official Bank Rate at 4.75% at the December meeting. The major surprise being the 6 – 3 vote with several members voting for an immediate cut of 0.25% reflecting the BoE's unique challenge of navigating persistent inflation alongside a slowing economy. Headline CPI ticked back upward in November to 2.6% whilst services inflation (5%) and wage inflation (5.2%) both remain stubbornly high. With an economy that contracted 0.1% in both September and October, there are clear divisions within the MPC about the trajectory of the UK economy and monetary policy.

Despite this division, governor Bailey signalled the committee's intent to continue with a gradual easing in 2025 although refused to commit to when by or how much. The long-term expectation remains a steady decline towards 3.5% - 4% however there is greater uncertainty around the speed of this decline which is dependent on whether services and wage inflation can be further reduced.

With no meeting of the MPC in January, there is hope that the extra couple of months of data before they meet again will provide evidence that services inflation is reducing quickly enough to allow the possibility of a rate cut in February.

Key facts

Authorised corporate director	CCLA Investment Management Limited
Fund size	£1,295m
Fitch money-market fund rating	AAAmf
Weighted average maturity	47.86
Launch date	May 2011
Dealing day	Each business day (see note 5)
Withdrawals	On demand
Fund domicile	United Kingdom
ISIN (share class 4)	GB00B3LDFH01
Interest payment frequency	Monthly
Ongoing charges figure	0.10% (currently reduced to 0.08%) (see note 6)

Please Contact

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Note 5: Dealing instructions (including cleared funds for purchases) must be received by 11:30am.

Note 6: The ongoing charges figure is based on the annual management charge (including portfolio transaction costs).

Please refer to <https://www.ccla.co.uk/glossary> for explanations of terms used in this communication. If you would like the information in an alternative format or have any queries, please call us on 0800 022 3505 or email us at clientservices@ccla.co.uk.

Risk warning and disclosures

This document is a financial promotion and is for information only. It does not provide financial, investment or other professional advice. The market update contained in this document represents CCLA's house view and should not be relied upon to form the basis of any investment decisions. To make sure you understand whether our product is suitable for you, please read the key investor information document and the prospectus and consider the risk factors identified in those documents. CCLA strongly recommend you get independent professional advice before investing. Under the UK money market funds regulation, the Public Sector Deposit Fund (PSDF) is a short-term low volatility net asset value money market fund. You should note that purchasing shares in the PSDF is not the same as making a deposit with a bank or other deposit taking body and is not a guaranteed investment. Although it is intended to maintain a stable net asset value per share (where £1 invested in the PSDF remains equal to £1 in value in the PSDF), there can be no assurance that it will be maintained. The value of the PSDF may be affected by interest rate changes. The PSDF does not rely on external support for guaranteeing the liquidity of the fund or stabilising the net asset value per share. The risk of loss of principal is borne by the shareholder. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future results. The value of investments and the income from them may fall as well as rise. You may not get back the amount you originally invested and may lose money. Any forward-looking statements are based on our current opinions, expectations and projections. We may not update or amend these. Actual results could be significantly different than expected. The PSDF is authorised in the United Kingdom and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority as a UK UCITS Scheme and is a Qualifying Money Market Fund. Issued by CCLA Investment Management Limited (registered in England and Wales, number 2183088, at One Angel Lane, London EC4R 3AB) who is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. For information about how we collect and use your personal information please see our privacy notice, which is available at <https://www.ccla.co.uk/our-policies/data-protection-privacy-notice>.

Short Term Investment - The Public Sector Deposit Fund

<i>Date</i>	<i>Opening Balance (£)</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>Amount (£)</i>	<i>Closing Balance (£)</i>	<i>Other details Interest earned</i>
29/02/24	769,500	Withdrawal	150,000	619,500	
31/03/24	619,500	Withdrawal	150,000	469,500	
30/04/24	469,500	Subscription	600,000	1,069,500	Transfer of funds from NatWest
31/05/24	1,069,500			1,069,500	
30/06/24	1,069,500	Withdrawal	100,000	969,500	
31/07/24	969,500	Withdrawal	100,000	869,500	
31/08/24	869,500	Withdrawal	400,000	469,500	3,112.89
30/09/24	469,500	Deposit Withdrawal	700,000 100,000	1,069,500	Transfer of funds from NatWest 3,664.40
31/10/24	1,069,500	Deposit Withdrawal	600,000 100,000	1,569,500	Transfer of funds from NatWest 6,720.18
30/11/24	1,569,500	Withdrawal	100,000	1,469,500	6,067.07
31/12/24	1,469,500	Withdrawal	300,000	1,169,500	5,188.16 <i>Average Fund yield for this period was 4.75%</i>
31/01/25	1,169,500	Withdrawal Deposit	150,000 150,000	1,169,500	4,510.45 (January's interest) <i>Average Fund yield for this period was 4.72%</i>

10:00am	4¼% Treasury Gilt 2034	5,000.0000	
	4 3/8% Treasury Gilt 2040	8,250.0000	7,924.2100
10:00am	4 3/8% Treasury Gilt 2028	5,312.4980	5,311.0997
10:00am	1 1/8% Index-linked Treasury Gilt 2035	1,500.0000	1,499.5640
10:00am	0 7/8% Green Gilt 2033	3,000.0000	2,243.4967
	0 1/8% Treasury Gilt 2026	1,500.0000	1,445.3065
10:00am	4 3/8% Treasury Gilt 2030	5,312.4990	5,335.5471
10:00am	1½% Green Gilt 2053	2,000.0000	947.3729

uction Close 11T/BST Time Zone)	Gilt Name	Nominal Amount Issued (£ million)	Cash Raised (£ million)
10:00am	0 5/8% Index-linked Treasury Gilt 2045		
10:00am	4% Treasury Gilt 2063		
10:00am	4 3/8% Treasury Gilt 2028		
10:00am	1 1/8% Index-linked Treasury Gilt 2035		
10:00am	4 3/8% Treasury Gilt 2040		
10:00am	4 3/8% Treasury Gilt 2054		
10:00am	4 3/8% Treasury Gilt 2030		
10:00am	A new conventional gilt in the 10-year maturity area expected to be launched by syndication in February		
10:00am	4 3/8% Treasury Gilt 2028		
10:00am	4¾% Treasury Gilt 2043		
10:00am	4% Treasury Gilt 2031		

1. Computershare Investor Services PLC (the "Company") will, on behalf of the United Kingdom Debt Management Office ("DMO"), provide a purchase and sale service (the "Service") to you if you own or wish to own United Kingdom Government stocks (the "Stock") and you are an individual aged 18 years or over. The Service is not available if you hold your Stock in CREST.
2. The Service will not be available to investors residing in a jurisdiction outside of the United Kingdom.
3. The price of Stock may fluctuate while your Dealing Form is in the post or between receipt and the time of trade.
4. Companies wishing to use the Service must execute the Dealing Form as if it were a deed.
5. The Service is offered on an execution only basis. You should ensure it meets your own particular requirements. This is not a recommendation to buy, sell or hold Stock. Neither the Company nor DMO offers investment advice. If you are unsure of what action to take, you should obtain independent financial advice. Please note that the value of Stock may go down as well as up, which may result in you receiving less than you originally invested if you sell your holding(s) or keep it until the Stock redeems.

Definitions

"**Business Day**" means any day (excluding Saturday and Sunday) on which banks in the United Kingdom are generally open for non-automated business;

"**Dealing Day**" means any Business Day on which the London Stock Exchange is open for business;

"**Dealing Form**" means either the form titled "Application to Purchase" or "Application to Sell";

"**Register**" means the register of Stock and Stock holders;

"**Stock**" means any of gilts, coupons or bonds;

"**You**" means the person using the Service.

Service Operation

6. Buying Stock

- (i) A completed Dealing Form will need to be submitted to the Company along with appropriate payment for the Stock;
- (ii) A completed Dealing Form can be submitted to the Company either as a clearly scanned PDF via email to gilts@computershare.co.uk or through the post. Unclear or incomplete Dealing Forms will be rejected and returned via the medium submitted. Please ensure that an email address and contact telephone number are included on the Dealing Form;
- (iii) **Where a single or multiple investment on any one Dealing Day is for more than £1,000** the Company will only accept electronic payment. (Please note that the Company can no longer accept payment by cheque for the purchases of Stock where the amount invested is more than £1,000). On the same day as the Dealing Form is submitted, have the amount of money you wish to invest sent electronically to sort code 16-08-11 account number 10000898. Please ensure that within the reference field your daytime contact telephone number and the first holder's surname / company name is quoted e.g. 012624131695SMITH. Please ensure that the same daytime contact telephone number along with an email address is quoted in Section 8 of the Dealing Form;
- (iv) **Where a single or multiple investment on any one Dealing Day is for £1,000 or less** then cheque payments are still acceptable. The Dealing Form should be submitted to the Company with a cheque for the amount of money that you wish to invest. You must pay by a sterling cheque drawn on an account in your name with a UK bank. Cheques should be made payable to Computershare Investor Services PLC and crossed "A/C Payee". You represent to the Company that your cheque will be honoured on first presentation. Please note that third party cheques will not be accepted. Alternatively, please have the amount of money you wish to invest sent electronically on the same day as the Dealing Form is submitted following the instructions in 7(iii);
- (v) The Company will normally instruct the purchase of your Stock from the DMO on the next Dealing Day following receipt and acceptance of your instruction and payment monies, subject to the correctly completed Dealing Form being received by the Company by 5pm on the Business Day prior. Dealing Forms received after 5pm on a Business Day will be treated as having been received on the next Business Day. The Company will endeavour to meet this timescale where practicable however, the Company reserves the right to delay executing the Dealing Form where operational requirements or other issues dictate;
- (vi) **You are not able to specify the price or a maximum price at which your purchase of Stock is to be made;**
- (vii) The money which you send to the Company is used to cover the purchase price of the Stock and any fees and charges (see below for details);
- (viii) The Company will send you your stock certificate four Business Days after the purchase was transacted or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter; and
- (ix) If the purchase of your Stock is settled on a day which is six or less Business Days prior to the interest payment date for that Stock, you will not receive the full interest due but an amount of money representing the accrued interest due to you will be deducted from the purchase price.

7. Selling Stock

- (i) You can instruct the Company to sell all or part of your Stock holding(s) by filling in the appropriate box on the Dealing Form and by sending it to Gilts Purchase and Sale Service, British government Stocks, Computershare Investor Services PLC, The Pavilions, Bridgwater Road, Bristol, BS99 6ZW together with your stock certificate(s) and any supporting documentation (e.g. any power of attorney or marriage certificate). When you give an instruction to sell your Stock, you represent that no other person has any rights, interests or charges in or over the Stock you are selling;
- (ii) Please ensure that an email address and daytime contact telephone number are included on the Dealing Form;
- (iii) The Company will normally instruct the sale of your Stock to the DMO on the next Dealing Day following receipt and acceptance of your instruction, subject to the correctly completed Dealing Form being received by the Company by 5pm on the Business Day prior. Dealing Forms received after 5pm on a Business Day will be treated as having been received on the next Business Day. The Company will endeavour to meet this timescale where practicable however, the Company reserves the right to delay executing the Dealing Form where operational requirements or other issues dictate;
- (iv) Unclear or incomplete Dealing Forms will be rejected and returned by post unless an email address is provided on the Dealing Form to allow the Company to correspond and query any discrepancies. This may still result in the Dealing Form being returned through the post;
- (v) **You are not able to specify the price or a minimum price at which your Stocks are to be sold;**
- (vi) If the sale of your Stock is settled on a day which is six or less Business Days prior to the interest payment date for that Stock, you will still receive the full interest when it is paid, but part of it will be deducted from the proceeds in the form of rebate interest;
- (vii) **Where the proceeds of the sale are for less than £1,000** you may opt to receive payment by cheque or by automated transfer to a UK Bank Account (e.g. BACS). If you opt to receive payment by cheque the Company will make the payment, once the settlement monies are received from the DMO, to the registered holder of the Stock (or the first named holder in the case of joint holders). The Company will not, at any time, accept any instructions to make cheques payable to anyone other than the person(s) whose name appeared on the Dealing Form. Please refer to the instructions in (viii) below for payments by automated transfer; and
- (viii) **Where the proceeds of the sale are for over £1,000** you can only receive the proceeds of the sale by automated transfer to a UK Bank Account (e.g. BACS). Payment of sale proceeds, once the settlement monies are received from the DMO, will be made to the bank account of one of the named stockholders or the solicitors acting on their behalf. If the payment instructions are not in favour of one of the above, then the Company reserves the right to reject the instruction or request further information regarding the destination of the funds. Please ensure that payment instructions are included on the Dealing Form. Where these are not provided, the Company will reject the Dealing Form.

General provisions relating to buying and selling gilts

8. The current scale of commission charges are shown in the table below. The charges are based on the total settlement proceeds, including any accrued or rebate interest;

Deal Value	Commission Rate	Minimum Charge
Costs up to £5000	0.7%	£12.50
Costs over £5000	£35 plus 0.375% of the amount in excess of £5,000	£35
Proceeds up to £5000	0.7%	None
Proceeds over £5000	£35 plus 0.375% of the amount in excess of £5,000	£35

NB: All commission is calculated after adding or deducting any accrued or rebate interest

9. The Company reserves the right not to accept instructions which are not given on the standard Dealing Form, or which have not been properly completed (including non-supplied contact information);
10. The Company reserves the right to delay execution of any Dealing Form where, in its opinion, it needs to satisfy itself in respect of any legal, regulatory or other matters. Neither the Company nor DMO will be responsible for any lost opportunity (including due to movements in market prices) due to any delay in executing a Dealing Form.
11. The Company reserves the right not to act on any particular Dealing Form. The Company will notify you in writing or by email as soon as it decides not to accept a particular instruction. You may not cancel or amend any instructions to purchase or sell Stock once such instructions have been received. Neither the Company nor DMO will be responsible for any lost opportunity (including due to movements in market prices) due to the Company's refusal to execute a Dealing Form
12. If you wish to purchase or sell Stock in joint names then everyone who is or wishes to be joint holders must sign the Dealing Form;
13. The Company may aggregate your order with orders it receives from other people using the Service. Aggregation may work on some occasions to your disadvantage;
14. Settlement will normally occur on a T+3 basis (i.e. 3 Business Days following the date of the trade). You will be sent a contract note within two Business Days of the execution of your Dealing Form. The contract note will detail the nominal amount of Stock purchased or sold on your behalf and the price together with any accrued or rebate interest.

Liability

15. The Company will take reasonable care in operating the Service, and will be responsible to you for any losses or expenses (including loss of Stock) suffered or incurred by you as a direct result of its negligence, wilful default or fraud. **Each of the Company and the DMO does not accept liability for any indirect or consequential loss suffered by you or for any loss which does not arise as a result of its negligence, wilful default or fraud.**

Contacting Each Other

16. All notices and other communications which you send to the Company should be addressed to gilts@computershare.co.uk or British Government Stocks (Gilts), Computershare Investor Services PLC, The Pavilions, Bridgwater Road, Bristol, BS99 6ZW.
17. All stock certificates will be sent to the address which appears for you on the Register (in the case of joint holdings they will be sent to the address of the first named holder).
18. **Stock certificates will be sent to you at your own risk. The Company accepts no liability for non-receipt after dispatch of any certificate.**
19. **If you require any documents, including stock certificates, to be sent to you by Royal Mail Special Delivery Service (or equivalent), you should request this in writing when submitting your Dealing Form. There is an administration fee of £20.50 for the provision of this service and you should send a cheque for this amount (made payable to Computershare Investor Services PLC) or include alongside your electronic payment for purchase.**
20. If you need a replacement stock certificate for any reason, then a Form of Indemnity will have to be completed. Depending on the value of the stock certificate, the indemnity may need to be counter-signed by an authorised third party; that is an authorised bank, building society or insurance company. All costs relating to the obtaining of such counter-signature must be met by the stock holder(s).

Approved Group of Investors

21. To be eligible to purchase Stock, you must be a member of the DMO's Approved Group of Investors and the Company reserves the right to delay taking action on any particular instructions from you until you have satisfied the requirements specified by the DMO for membership (including the provision of acceptable evidence of identity, address and source of funds), or to investigate any concerns it may have about the validity of or any other matter relating to the instruction.

General

22. The DMO or the Company may refuse to do, or refrain from doing, anything which would, or might in their judgement, break any relevant laws, rules, regulations or codes or risk exposing them to criticism for behaving improperly or not acting in accordance with good market practice.
23. All monies which are held for you will be held in a client bank account which is maintained for clients of the Service. Interest will not be paid on any such money. Cash fractions arising in respect of money due to you are rounded down and any tax or commission which may be payable on aggregated purchases or sales is charged at the prevailing rate against each individual sale instruction rounded up to the nearest penny, and in each case the Company will keep the difference for its own benefit.
24. Fractions of pence arising in respect of the amount of Stock purchased for you are rounded up or down according to the normal trading conventions and the consequent settlement amount may not correspond exactly to the monies sent by you with the Dealing Form. Such cash sums as arise shall be kept by the Company for its own benefit.
25. The DMO may change these terms and conditions from time to time upon giving you 20 Business Days' notice in advance of any such change taking effect. No change will affect any completed purchase or sale or any instruction received but not completed by the date of the change. The DMO may choose to withdraw the Service without giving you any notice that the Service is no longer available.
26. These terms and conditions are governed by and shall be construed in accordance with the law of England and Wales.

Data Protection Notice

27. The Service is administered by the Company on behalf the DMO.
28. Any personal data obtained in the course of providing this Service will be held by the Company in accordance with current data protection legislation.
29. Your information will be held on a database in the normal course of the registration business including maintenance of the Register and to enable payments relating to your holding(s). The Registrar will not disclose your information except:
- (i) where we have your consent; or
 - (ii) where we are required or permitted to do so by law
30. You have the right to ask for a copy of information held about you in relation to this service, and also to request that any inaccuracies are corrected.
31. If you do wish to view this information, you should write to The Data Protection Officer, Computershare Investor Services PLC, The Pavilions, Bristol, BS99 7NH.
32. For further information about how the Company and the DMO may use your personal data, please refer to each organisation's respective Privacy Notices on their websites:
- (i) Computershare Notice - <https://www.computershare.com/uk/privacy-policy>
 - (ii) DMO Notice - <https://www.dmo.gov.uk/media/15491/uk-dmo-external-privacy-notice-v2.pdf>

Complaints

33. There are procedures in place that aim to help resolve all complaints from customers effectively, a copy of which can be provided on request. If you have any complaints about the service provided to you, you should write to the British Government Stocks (Gilts), Computershare Investor Services PLC, The Pavilions, Bridgwater Road, Bristol, BS99 6ZW.
34. These terms and conditions were issued by the DMO.

Contact details

35. For the Company: Computershare Investor Services PLC, Registered in England No. 3498808, The Pavilions, Bridgwater Road, BS13 8AE
36. For the DMO: UK Debt Management Office, The Minster Building, 21 Mincing Lane, London, EC3R 7AG





HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements

Date of Approval:	22 nd March 2004
Dates of Review:	3 rd December 2012; 20 th July 2015; 30 th May 2017; 23 rd September 2019; 14 th September 2020; 21 st September 2021; 4 th October 2022; 9 th September 2024; 3 rd March 2025
Re-Approval:	15 th February 2013; 6 th June 2016; 8 th October 2018; 9 th December 2019; 14 th December 2020; 13 th December 2021; 19 th December 2022; TBC

Contents

1. Banking Arrangements
2. Investment Strategy
3. Investment Arrangements
4. Review

1. Banking Arrangements

- 1.1 In accordance with the Financial Regulations (para 5.1 - 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.) the following information summarises the banking arrangements of Houghton Regis Town Council:

- (i) The payment of income into the Bank shall be undertaken regularly (usually weekly) subject to necessity:
- (ii) When a new Council comes into Office, bank mandates will be updated within 3 months, or as soon as practicable hereafter:

2. Investment Strategy

2.1 Introduction:

The strategy has been produced and complies with the guidance issued by the Secretary of State under Section 15(1) (a) of the Local Government Act 2003 and being effective from 1st April 2018.

Houghton Regis Town Council acknowledges its responsibility to the community and the importance of prudently investing the temporary surplus funds held on behalf of the community.

2.2 Objectives:

The general policy objective for this Council is prudent investment of its balances. The Council's investment priorities are:-

- (i) the security of its reserves
- (ii) the liquidity of its investments
- (iii) the yield obtained from any investment.

The Council will aim to achieve the optimum return on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity.

2.3 Policy:

All the Town Council's investments will be those offering high security and high liquidity. This means that:-

- (i) All investments will be made in sterling and any payments or repayments will also be made in sterling.
- (ii) All investments will be short term investments which will not exceed a maximum of twelve months.
- (iii) Before investments have reached their 12-month maturity term and it is in the Council's best intention to continue with the fund by having a roll-on investment, a review will take place on the eleventh month of every year of the duration of the fund.
- (iv) All investments will be made in UK banks, building societies and CCLA PSDF (Public Sector Deposit Fund) accounts.

- (v) The Council will monitor the risk of loss on investments by review of credit ratings on a regular basis.
- (vi) The Council will only invest in institutions of high credit quality – based on information from credit rating agencies (as defined).

For prudent management of its balances, the Town Council, maintaining sufficient levels of security and liquidity, will adopt a policy whereby funds which are likely to be surplus for up to three months can be invested in short term deposits with one or more of the UK major clearing banks and/or building societies.

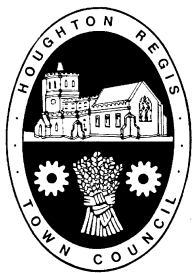
The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government maintain that borrowing of monies purely to invest, or to lend and make a return is unlawful and the Town Council will not engage in such activity.

3. Investment Arrangements

- 3.1 In accordance with the approved Committee Functions & Terms of Reference the Corporate Services Committee will determine investment opportunities.
- 3.2 Approximately 1 month prior to an investment maturing a report will be presented to the Corporate Services Committee detailing:
 - (i) capital expenditure forecast
 - (ii) investment opportunities
 - (iii) recommendation for subsequent investment including location of investment, period and amount.
- 3.3 Upon an investment maturing the Corporate Services Committee will receive a report detailing the investment return.

4. Review

- 4.1 This policy must be reviewed annually at the earliest practicable Corporate Services Committee meeting after the annual meeting.



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, LU5 5EY

Town Mayor: **Councillor JW Carroll**

Tel: 01582 865463

Town Clerk: **Clare Evans**

Miscellaneous Fees - Offices 2024 - 2025

Hire of the Council Chamber £7.50 per hour

Hire of the Mayor / Member Room £5 per hour

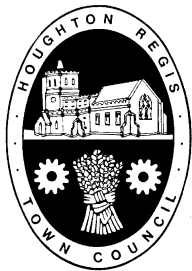
Photocopying*

	A4		A3	
	Black & White	Colour	Black & White	Colour
Councillors	2p	5p	4p	10p
Members of the Public	13p	16p	15p	21p

* VAT will be charged at standard variable rate

Notes:

- Free use of a Council room is permitted where there is no operational cost incurred or income lost for the following:
 - Any meeting at which an Officer of the Town Council is present;
 - Any Residents meeting organised and attended by Town Councillors;
 - Town Council political group meetings where that political group is elected to the council and where topics for discussion relate to town council business
- Free use of a Council room can be applied for by local voluntary or charitable organisations which will be determined by the Town Clerk
- A charge will be made for political branch meetings or political campaigning meetings
- The booking form must be used for all meetings.



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, LU5 5EY

Town Mayor: **Councillor E Cooper**

Tel: 01582 865463

Town Clerk: **Clare Evans**

Miscellaneous Fees - Offices 2025 - 2026

Hire of the Council Chamber £7.50 per hour

Hire of the Mayor / Member Room £5 per hour

Photocopying*

	A4		A3	
	Black & White	Colour	Black & White	Colour
Councillors	2p	5p	4p	10p
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Notes:

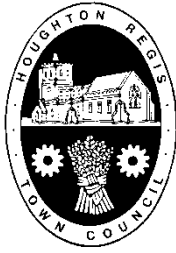
- Free use of a Council room is permitted where there is no operational cost incurred, or income lost for the following:
 - Any meeting at which an Officer of the Town Council is present;
 - Any Residents meeting organised and attended by Town Councillors;
 - Town Council political group meetings where that political group is elected to the council and where topics for discussion relate to town council business
- Free use of a Council room can be applied for by local voluntary or charitable organisations which will be determined by the Head of Corporate Services
- A charge will be made for political branch meetings or political campaigning meetings
- The booking form must be used for all meetings.

In accordance with Financial Regulations 9.8, attached is a copy of the VAT Return for quarter 1 of the financial year 2024-2025													
Quarter 1, April - June 2024, was submitted on 12/07/24 and the reimbursement from HMRC was received on 18/07/24													
Below is the VAT Return for the same quarter of the financial year 2023-2024													
Financial Year	2024-2025			2023-2024				Significant details					
Quarter 1	£14,878.28			£81,795.76				The reason behind the considerable decrease					
								in VAT submission/reimbursement from HMRC is					
								because there has been no stage payments for Tithe					
								Farm Pavilion this quarter.					

In accordance with Financial Regulations 9.8, attached is a copy of the VAT Return for quarter 2 of the financial year 2024-2025												
Quarter 2, July - September 2024, was submitted on 09/10/24 and the reimbursement from HMRC was received on 15/10/24												
Below is the VAT Return for the same quarter of the financial year 2023-2024												
Financial Year		2024-2025			2023-2024			Significant details				
Quarter 1		£62,293.88			£100,497.49			There was an increase in VAT compared to				
								Q1 24-25 due to a stage payment for Tithe Farm Pavilion.				
								Compared to Q2 23-24, there is a decrease due to two st				
								payments made in that quarter.				
								The remaining VAT relates to normal operating expenses				

Appendix C

In accordance with Financial Regulations 9.8, attached is a copy of the VAT Return for quarter 3 of the financial year 2024-2025												
Quarter 3, October - December 2024, was submitted on 09/01/25 and the reimbursement from HMRC was received on 15/01/25												
Below is the VAT Return for the same quarter of the financial year 2023-2024												
Financial Year		2024-2025			2023-2024			Significant details				
Quarter 3		£77,826.47			£215,733.20			There was an increase in VAT compared to Q1 24-25 due				
								into a finance agreement for the purchase of two mower				
								The initial accounting entries accounted for VAT.				
								Compared to Q3 23-24, there is a decrease in VAT due to				
								payments for the Tithe Farm project made in that quarte				
								The remaining VAT relates to normal operating expenses				



CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 13

Date:	3rd March 2025
Title:	Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 – Sexual Harassment at Work
Purpose of the Report:	To provide members with information in regard to the update of various policies following the introduction of the Sexual Harassment at Work legislation
Contact Officer:	Debbie Marsh, Head of Corporate Services

1. RECOMMENDATION

To recommend to Town Council, the adoption of the following updated policies:

- a) Bullying and Harassment Policy**
- b) IT Policy**
- c) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**
- d) Disciplinary Policy**
- e) Social Media Policy**

2. BACKGROUND

Members may recall that at the last meeting of this committee members were advised that a new Act had come into effect on 26th October 2024 which introduced a new legal duty on employers to prevent sexual harassment during the course of employment.

3. INFORMATION

At this meeting members were informed that following the introduction of this new Act a number of town council policies may need to be revised.

At this time, five policies have been identified as having to have revisions made to them in order for the policies to conform with the new Act. They are:

- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- IT Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Social Media Policy

Members are advised that following completion of a risk assessment there may be revisions to other policies affected by this new Act, or indeed new policies themselves.

Members are informed that these revised policies have been provided by the Town Councils HR consultant and reviewed by the Head of Corporate Services to ensure they fit with the procedures and practices of Town Council business.

It is fair to say that some of the policies have been revised quite considerably. Therefore, due to these revisions it was not thought prudent to try and show track change documents but to be consistent and provide them in their new format.

Whilst these policies are provided to staff members, members are advised to familiarise themselves with these policies to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities as a corporate employer.

4. 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.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Implications

- These policies, once adopted, will be provided to all staff and Councillors via email.

Legal Implications

- These policies support the Council in complying with the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023

Financial Implications

- There is sufficient funds available in the 2024/25 budget provision to cover training for both Members (102/4008) and staff (190/4008).

Risk Implication

- Reputation
- Employment Tribunal
- Service delivery

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 recommendation

Press Contact

- There are no press implications arising from the recommendation

6. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

These policies have been updated to support the Council, as a Corporate Employer, in complying with the new Act. These policies will be provided to staff and, if required, referred to, prior to Councils formal adoption, in order to comply with the law and to reduce the risks identified in the risk assessment.

7. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Bullying and Harassment Policy

Appendix B – IT Policy

Appendix C – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Appendix D – Disciplinary Policy

Appendix E – Social Media Policy



Houghton Regis Town Council

Bullying and Harassment Policy

Date of Approval:	23 rd October 2006
Dates of review:	15 th February 2013; 1st December 2016; 25 th September 2017; 23 rd November 2020; 3 rd March 2025
Dates of Re-approval:	15th February 2013; 11th December 2017; 14th December 2020; TBC

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1 Purpose

- 1.1 We believe that all our employees and workers have the right to work in an environment free from bullying behaviour and any form of harassment, whether this is on the grounds of a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race (including nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion or philosophical belief, sex, sexual orientation) or indeed any other characteristic such as appearance, regional dialect or political stance.
- 1.2 We operate a zero-tolerance stance on bullying and harassment and expect all our managers to adopt this approach by using the guidance set out within this policy. This policy also provides a means by which any employee or worker who feels that they are being subjected to such behaviour may raise this without fear of reprisal and that any problems may be resolved and any further recurrence prevented.
- 1.3 We will take reasonable steps to prevent bullying and harassment occurring during the course of employment, but in the event that it does take place, we will also take reasonable steps to prevent it from reoccurring.
- 1.4 Such behaviour will not be tolerated and we seek to ensure that our working environment is sympathetic to everyone with whom we deal with in our working activities and that they are treated with dignity and respect.
- 1.5 This policy is available in both printed form and on the council's shared drive and all employees and workers are required to read this policy to ensure they understand what types of behaviour may amount to bullying, harassment and sexual harassment.
- 1.6 Where complaints are dealt with through this policy rather than the grievance policy, then there can be no further right of redress through the grievance policy thereafter.
- 1.7 This policy should be read together with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy also available in both printed form and on the council's shared drive.
- 1.8 We reserve the right to amend and update this policy at any time.
- 1.9 This policy is not contractual but aims to set out how we normally deal with such issues.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees and workers, at all levels within our business. It applies equally to an employee bullying or harassing a manager or the other way around. In addition, we aim to ensure that (as far as is practicable) employees and workers are protected from harassment of any kind from customers and other business contacts.

3 Definitions

- 3.1 **Bullying** is defined as behaviour against an individual that is intimidating, degrading, offensive or malicious and undermines the confidence and self-esteem of the recipient.
- 3.2 **Harassment** is defined as unwanted conduct that either violates a person's dignity, or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. It may be related to any personal characteristic of the individual (whether perceived or real), or by association (ie related to the individual's relationship or dealings with others who have that personal characteristic, even if they do not). It may be persistent, or an isolated incident and can take many forms, from relatively mild banter to actual physical violence. Harassment can be regarded as behaviour that is offensive, frightening or in any way distressing and it is the impact on the individual that is important. It may be intentional, obvious or violent, but it can also be unintentional or subtle and insidious.
- 3.3 **Sexual harassment** is a form of unlawful harassment (as defined above) which entails unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. A person of any gender can be a victim of sexual harassment, and it may be committed by a person of any gender.
- 3.4 **Third party harassment and discrimination** refers to the harassment and/or discrimination of an employee or worker that is carried out by someone who is not an employee or worker and may include:
- customers or clients
 - volunteers
 - suppliers and
 - independent contractors and consultants.
- 3.5 The use of the word 'harassment' throughout this policy includes sexual harassment.
- 3.6 Employees may not always realise that their behaviour constitutes bullying or harassment, but they must recognise that what is acceptable to one person may not be acceptable to another. The fact that bullying or harassment was not intended does not mean that it cannot have occurred; however, bullying or harassment will not have taken place if the claimant's perception of the conduct in question is unreasonable in all of the circumstances.
- 3.7 The person complaining of bullying or harassment need not necessarily be the person towards which the behaviour is directed. For example, a person who overhears comments made to someone else, and who is offended by those comments, may still make a complaint of bullying or harassment.
- 3.8 Examples of behaviour that may constitute bullying or harassment include (but are not limited to):

- **unwanted physical conduct** - such as unnecessary touching, patting, pinching, brushing against another person's body; insulting behaviour or obscene gestures; physical threats, aggressive behaviour and/or assault.
- **unwanted verbal conduct** - such as unwelcome advances; patronising titles or nicknames; offensive or insulting comments; propositions or remarks; innuendo; lewd or suggestive comments; over-familiar behaviour; slogans or songs; insensitive jokes, gossip and slander (including speculation about a person's private life and sexual activities); banter or abusive/offensive language which is either threatening or refers to a person's sex, race (including colour and ethnic or national origins), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, marital status or civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity or gender reassignment.
- **unwanted non-verbal conduct** - such as racially or sexually based graffiti or graffiti referring to an individual's characteristics or private life; abusive or offensive gestures; leering, whistling, creation, distribution or display of suggestive or offensive pictures, objects or written materials (including "pin-up" calendars) or videos through any means.
- **bullying** - includes unwanted physical contact or assault but also verbal bullying such as insulting or threatening comments; comments intended to undermine, belittle, embarrass or humiliate the recipient; personal abuse, either in public or private, which humiliates or demeans the individual involved.
- **virtual bullying** - includes distribution of unwanted emails, texts, images or humiliating data published on social networking internet sites or abusing our technology or using the employee's own technology to contact a colleague in an intimidating or malicious manner.
- **conduct of a sexual nature** – includes unwanted physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct as discussed above; further examples include displaying pornographic or explicit images, indecent exposure, e-mails with sexual content, sexual innuendo, sexual solicitation, sexual assault; see also, coercion.
- **coercion** - including threats of dismissal or loss of promotion etc for refusal of sexual (or other) favours (or promises made in return for sexual or other favours); pressure to participate in political or religious groups etc.
- **isolation or non-co-operation at work** - deliberate exclusion from communications including group emails, conversations or social activities; setting unrealistic deadlines; substituting responsible tasks with menial or trivial ones; withholding information or giving false information; constantly undervaluing effort.

3.9 Such conduct is employment related if, for example, submission to, or rejection of, the conduct is used as a basis for an employment decision; or if the conduct interferes with the affected person's work performance; or if it creates an intimidating hostile, humiliating or offensive working environment.

- 3.10 Bullying or harassment can be a single serious incident or persistent and repeated, continuing after the person subjected to it makes it clear that they wish it to stop.
- 3.11 All employees should be aware that any act or acts of bullying or harassment committed by them in the course of their employment will be dealt with as set out under this policy. This includes not only situations occurring whilst at work, but also at any time on our premises, or externally whilst attending social functions or training courses, etc in the course of the employment. It also covers emails, phone calls and texts sent by employees outside of work using either our equipment or their own personal equipment, as well as posts on social networking sites.
- 3.12 Employees should also consider how their behaviour or conduct would appear to a senior manager or elderly relative, or if it were reported in the press or on TV, and to refrain from any language or behaviour which would reflect unfavourably on them.
- 3.13 Legitimate, reasonable and constructive criticism of an employee's performance or behaviour, or reasonable instructions given during the course of employment will not, on their own, amount to bullying.

4 Working environment

- 4.1 In addition to bullying and harassment at work being a violation of employment and health and safety laws, and a contravention of criminal and/or civil law in some circumstances, this type of behaviour can reduce the effectiveness of our organisation by creating a hostile or threatening environment. The damage, tension and conflict which harassment and bullying creates not only results in poor morale for all, but also divides teams and reduced productivity. Employees can be subject to fear, stress and anxiety, which not only affect their contribution within the workplace but can also put great strains on their personal and family life, leading to illness, increased sickness absence and staff turnover.
- 4.2 Therefore, all complaints of bullying or harassment will be treated very seriously.

5 Sexual Harassment

- 5.1 Sexual harassment is unlawful and will not be tolerated. Complaints resulting in the finding of sexual harassment having taken place will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including summary dismissal (without notice). Or in the case of a worker, their engagement with us may be terminated.
- 5.2 Sexual harassment can include, but not limited to:
- unwanted physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature
 - displaying pornographic or explicit images

- indecent exposure
- using e-mail or social media to make inappropriate, derogatory or offensive content that is of a sexual nature, which can include sexual innuendos, sexual solicitation, sexual assault. This can include sharing, posting, liking or tagging someone in a post
- unwanted physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature that is towards another person, such as a colleague, customer, client, suppliers, contractors or any other third party associated with us

5.3 Examples of situations involving sexual harassment:

- A male colleague alters a pornographic image by placing an image of their female colleague's face onto it. He then sends it to other colleagues causing them to ridicule her.
- An employee has a sexual relationship with their supervisor. They then end their relationship as they think it was a mistake. The next day, the supervisor grabs the employee's bottom and says, "come on, don't play hard to get".
- Male workers download pornographic images onto their computers in an office where a woman works. She finds out about the images being downloaded and that the images are creating a hostile and humiliating environment for her.
- During a busy dinner service, one member of the waitressing team is helping in the kitchen to prepare orders. The chef makes inappropriate comments of a sexual nature about her appearance and makes advances towards her that include touching her back and shoulder whilst passing by or reaching for items.

5.4 Employees and workers should be aware that individuals may be held personally liable for their own acts and behaviour.

6 Third party harassment and discrimination

6.1 Third party harassment and discrimination refers to harassment and/or discrimination of an employee by any person who is not one of our employees. Third party harassers and discriminators may include:

- customers or clients
- volunteers
- suppliers and
- independent contractors and consultants.

6.2 Third party harassment will not be tolerated, and we take reasonable steps to prevent it from occurring. This includes:

- Warning notices to our visitors
- Information in our Disciplinary Policy
- Providing annual training for managers and staff to raise awareness of rights related to sexual harassment and of this policy
- Providing specific training for managers to support them in dealing with complaints
- Taking steps to minimise occasions where staff work alone
- Where possible, ensure lone workers have additional support
- Including this risk on any risk assessments when planning events which are attended by the public

6.3 Any employee who believes that they have been the victim of third party harassment and/or discrimination should immediately inform their manager of the incident. Where an employee has been harassed and/or discriminated against, we will take such steps as are reasonably practicable to prevent any recurrence. The options may include:

- Issuing a warning about their behaviour
- Banning a customer or other type of 3rd party
- Reporting criminal acts to the police

6.4 If an employee harasses and/or discriminates against a customer, client, supplier or an independent contractor or consultant, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action.

6.4.1 Examples of third party harassment and/or discrimination:

- A young member of the bar staff is subjected to sexually offensive terms by a customer.
- In a retail store, an employee faces repeated harassment from a regular customer. The customer makes inappropriate comments about the employee's appearance and personal life and sometimes behaves in a rude or aggressive manner. Despite the employee's attempts to handle the situation politely and report the behaviour, the harassment continues, causing significant stress and discomfort.

7 Victimisation

7.1 Victimisation is when someone is treated less favourably because they have committed, or it is believed they may commit a "protected act". "Protected acts" include bringing legal proceedings relating to harassment or discrimination against the employer or the perpetrator, or the giving of evidence at a disciplinary or grievance hearing or at tribunal, or making complaints about the perpetrator or the employer about their alleged discriminatory and unlawful practices, etc.

7.2 We encourage employees and workers to challenge or raise incidents of unacceptable behaviour should they witness or experience it directly. Disciplinary action, including summary dismissal, without notice, may be taken against an employee who is found guilty of victimisation. In the case of a worker being found guilty of victimisation, their terms and conditions of engagement may be terminated with immediate effect.

7.3 Examples of victimisation:

- A casual worker gives a witness statement as part of a grievance and disciplinary process that supports a colleague's claim of sexual harassment. As a result, their line manager fails to provide them with any further work.
- An employee files a complaint about racial discrimination by their manager. After raising the complaint, the employee's performance reviews become increasingly negative, even though their performance has not changed. The unfair reviews are used as a basis for denying them a promotion.

8 Risk assessment

8.1 We will identify and assess the risks associated to bullying and harassment and identify reasonable measures to prevent it from occurring. The findings will be recorded in writing, and we will keep our assessment under continuous review.

8.2 A copy of the risk assessment can be found in the Health and Safety Folder on the Shared Drive.

8.3 We encourage all employees and workers to inform their manager of areas in which they believe harassment protection could be further improved.

8.4 We also consider risks relating to bullying and harassment in our other organisational risk assessments, including our risk assessments for young workers / lone workers / off site working / working with 3rd parties.

9 Allegations that could be criminal behaviour

9.1 Some acts of harassment can amount to a criminal offence and so we may discuss with the employee and worker, their right to report the matter to the police.

- 9.2 If the employee or worker chooses to report a complaint to the police, we will provide them with the necessary support.
- 9.3 If the employee or worker does not wish to report their complaint to the police, we may need to give serious consideration of reporting the incident. Our intentions are to respect the wishes of the employee; however, we must balance this against the potential risk to others. In coming to our decision, we would weigh up the wishes of the employee against the risks to the individual, their colleagues or third parties and provide the rationale for taking such decision.

10 General principles for raising a complaint

- 10.1 Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated. We recognise that making a complaint can be embarrassing and stressful. Sometimes the complainant simply wants the conduct or behaviour to stop and sometimes they want stronger action to be taken. To take account of this, and to encourage employees and workers to discuss any problems in confidence with someone they trust and feel comfortable talking to, this procedure has various routes for action.
- 10.2 An employee or worker who thinks they are being bullied or harassed should either initially address the matter informally with their manager or the town clerk, or formally by following the procedure set out below. No judgements will be made about any complaints based on the course of action the employee or worker chooses to adopt.
- 10.3 An employee or worker who witnesses bullying or harassment may also raise the matter either informally or formally as discussed above.
- 10.4 Where a complaint concerns the behaviour of the employee or worker's manager, they should raise the issue with a more senior manager.
- 10.5 Each complaint will be handled in strict confidence and with impartiality and will be promptly and thoroughly investigated. As any complaint of this nature will be regarded as serious it may be that the person who is alleged to have carried out the bullying and/or harassment will be suspended whilst the complaint is being investigated.
- 10.6 We understand that it can be difficult to come forward and to speak up and raise a complaint. We wish to give our reassurances that when a complaint of bullying or harassment is made, the employee or worker, will be given the necessary support and will not suffer victimisation for having brought the complaint.
- 10.7 As a general principle, the decision to progress a complaint rest with the employee and worker and we may be asked not to take the matter forward. Our aim is to respect the employee or worker's wishes to avoid further harm to them. However, we must consider the risks of not taking action compared to those that may arise from overriding the employee's wishes and as we have a duty to protect all employees and

workers, we may pursue a complaint independently if we consider it is appropriate to do so.

10.8 In considering the most appropriate way forward, we will consider:

- What would the risks to the employee or worker raising the complaint, their colleagues or third parties be if we do not take further action?
- What will the impact be on the employee, if we do not follow their wishes?
- Have we received any other complaints about the same person?
- What is the likelihood of the employee or worker resolving the matter without our intervention?

10.9 If we can support the employee or worker's wishes, then we will:

- Encourage the employee or worker to address the issue informally either directly themselves, or with support (as set out below).
- Provide the employee or worker with any necessary support and guidance on how to address the issues informally
- Keep the situation under review, where we reserve the right to take steps to address the matter if we believe it is in the best interest of the employee or worker's wellbeing and that of their colleagues.

10.10 In the event that we believe that the right course of action is to intervene and take action, we will explain our reasons for this decision and implement suitable safeguards to prevent further harassment or victimisation and to support the wellbeing of the employee or worker, in order to help in dealing with any impact the decision may have.

11 Malicious complaints

11.1 If any employee or worker raises a complaint, and upon investigation, it is proven to be both false and made in bad faith, then that employee may become the subject of disciplinary action, or in the case of a worker, may have their terms of engagement terminated.

11.2 Employees will not be subjected to disciplinary action or to any other detriment simply because their complaint is not upheld. Disciplinary action may only be taken if it is found both that the allegation is false and made in bad faith.

12 Confidentiality

12.1 To protect an employee or worker who has raised a complaint, we will ensure that the complaint is kept confidential, subject to any legal obligations or rights of either the employee, or the council.

12.2 Furthermore, it may also be a reasonable requirement for an employee to provide information relating to the matter, to a companion who is supporting them as part of a process, and it is needed in order that they can be effectively represented.

12.3 Where there are witnesses to an incident, we will ensure that they are made aware that the matter is confidential (subject to any personal legal or regulatory obligations or rights) and that a breach of confidentiality may be a disciplinary offence.

13 Informal procedure

13.1 It is usually best to try and sort things out quickly and as close to the problem as possible. Therefore, it may be sensible to try to resolve an issue informally by approaching the person directly and making it clear to them that their behaviour is unwelcome, explain the effect that it is having and that it should stop.

13.2 Any employee or worker who does not want (or who does not feel able) to do this, particularly if feeling bullied or intimidated, or if they would find it too embarrassing, may speak with their manager or the town clerk. As a result of the advice, they may then feel able to approach the person directly or may be willing to do so with support. Alternatively, the manager or one of similar seniority, may be requested to approach the person on their behalf - this approach may be more effective if the perpetrator is a visitor, Councillor, community volunteer or business contact.

13.3 If the employee or worker chooses to address their concerns directly with the person concerned, they should be clear and assertive. They may find it helpful to ask a colleague to be with them in a support role. Alternatively, they could put their issue in writing to the alleged harasser.

13.4 The employee or worker may wish to keep a written record of the details of any incidents of perceived bullying (including date; time; place; name of person allegedly harassing the individual; what happened including verbatim quotes of relevant comments where possible; how the individual felt at the time; names of any witnesses and any action taken), and retain any texts, emails, voice messages or other evidence that may support their allegations.

13.5 If they do not wish to deal with this informally, or if informal steps have failed to resolve the problem, they can raise the matter in line with the formal procedure below and if necessary, assistance should be sought.

14 Formal procedure for raising a complaint

14.1 A formal complaint may be made to either the employee or worker's immediate line manager or to the town clerk.

- 14.2 The formal complaint should be detailed in writing and submitted without unreasonable delay in order to help end the bullying and harassment as soon as possible. Complaints submitted sometime after the event will still be heard.
- 14.3 It should contain the reasons for the complaint and all relevant facts surrounding the matter, including relevant dates, names and witnesses. The employee or worker should also indicate what we should do and any other suggestions or information that will assist in resolving the issue. Whilst recognising the employee or worker's feelings and the effect the alleged behaviour may have had, it is important to establish the facts and he/she will be asked to provide details of the allegations, e.g.:
- what happened
 - where it occurred
 - when did it occur
 - who was involved
 - was this the first incident
 - were there any witnesses
 - whether any action has been taken previously to prevent further repetition of the behaviour
- 14.4 A formal meeting will be arranged as soon as possible and without unreasonable delay to discuss the complaint.
- 14.5 The employee or worker may be supported throughout the process and at any meetings by a colleague of their choice, a union representative (who must be certified in writing by the union as having experience of, or having received training in, acting as a worker's companion at disciplinary or grievance hearings) or an official employed by a trade union as a companion to the meeting, in which case we request that they advise us of the identity of their chosen companion in advance of the meeting.
- 14.6 During the meeting, the person hearing the complaint of bullying and harassment will review the written complaint and listen to the individual's point of view. If the employee or worker has not stated what outcome they are seeking, clarification may be sought before proceeding.
- 14.7 The person investigating the complaint will be sensitive and will take care not to phrase questions in a way that implies that the bullying and or harassment may in some way have been directly or indirectly invited and to avoid remarks that appear to trivialise the experience or suggest that it was imaginary. The intention of the alleged bully/harasser is irrelevant, it is the effect on the complainant that is important.

- 14.8 Once the individual has been given full opportunity to talk through their information, present any additional information and answer any questions, the meeting would then be adjourned to allow a full investigation to be undertaken as quickly as possible to establish the facts.
- 14.9 Where appropriate, it may be necessary to call witnesses or speak to third parties to fully investigate and understand the issues. No decision will be made until the manager has sufficient information and evidence and conducted all reasonable investigations.
- 14.10 Consideration will be given as to whether the alleged bully/harasser should be redeployed temporarily or suspended on full pay or whether reporting lines or other managerial arrangements should be altered pending the outcome of the investigation.
- 14.11 All parties involved in the investigation are expected to respect the need for confidentiality. Failure on the part of any employee involved (whether the recipient, perpetrator or a witness) will be considered a disciplinary offence.
- 14.12 Copies of statements made by witnesses will be made available to both the person making the complaint and the alleged bully/harasser, but the names of the witnesses may be withheld if they request to remain anonymous and particularly if they have a genuine belief of fear of reprisal.
- 14.13 Once all reasonable investigations are complete, the person chairing the process will reconvene the formal meeting for the purpose of allowing the employee the right to reply to the gathered evidence.
- 14.14 Depending upon the confidential nature and sensitivity of the evidence, it may be appropriate in some circumstances to provide the employee or worker with access to the information before the reconvened meeting, rather than providing them with their own set of documents. Each situation will be taken on its own merits, taking account of the nature of the data gathered, the needs of all parties and those of the business.
- 14.15 Once the person chairing the grievance meeting has sufficient information the meeting will be adjourned to review the case and reach a decision. A written response will be prepared to be given to the individual, which will confirm any action we intend to take to resolve the grievance, together with the right to appeal against this outcome. Depending upon the circumstances, we may seek to invite the employee or worker to a decision meeting to deliver the outcome. In this situation, there will still be an outcome letter provided as noted above, and the usual right to be accompanied will continue to apply. The written response and any decision meeting, where one is appropriate, will be arranged and provided as soon as reasonably possible

15 Appeal process

- 15.1 In the event that the employee or worker is dissatisfied with the outcome of the meeting, then they may lodge an appeal, preferably in writing, and stating the full grounds for the appeal, within a reasonable timescale (we would expect this usually to be within five working days of receipt of the outcome letter) to the Chair of the Corporate Services Committee.
- 15.2 Failure to appeal within a reasonable timescale may mean that the appeal will not be heard. It will only be heard outside of this time frame in exceptional circumstances.
- 15.3 A further meeting will be arranged as soon as is reasonably practicable to hear the appeal. Again, the individual will be given full opportunity to state the case, provide further information and answer questions.
- 15.4 The person chairing the appeal meeting will attempt to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of both the individual and the council.
- 15.5 The employee or worker may bring either a work colleague, a trade union representative (who must be certified in writing by the union as having experience of, or having received training in, acting as a worker's companion at disciplinary or grievance hearings) or an official employed by a trade union as a companion, but in which case we request that they advise us of the identity of the chosen companion in advance of the meeting.
- 15.6 It may be necessary for further investigations to take place as part of the appeals process. Once all reasonable investigations are complete, the person chairing the appeal meeting will reconvene it for the purpose of allowing the individual the right to reply to the gathered evidence.
- 15.7 Depending upon the confidential nature and sensitivity of the evidence, it may be appropriate in some circumstances to provide the individual access to the information before the reconvened meeting rather than providing them with their own set of documents. Each situation will be taken on its own merits taking account of the nature of the data gathered, the needs of all parties and those of the business.
- 15.8 Once the person chairing the appeal meeting has sufficient information the meeting will be adjourned to review the case and reach a final decision. They will either advise the individual at the meeting as to the outcome or prepare a response in writing after the meeting.
- 15.9 Depending upon the circumstances, we may seek to invite the employee or worker to a decision meeting to deliver the outcome. In this situation, there will still be an outcome letter provided and the usual right to be accompanied will continue to apply.

- 15.10 The written response and any decision meeting, where one is appropriate, will be arranged and provided for as soon as reasonably possible.
- 15.11 This is the final step in the process and any decisions taken at this stage are final with no further right to recourse. A complaint dealt with under this policy cannot be re-heard under the Grievance policy. It is for this reason, we ensure the process set out within this policy ensures the right to a fair process, akin to a grievance.

16 Potential next steps

- 16.1 Where the person in charge of dealing with the complaint believes, after investigation, that bullying or harassment may have taken place, appropriate action will be taken.
- 16.2 If the alleged bully/harasser is a worker, the person in charge of dealing with the complaint may choose to end the terms of the engagement.
- 16.3 If the alleged bully/harasser is an employee, they will invoke the disciplinary procedure to ensure that the employee accused of this behaviour has every opportunity to defend or explain their actions. The employee will be entitled to be accompanied at any disciplinary hearing. Common responses to allegations of bullying and or harassment include denial or disbelief that the behaviour was offensive or was not welcome. None of this alters the fact that a complaint has been made which may lead to disciplinary action.
- 16.4 The disciplinary process may lead to disciplinary action being taken, up to and including summary dismissal (without notice). This action can be taken for situations where the action took place in either:
- A work situation
 - During a situation that is related to work, which may include a social event with colleagues
 - Outside of a work situation and against a colleague, or other person connected to the organisation. This could include on social media and the circumstances therefore make it a work matter and entitle the organisation to address the matter under our policy and procedures.
- 16.5 The severity of the penalty imposed upon an employee believed to be guilty of bullying and or harassment will be consistent with other disciplinary offences. Where the bully/harasser is given a warning short of dismissal, discussions will take place with the person making the complaint, and, where necessary, any reasonable steps will be taken to alter working practices to minimise contact between the affected employees.

- 16.6 The decision-making process will take account of any aggravating factors which are circumstances relevant to the complaint. Examples of aggravating factors include (but not limited to):
- The harasser was in a position of trust and responsibility and their actions were an abuse of that power over a junior member of the team.
 - The employee had a disability and faced difficulties in speaking up.
 - The individual was a low paid worker and had insecure work, making them vulnerable to harassment because of their economic circumstances.
- 16.7 An employee who receives a warning or is dismissed for bullying and or harassment may appeal against the penalty in accordance with our disciplinary procedure. In serious cases where criminal charges may be appropriate, for example sexual assault, it may be necessary to refer the case to the police.
- 16.8 Where the complaint is made against a visitor, Councillor, community volunteer, supplier or other business contact, this will be investigated, and such steps will be taken as are reasonably necessary to protect the employee or worker. The complainant should not be moved except at their request or in exceptional circumstances.
- 16.9 Full consideration will be given to how the on-going working relationship between the parties should be managed going forwards. This may involve, for example, arranging for some form of mediation or counselling or a change in the duties or reporting lines of either party. This will apply even where a complaint is not upheld (for example where evidence is inconclusive).
- 16.10 Once this has been resolved and time has been given to allow relationships to stabilise and return to normal in the workplace, contact should be maintained with the affected employees informally. If further problems of bullying, harassment or victimisation are encountered, or the employee or worker continues to suffer stress or anxiety, immediate action should be taken to investigate or find a solution.

17 Support and guidance

- 17.1 We are mindful of the impact that bullying and harassment can have and understand that this may be a particularly distressing time. We also respect an employee and worker's decision to report any incident to the police. We are therefore committed to ensuring that when any complaints are raised, the individual is fully supported and has access to appropriate lines of support.
- 17.2 Employees and workers can speak to a senior manager not involved in any investigation who will be able to provide guidance on how the company's investigation process works.

- 17.3 We also recognise the impact of being accused of bullying and harassment and that this may be particularly stressful in the rare event of false accusations. During the course of investigating a complaint, the matters are regarded as alleged until a final outcome is reached and disciplinary action shall only be taken if it is found there is a case to answer. If an employee or worker is found to have been falsely accused, they will be provided with any support as be appropriate for them.
- 17.4 We offer access to an Employee Assistance Programme, via Health Assured, which is a free external confidential support line available 24-7, offering advice and guidance on issues such as bullying and harassment. They can be contacted via the following phone number 0800 028 0199.
- 17.5 Employees and workers who are members of a Trade Union can seek support as part of their membership.
- 17.6 Sources of external advice, information and guidance on bullying and harassment is shown below.
- 17.6.1 Citizens Advice Bureau
- National phone line: 0800 144 8848 (England), 0800 702 2020 (Wales)
 - Online chat: [click here](#)
 - Website: [click here](#)
- 17.6.2 National bullying helpline
- Freephone: 0300 323 0169
 - Telephone: 0845 225 5787
 - Website: [click here](#)
- 17.6.3 Rape Crisis England & Wales
- Telephone: 0808 500 2222
 - Online chat: [click here](#)
 - Website: [click here](#)
- 17.6.4 The Equality Advisory and Support Service: for advice, information and guidance on equality, discrimination or human rights issues.
- Telephone: 0808 800 0082
 - Textphone: 0808800 0084
 - Website – [click here](#)

18 Further information

Any queries or comments about this policy should be addressed to the Head of Corporate Services.



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Information Technology Policy

Date of Approval:	23 rd October 2006
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1 Purpose

- 1.1 IT communications are a key part of Houghton Regis Town Councils business, and so it is important that we adhere to certain standards to protect everybody. Our IT systems and services are primarily a business tool and we aim to take a fair and consistent approach to their use within our organisation. This policy sets out the rules when using our computer equipment and systems. Computer equipment includes laptops, stand-alone PCs and other portable devices. This policy also covers system security, personal use, computer viruses, monitoring, email and internet use, and what we would deem to be inappropriate use.
- 1.2 We also expect employees and workers to maintain a high standard of conduct whilst using the organisation's IT systems and associated facilities.
- 1.3 We operate a zero-tolerance policy on any form of bullying, harassment, sexual harassment or discrimination during the course of employment, including when using IT systems and associated facilities. It is expected that employees and workers and workers using our systems to treat colleagues and others with respect and to behave in a way that does not conflict with our policies, work activities, business dealings or which may adversely affect or undermine our reputation.
- 1.4 We encourage employees to use email at work. However, we do require them to follow the simple rules below and to note that a serious breach of these rules could lead to dismissal. Any employee or worker who is unsure about whether anything may be in breach of these rules should speak to their Line Manager in the first instance.
- 1.5 Misuse of the Internet or email may give rise to legal liability to third parties. It may also give rise to a claim against us. Unauthorised access or intentional modification to restricted documentation or software will be considered a disciplinary offence. By following the standards set out in this policy, we aim to ensure that the use of our IT equipment and services are legally compliant and secure and that our users can work efficiently and productively. It is therefore vital that this policy is adhered to.
- 1.6 It is important that all users understand their responsibilities and are aware of the implications of misuse of our systems and services. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all users are aware of the restrictions that we place on the use of our IT systems and services, and the implications that misuse of it might have on the individual and Houghton Regis Town Council.
- 1.7 If there is anything in this policy which becomes unworkable or unclear, then this must be brought to the attention of the employees Line Manager
- 1.8 The current laws must be obeyed at all times. We will never ask nor expect any employee to breach the law whatever the circumstances.

- 1.9 IT and the law relating to it changes all the time and this policy will be updated regularly. Users are responsible for ensuring they read and understand the latest version of this policy which will be emailed or printed off for employees.
- 1.10 This policy should be read together with our Disciplinary Policy, Grievance Policy, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Bullying and Harassment Policy, and Social Media Policy which will be emailed or printed off for employees as well as being available on the Town Council shared drive.
- 1.11 This policy is not contractual but sets out our current rules and procedures for computer, email, and internet use.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to:
- HRTC employees and/or Councillors
 - Houghton Regis Town Council IT equipment including (but not limited to) computers, tablets, laptops, printers, mobile phones and network
 - Software and IT services licensed by Houghton Regis Town Council
 - Volunteers using Houghton Regis Town Council computer equipment and/or network.
 - Councillors when using Houghton Regis Town Council IT equipment and/or network.
 - Members using social networking media in their capacity as Councillors
- 2.2 New employees must be made aware of this policy upon joining Houghton Regis Town Council as part of the induction process.
- 2.3 Any Houghton Regis Town Council employee and/or Councillor who are requesting permission to use their own IT equipment (e.g. mobile phones, tablets) for Council business purposes.

3 Computer use

3.1 Hardware

- 3.1.1 Our IT equipment and services are provided for Houghton Regis Town Council business purposes, however reasonable personal use is permitted (reasonable interpreted as in the opinion of a Senior Manager). Any personal use of our IT equipment and services should not interrupt our daily business in any way and users are asked to restrict any personal use to official lunch breaks or before or after working hours.
- 3.1.2 All IT equipment supplied should be treated with good care at all times. IT equipment is expensive, and any damage will have a financial impact on the Council.
- 3.1.3 Computer and electronic hardware should be kept clean and every precaution taken to prevent food and drink being dropped or spilled onto it.

- 3.1.4 All IT equipment will carry a number which is logged against the current user of that equipment. A database of IT equipment issued will be kept.
- 3.1.5 IT equipment should not be dismantled or reassembled without seeking advice.
- 3.1.6 Employees are not to purchase any IT equipment or software for Houghton Regis Town Council without it being authorised by a Senior Manager
- 3.1.7 Personal external storage devices, e.g. USB disks, CDs, DVDs, memory sticks, cannot be used on our computers without the prior approval of a Senior Manager.
- 3.1.8 Any IT faults or necessary repairs must be reported to a Senior Manager or to the company who provide IT support to Houghton Regis Town Council, currently Techies Ltd.

3.2 Portable IT equipment

- 3.2.1 Portable IT equipment includes, but not limited to, laptop computers, notebooks, tablets, mobile phones., external storage devices.
- 3.2.2 Data backup procedures specific to portable IT equipment should be followed at all times.
- 3.2.3 All portable computers must be stored safely and securely when not in use in the office, i.e. when travelling or when working from home. Portable IT equipment (unless locked in a secure cabinet or office) should be kept with or near the user at all times and must not be left unattended when away from our premises. and should never be left in parked vehicles.
- 3.2.4 It is important to ensure all portable devices are protected with suitable security in case they are lost or stolen. All smartphones or tablets that hold Town Council data including emails and files must be protected with a pin code. Where possible, these devices should also be configured to erase all content after several unsuccessful attempts to break in. Any security configured on these devices must not be disabled or removed.
- 3.2.5 If an item of portable IT equipment is lost or damaged this should be reported to a Senior Manager. If the loss or damage is due to an act of negligence by the user, they may be liable to meet an agreed amount of the loss/damage.
- 3.2.6 To protect confidential information, unless it is a requirement of the job and this has been authorised, it is forbidden for photographs or videos to be taken on our premises without the prior written permission of a Senior Manager. This includes mobile telephones with camera function, camcorder, tape or other recording device for sound or pictures - moving or still.
- 3.2.7 Under no circumstances must any meeting or conversation be recorded without the express permission of those present.
- 3.2.8 In addition, we do not permit-webcams to be used in the workplace, other than for conference calls for business purposes. If there is any doubt as to whether a device falls under this clause, advice should be sought from a Senior Manager

3.3 Phones

- 3.3.1 Houghton Regis Town Council use a phone system (3CX) that connects to the internet to make and receive phone calls (both internal and external). The system can be accessed either through a web browser or an application that is installed on any compatible device.
- 3.3.2 If the user is making a business call from a mobile phone (both Houghton Regis Town Council and personal device) then the call should be made from the 3CX system rather than the mobile number unless this is unavoidable.
- 3.3.3 If a 3CX phone user is not available (e.g. holiday) then the status of the users extension should be changed to show this, and an appropriate call forwarding is set.
- 3.3.4 Personal calls must not be made from the 3CX system as this will show Houghton Regis Town Council as the caller ID.
- 3.3.5 The status must be set to available during working hours except if permission has been obtained to change it by a manager.
- 3.3.6 Automatic call forwarding to another user must only be setup if the user the call is being forwarded to has agreed to this.

3.4 Video Conferencing

- 3.4.1 Video conferencing is available from many different applications (including Microsoft Teams, Zoom and 3CX).

3.5 Use of own devices including BYOD (Bring Your Own Device)

- 3.5.1 Some users may wish to use their own smartphones, tablets, laptops etc. to connect to the Town Councils network. and use them for business purposes. This includes, but not limited to, reading Town Council emails, accessing Town Council documents stored on our server(s) or access data in other services. Any such use of personal devices will be at the discretion of the user's manager, but consent for standard systems (MS Windows, Mac OS X, Linux - in commercial configurations) will normally be permitted. Such devices must be kept up to date so that any vulnerabilities in the operating system or other software on the device are appropriately patched or updated.
- 3.5.2 The same security precautions apply to personal devices as to Town Council owned IT equipment. For continuity purposes, calls made to external parties must be made on our landlines or mobile phone numbers to ensure that only these numbers are used and/or stored by the recipient, rather than personal numbers. Any emails sent from own devices should include our name, address, contact telephone number and our standard disclaimer and should not identify the employee's personal email address.

- 3.5.3 Users of our IT services are expected to use all IT equipment (both Town Council and personal devices including mobiles) in an ethical manner and in accordance with this policy. Accessing inappropriate websites or services on any device using the Town Councils IT services that are paid for or provided by us carries a high degree of risk, and, for employees, will result in disciplinary action, including dismissal, irrespective of the ownership of the device used. An example would be downloading copyright music illegally or accessing pornographic material.
- 3.5.4 In cases of legal proceedings against Houghton Regis Town Council, we may need to temporarily take possession of any employee's personal device to retrieve the relevant data.
- 3.5.5 Wherever possible the user should maintain a clear separation between the personal data processed on our behalf and that processed for their own personal use, for example, by using different applications (apps) for business and personal use. If the device supports both work and personal profiles, the work profile must always be employed for work-related purposes.
- 3.5.6 Users who intend to use their own devices via any Town Council IT service must ensure that they:
- use a 4 digit pin, strong password (i.e. one which contains lower and upper case letters and numbers or fingerprint (preferably the latter) to protect their device(s) from being accessed. For smartphones and tablets this should lock the device after 3 failed login attempts.
 - configure their device(s) to automatically prompt for a password after a period of inactivity of more than 2 minutes duration
 - always password protect any documents containing confidential information that are sent as attachments to an email, and notify the password separately (preferably by a means other than email)
 - for smartphones and tablets, activate the automatic device wipe function (where available). Note that use of the remote wipe function may also involve the removal of the employee's personal data. Employees are advised therefore to keep personal data separate from business data where possible.
 - ensure that they use secure WiFi networks
 - be cautious if family or friends use the device, ensuring that work-related data cannot be accessed
 - inform us if their device(s) is/are lost, stolen or inappropriately accessed where there is risk of access to our data or resources. To prevent phones being used, they will need to retain the details of their IMEI number and the SIM number of the device as their provider will require this to deactivate it.
- 3.5.7 Any Town Council work done on a user's own equipment must be stored securely and password protected and must always be backed up in accordance with our standard backup procedures.
- 3.5.8 If transferring data, either by email or by other electronic means, this should be done through an encrypted channel, such as a virtual private network (VPN) or a secure web protocol (https://). Unsecured wireless networks should not be used.

- 3.5.9 Prior to the disposal of any device that has Town Council data stored on it, and in the event of a user leaving our employment, users are required to allow the Town Clerk access to the device to ensure that all passwords, user access shortcuts and any identifiable data are removed from the device.
- 3.5.10 Users must take responsibility for understanding how their device(s) work in respect to the above rules if they are accessing our servers/services via their own IT equipment. Risks to the user's personal device(s) include data loss as a result of a crash of the operating system, bugs and viruses, software or hardware failures and programming errors rendering a device inoperable. We will use reasonable endeavours to assist, but users are personally liable for their own device(s) and for any costs incurred as a result of the above.
- 3.5.11 By connecting a personal device to any Town Council network or service the user is allowing Houghton Regis Town Council to implement policy(s) on the device that will enable Houghton Regis Town Council to erase any or all of the data on the device to ensure confidentiality.

4 Health and safety

- 4.1 Users who work in our offices will be provided with an ergonomically designed workstation.
- 4.2 We have a duty to ensure that regular appropriate eye tests, carried out by a competent person, are offered to employees using display screen equipment. Further details are set out in our Eyecare Policy.
- 4.3 Any VDU user who feels that their workstation requires changes to make it compliant must speak to their Line Manager.
- 4.4 If any hazards are detected at a workstation, including 'noises' from the IT equipment, this should be reported immediately to a Senior Manager.

5 Software

- 5.1 Equipment allocated to individuals will be supplied with the appropriate software and configuration. Users are not permitted to load screensavers/software from any source without the prior permission of a Senior Manager.
- 5.2 Any software that is additional to that supplied must be discussed with the user's manager and authorised prior to purchase to ensure that the necessary licences are also purchased.
- 5.3 Non-approved software or data, such as games, screen savers, video clips, non-worked related programmes, must not be installed on our computers under any circumstances, unless prior approval has been given by the Line Manager.
- 5.4 Copies of any software must not be made unless prior approval has been given by the Line Manager. We do not allow the use of pirated or copied computer software. All software must be licensed.

- 5.5 The licence agreement that accompanies software packages should be strictly adhered to. Unauthorised copies of software must not be made for use within the office or outside.

6 Virus checking

- 6.1 Virus protection and awareness of the importance of this is vital to our day-to-day ability to operate effectively. A catastrophic failure of the IT structure will potentially render us inoperable. Any activity by an individual that contributes to such a potential situation may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal. Users should note that the intentional introduction of viruses is a criminal offence under the Computer Misuse Act 1990.
- 6.2 Anti-virus software is installed on all computers and should be left running automatically and updated when prompted. Full system auto scans are set to run and must be left in place until a time when an alternative might be considered appropriate. We use virus detection software to scan all email and attachments received from any external source.
- 6.3 There is a risk of importing computer viruses if programmes or executable files are downloaded from the Internet, or if email attachments containing viruses are opened. All incoming email documents are scanned for viruses, and documents containing known viruses are intercepted. However, users who believe an attachment is suspicious should contact their Line Manager or the IT Support company before opening this.
- 6.4 All incoming material should be checked for viruses, whether loaded manually (e.g. from CDs or memory sticks) or downloaded from an external source such as the Internet before being saved or copied onto our computers.
- 6.5 Users must not change or install any software on their computer that includes the transference of data/software from their work or home computer without the express permission of the Town Clerk.
- 6.6 If a virus is detected a Senior Manager or the IT Support company must be notified immediately.
- 6.7 Nothing should be attached to an email which may contain a virus. We could be liable to the recipient for any loss suffered. We have virus-checking in place, but a check should be made with a manager if in doubt.
- 6.8 Care should be taken when forwarding attachments from third parties, particularly unidentified third parties. These may carry viruses, and they may also not have been cleared for copyright issues. Sending them on to someone else may be a breach of copyright and result in damages for breach of copyright.

7 Desktop appearance and settings

- 7.1 The programme and desktop icons should not be changed from the standard icons.

7.2 Our IT systems may not be used to acquire, display or distribute any content that may be considered offensive to others, including content of a sexual nature. This includes, but not limited to, any programme, image, document, sound or video clip that can be displayed or heard on any IT equipment.

7.3 Sound systems on computers must be switched off in consideration of people working near to you.

8 User IDs and passwords

8.1 Users are authorised only to use the IT services made available to them when logging onto the IT equipment under their allocated username.

8.2 Individual users are responsible for the security of their IT equipment and must not allow this to be used by an unauthorised person. Personal password(s) should be kept confidential and all reasonable precautions taken to prevent unauthorised access to the data stored on any Town Council IT equipment.

8.3 Users are not permitted to use, change or divulge to any other party, their or any other person's password or own Council system password without the express permission of a Senior Manager.

8.4 Passwords should not be written down anywhere where they could be easily retrieved by someone else.

8.5 Users should never use another person's username, email address or password (unless specifically authorised to do so), nor should they permit any other person to transmit, download, copy, forward or store material using their username, email address or password.

8.6 A user who changes their name through marriage, divorce, deed poll or any other method, should inform their Line Manager immediately so that all user IDs, passwords and email addresses can be amended accordingly.

8.7 When logged onto our IT system, and leaving any IT equipment unattended, or on leaving our workplace, users should ensure they log off the system to prevent unauthorised access. Any printed material should also be collected and stored confidentially.

8.8 Passwords may be changed from time to time, especially when someone leaves our employment.

8.9 On leaving our employment, access to our systems will be immediately withdrawn. Incoming emails will be diverted to the leaver's manager and an automatic response will be set up informing the sender that the address is no longer to be used to contact the leaver. Any passwords giving remote access to our systems will be changed, thus preventing unauthorised access. We will also notify any suppliers or contractors of any leavers who should be removed from their list of those who are authorised by us to use their services. Note that in order to protect our business interests, the above may also apply during any period of "garden leave".

9 Files and data

- 9.1 All files should be stored on the Town Councils file servers. Permission must be obtained from the Town Clerk before any data is removed or duplicated to any other IT equipment.
- 9.2 Any Town Council sensitive or personal data stored on our IT equipment must be kept in the strictest of confidence and no copies must be taken other than for back-up purposes without the permission of the Town Clerk.
- 9.3 All reasonable precautions should be taken to ensure that any data storage devices containing Town Council files, or printouts of data are secure from theft or copying.
- 9.4 Any data stored on our IT equipment or systems must only contain information relating to our business. No personal data must be stored on our IT equipment and systems.
- 9.5 No data of any other description should be present on our computer systems with specific regard to pornographic or obscene material, whether pictorial or descriptive.
- 9.6 All users must be aware that storing any Town Council personal data on a computer is subject to data protection legislation.
- 9.7 Houghton Regis Town Council IT equipment and systems must be used responsibly and in a way that does not interfere with, disrupt or prevent anyone else legitimately using these resources. Users should ensure they are aware to which drives they have access/modification rights and remember this when saving confidential data. This is to make certain that the right people can view and edit the files saved to the system.
- 9.8 Unauthorised access, attempts to access, modify, delete or use data belonging to the Town Council will be considered a disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence under the Computer Misuse Act 1990.
- 9.9 Users will be notified of any data backup procedures in place that affect them: these must be followed at all times.
- 9.10 Hard copies should be kept of information regarded as legal messages, relating to such matters as occupancy, staff or business transactions. Financial information, including VAT records (which should be stored for 6 years), must be stored on physical files.

10 Monitoring

- 10.1 Houghton Regis Town Council reserves the right to monitor, inspect and maintain logs of the usage of any Town Council IT equipment or personal devices that use the Town Councils network or services to ensure compliance with this policy as well as relevant legislation. Internet, email, and computer usage is continually monitored as part of our protection against computer viruses, our ongoing maintenance of the system, and when investigating faults.

- 10.2 We will monitor the use of electronic communications and use of the internet in line with the Investigatory Powers (Interception by Businesses etc for Monitoring and Record-keeping Purposes) Regulations 2018.
- 10.3 Monitoring of an employee's email and/or internet use will be conducted in accordance with an impact assessment that the organisation has carried out to ensure that monitoring is necessary and proportionate. Monitoring is in the organisation's legitimate interests and is to ensure that this policy is being complied with.
- 10.4 The information obtained through monitoring may be shared internally, including with relevant managers and IT staff if access to the data is necessary for performance of their roles. The information may also be shared with external HR or legal advisers for the purposes of seeking professional advice. Any external advisers will have appropriate Data Protection policies and protocols in place.
- 10.5 The information gathered through monitoring will be retained only long enough for any breach of this policy to come to light and for any investigation to be conducted.
- 10.6 Employees and workers have a number of rights in relation to their data, including the right to make a subject access request and the right to have data rectified or erased in some circumstances. You can find further details of these rights and how to exercise them in our Data Protection Policy.
- 10.7 Monitoring and the inspection of the content of any files or messages (including emails) may be for the purposes of checking whether the use of the system is legitimate, to find lost messages or to retrieve messages lost due to computer failure, to assist in the investigation of wrongful acts, or to comply with any legal obligation.
- 10.8 Houghton Regis Town Council also reserve the right to monitor the internet usage, including the websites being accessed and the extent and frequency of use of the internet at any time, both inside and outside of working hours to ensure that the system is not being abused and to protect us from potential damage or disrepute.
- 10.9 Any use that the Town Council considers to be 'improper', either in terms of the content or the amount of time spent on this, may result in disciplinary proceedings.
- 10.10 All computers will be periodically checked and scanned for unauthorised programmes and viruses.

11 Remote working

- 11.1 Increased IT security measures apply to those who work away from their normal place of work (e.g. whilst travelling, working from home or any other different venue), as follows:
- if accessing the Town Councils systems or services remotely, using IT equipment that either does not belong to the Town Council or is not owned by the user then any passwords must not be saved (cached), and the user must log out or disconnect at the end of the

session deleting all logs and history records. If this is not possible for the IT equipment being used (e.g. at an internet café), our services must not be accessed from that device.

- the location and direction of the screen must be checked to ensure the contents cannot be viewed by other people. Steps should be taken to avoid messages being read by other people, including other travellers on public transport etc.
- any data printed must be collected and stored securely
- all electronic files should be password protected, and the data saved to the Town Councils system/services when accessible
- papers, files or IT equipment must not be left unattended at a third parties premises. If this is not possible for any period, then arrangements must be made with a responsible person at the third parties premises for them to be kept in a locked room or cabinet
- any data should be kept safely and should only be disposed of securely
- papers, files, memory sticks, flash drives or backup hard drives should not be left unattended in cars, except where it is entirely unavoidable for short periods, in which case they must be locked in the boot of the car. If staying away overnight, company data should be taken into the employee's accommodation, care being taken that it will not be interfered with by others or inadvertently destroyed
- where possible the ability to remotely wipe any mobile devices that process sensitive information should be retained in the case of loss or theft
- employees and workers who work away from the office with sensitive data should be equipped with a screen privacy filter for mobile devices and should use this at all times when accessing such data away from the office.

11.2 Those issued with a mobile phone that allows WiFi access using hotspot should take note of the monthly data limit for the phone and the additional cost if it is exceeded, especially if used abroad.

11.3 The use of paid for WiFi access, for example at hotels and airports should be carefully monitored and restricted to essential business use.

12 Email

12.1 General principles

12.1.1 Our email facilities are intended to promote effective and speedy communication on work-related matters. Although we encourage the use of email, it can be risky. Users need to be careful not to introduce viruses onto our system and should take proper account of the security advice below.

12.1.2 On occasion, it will be quicker to action an issue by telephone or face to face, rather than via protracted email chains. Emails should not be used as a substitute for face to face or telephone conversations. Employees are expected to decide which is the optimum channel of communication to complete their tasks quickly and effectively.

- 12.1.3 These rules are designed to minimise the legal risks we run when using email at work and to guide users as to what may and may not be done. If there is something which is not covered in the policy, users should ask their manager, rather than assuming they know the right answer.
- 12.1.4 All employees who need to use email as part of their role will normally be given their own Town Council email address and account. We may, at any time, withdraw email access from any employee, should we feel that this is no longer necessary for the role or that the system is being abused.
- 12.1.5 Email messages sent from a Houghton Regis Town Council account must be for Town Council business use only. Users are asked to restrict their personal use of emails to their personal email account(s) during official lunch breaks or before or after working hours.
- 12.1.6 Misuse of our email address may give rise to legal liability on the user's behalf to third parties. It may also give rise to a claim being made against the Town Council. It is therefore vital that the following policy is adhered to when using email.

12.2 Reading email

- 12.2.1 Email messages should be read regularly. Employees who are away from their place of work for more than a day should ensure that an appropriate message is sent automatically to senders and/or that temporary access is granted to another colleague and that emails are dealt with in their absence as appropriate. With the exception of senior managers, unless specifically requested to do so, employees are not expected to read or action their emails when on any form of leave.
- 12.2.2 During unplanned leave or prolonged absence, and solely where necessary, we may access and/or divert email accounts to continue the smooth operation of our business.
- 12.2.3 Take care before opening emails from unknown sources - this is how most viruses are introduced, and they could easily spread throughout our systems.
- 12.2.4 When an email is received from a sender outside the Town Councils email domain (@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk) a banner is inserted in the email to notify the recipient that it is from an external source and that any attachments or links must be checked before opening.

12.3 Sending email (including replies and forwarding)

- 12.3.1 Email sent from an individual's mailbox is effectively signed by an individual.

- 12.3.2 Emails are merely another form of communication: in some instances, they may be the only contact that a recipient has with the Town Council and the style, appearance and content of the email will therefore influence the image that is portrayed of our organisation. Emails can appear to be a more informal type of communication, but our normal standards of presentation and content apply equally to them and the language used in the message must be courteous and professional. This includes spelling, punctuation and correctly heading each email as appropriate. All emails should therefore be checked before they are sent to ensure they don't contain typing, grammatical or spelling mistakes and to ensure the content is professional and accurate. In many cases for longer emails, it may be better to prepare the message as a draft and check it carefully before sending.
- 12.3.3 Messages should be concise and directed only to those on a 'need to know' basis. General messages to a wide group should only be used where necessary and the "reply all" facility should not be overused.
- 12.3.4 Long email trails should not be sent unless absolutely necessary and messages should only be marked as 'urgent' if they warrant immediate action. "Read receipts" and requests to acknowledge acceptance of an email further add to email traffic, so should be used sparingly. Please be mindful of the size of attachments within emails. Very large attachments can have an impact on speed and performance of the email systems and internet connections and may be rejected by one or more of the recipients. Where possible, the size of pictures should be reduced and very large files compressed into smaller files by zipping them.
- 12.3.5 Houghton Regis Town Council users must not solicit, send or willingly receive emails of an obscene nature, or which are intended to annoy, harass, intimidate or cause offence to colleagues or members of the public.
- 12.3.6 Personal or sensitive data must not be sent using email unless agreement has been received from the individual concerned or this processing is necessary to carry out public functions.
- 12.3.7 Houghton Regis Town Council users should regularly delete or archive emails when they are no longer current or required in order to restrict the size of their mailboxes and reduce the risk of incoming emails being rejected.
- 12.3.8 Houghton Regis Town Council users should be aware of the characteristics of spam and phishing emails and should not reply to or forward these emails but add the sender to their email system's Blocked Senders List.
- 12.3.9 Emails should contain the sender's full name and job title. All emails sent by employees must have one of the following disclaimers (as appropriate):

Please consider the environment and don't print this e-mail unless you really need to.

- ***** Any opinions expressed in this email are those of the individual and are not necessarily those of Houghton Regis Town Council.

- This e-mail and any attachments hereto are strictly confidential and intended solely for the addressee. It may contain information which is privileged. If you are not the intended addressee, you must not disclose, forward, copy or take any action in reliance of this e-mail or attachments. If you have received this e-mail in error, please delete and notify the sender immediately.
 - The anti-virus software used by Houghton Regis Town Council is updated regularly in an effort to minimise the possibility of viruses infecting our systems. However, you should be aware that there is no absolute guarantee that any files attached to this e-mail are virus free.***
- 12.3.10 Email correspondence with a third party can create a binding contract or otherwise be disclosed in legal proceedings. Where appropriate, the use of clear labelling to prevent either of these circumstances arising (e.g. the words 'subject to contract' and 'without prejudice' must be used). Statements should not be made in an email which could, intentionally or otherwise, create a binding contract or make a negligent statement.
- 12.3.11 Emails containing confidential information, client/customer information or any personal data should only be transmitted, copied or forwarded to authorised third parties.
- 12.3.12 Confidential information should not be sent externally by email. Such messages should be fully encrypted (or any attachments containing confidential information password protected and the password sent separately).
- 12.3.13 Delivery of email, like land mail, is not guaranteed and, if used for business-critical messages, confirmation of receipt should be requested from the recipient. Note: email 'read receipts' only confirm that the email has been flagged as read, it does not confirm the contents have been read nor does it confirm who has read it (the email could be opened by somebody else with permissions on the recipients mailbox).
- 12.3.14 Houghton Regis Town Council emails must not be used for spreading gossip or nuisance mail, for personal gain or in breach of any of our employment policies, such as equal opportunity, bullying, harassment or sexual harassment. Sending unwanted, abusive, discriminatory or defamatory emails can constitute bullying or harassment and will be treated as a serious disciplinary issue. This also applies to any emails sent from personal IT equipment to work colleagues or other Houghton Regis Town Council contacts.
- 12.3.15 Take care before sending or viewing material which may be of a hurtful, suggestive or harassing nature: it is the view of the recipient that determines whether it is inappropriate, even if the recipient was not the original addressee. When preparing an email, if the overall feeling is that you are glad you have 'got it off your chest', this is probably a signal it should not be sent. Drafts should be revisited prior to sending.
- 12.3.16 Anyone who receives an email message that has been wrongly delivered to his/her email address should notify the sender by returning the message to that person. If the message contains confidential information, this must not be disclosed or used.
- 12.3.17 Any emails that contravene this policy must be brought to the attention of the Town Clerk.

12.4 Legal proceedings and libel

- 12.4.1 All email messages are the property of the Houghton Regis Town Council and are treated as records of the business.
- 12.4.2 An email message (however confidential or damaging) may be subject to disclosure in legal proceedings or to relevant competition authorities and regulatory bodies. Claims of defamation, breach of confidentiality or contract could arise from a misuse of the system. Emails must therefore be treated like any other form of correspondence and, where necessary, hard copies retained. Even deleted emails may still be recoverable and are regarded as legitimate forms of evidence in court.
- 12.4.3 We can be sued for libel if inaccurate statements are made in emails which disparage other people or companies. This could lead to us having to pay damages. Therefore, all messages should be read carefully before sending and if in any doubt about what is written, the content should be checked with a manager first.
- 12.4.4 Users should avoid making statements which criticise our competitors or their staff, state there are quality problems with goods or services of suppliers or that state (or imply) that anyone is incompetent.
- 12.4.5 Neither should opinions or views be expressed that could be interpreted as misrepresenting our services or those of any other organisation with whom we deal.

12.5 Carbon copying (CCing)

- 12.5.1 Users should take care not to copy emails automatically to all those copied in with the original message to which they are responding. It is easy to do this but may result in a message being seen by someone that should not see this or may result in the disclosure of confidential information to the wrong person. Therefore, the automatic 'cc-ing back' function on the email should be disabled, and each email considered before copying people in. The use of the 'Reply' rather than 'Reply All' should be adopted.

12.6 Attachments

- 12.6.1 Care should be taken when opening attachments, and should any attachment produce strange or unexpected results, a Senior Manager should be notified immediately.
- 12.6.2 Certain types of attachments will not be allowed through our gateway.

12.7 Deleting and storing email

- 12.7.1 Good file management should be practiced by frequently checking the content and volume of email folders. As a guide, inboxes should only contain matters awaiting action; other items should be deleted, archived or filed.

12.7.2 Deleted email is stored temporarily in the 'Deleted Items' folder and should be emptied on a regular basis.

12.7.3 For record-keeping purposes, copies of important email (both sent and received) should be stored in an appropriate location on the shared drive.

12.8 Chain mail

12.8.1 It is prohibited to originate or distribute chain letters by email, either internally or externally.

12.9 Spam/junk mail

12.9.1 Any email message identified as spam or junk mail will be forwarded but marked that it is thought to be spam. Users can either deal with this manually or set up automatic rules.

12.10 Specifically prohibited activities

12.10.1 Houghton Regis Town Council users who are authorised to access external services and systems using Town Council IT equipment or their personal devices may not send or permit to be sent on behalf of Houghton Regis Town Council any email, attachment or posting which:

- is unlicensed software or other material that infringes the intellectual property rights of a third party
- contains information that is commercially sensitive or may have legal implications for us
- contains confidential information
- may damage our reputation or our relationships with any third party
- is defamatory about our business or any third party
- is illegal, of a sexual nature, obscene, pornographic, offensive, or is discriminatory or constitutes harassment (on any grounds of discrimination or any other unacceptable grounds), or damaging, or which may be considered by others to cause distress or is otherwise abusive or threatening
- may infringe copyright of someone else's work by copying files or data onto the Council's IT equipment or by copying to a third party
- may introduce viruses into our system
- constitutes 'junk' email or is posted to multiple groups
- invites automatic email back to us.

12.10.2 In addition, Houghton Regis Town Council IT services must not be used to search for, obtain or store information from any external network, which falls into the categories listed in 12.10.1 above.

12.11 Security

12.11.1 Users should be aware that emails are potentially insecure and others who are not the intended recipient might read messages, e.g. the recipient may forward the email on to other people.

- 12.11.2 Both sender and recipient should understand the risks of using email as a communication channel and agree what will and will not be sent.

12.12 Accessing other email accounts

- 12.12.1 Users must never access another person's email account. The only exception is where the person concerned has been authorised to access these during a prolonged absence due to holiday, ill health or some other valid reason.
- 12.12.2 Where such access is authorised, emails must not be sent from that person's account using the original account holder's name. If a response is required, this should be sent from the sender's own account, headed "sent on behalf of (colleague's name)".

12.13 Monitoring of emails

- 12.13.1 We reserve the right to monitor, at any time, all emails, including deleted emails, and the IT equipment (both Houghton Regis Town Council and personal) upon which such emails are stored and circulated. This right is reserved solely for the purposes of monitoring communications relevant to our business.
- 12.13.2 We will not routinely monitor emails. However, email folders will be checked when users are absent from work to ensure the continuation of service.
- 12.13.3 While an email that is clearly private does not fall within the definition of a communication that is relevant to our business, we maintain a right to monitor and examine such a communication where there is a reasonable suspicion that the content breaches this policy or where there are grounds for suspecting criminal activity or equivalent malpractice. When monitoring personal emails, we will, in most cases, restrict this to the address and heading of the emails. Personal emails should be clearly marked as such, and where possible we will avoid opening these unless there is a suspicion of improper use, and they form a relevant part of a disciplinary investigation.
- 12.13.4 We exercise this right under the Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000 for the following reasons: to check that this policy is being observed; that no discriminatory or offensive content appears in emails, etc; to maintain an adequate level of security for our computer systems; to detect computer viruses; and to check mailboxes of absent employees.
- 12.13.5 Therefore, electronic communications, storage or access should not be considered private if it is created or stored on our systems.

13 Use of the Internet

13.1 General principles

- 13.1.1 Utilising the vast amount of data that can be found on the Internet can be a useful resource and may be integral to some roles within our business.
- 13.1.2 All employees who need to use the Internet as part of their role will normally be permitted access. We may, at any time, withdraw internet access from any employee, should we feel that this is no longer necessary for the role or that the system is being abused.
- 13.1.3 Having access to the Internet demands a level of trust and responsibility, as websites visited can record the computer system's IP address. Users should restrict their access to websites necessary to complete their daily tasks and to consider the security implications before accessing any other sites for personal use.

13.2 Copyright

- 13.2.1 Much of what appears on the Internet is protected by copyright. Any copying without permission, including electronic copying, is illegal and therefore prohibited. The Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 sets out the rules. The copyright laws not only apply to documents but also to software. The infringement of the copyright of another person or organisation could lead to legal action being taken against our business and damages being awarded, as well as disciplinary action, including dismissal, being taken against the perpetrator.
- 13.2.2 It is easy to copy electronically, but this does not make it any less an offence. Our policy is to comply with copyright laws, and not to bend the rules in any way.
- 13.2.3 Users should not assume that because a document or file is on the Internet, it can be freely copied. There is a difference between information in the 'public domain' (which is no longer confidential or secret information but is still copyright protected) and information which is not protected by copyright (such as where the author has been dead for more than 70 years).
- 13.2.4 Usually a website will contain copyright conditions; these warnings should be read before downloading or copying.
- 13.2.5 Copyright and database right law can be complicated. Users should check with their manager if unsure about anything.

13.3 Trademarks, links and data protection

- 13.3.1 Our name is a registered trademark. Any employee or worker who notices anyone using the same or a similar name should let their manager know, so that we may instruct our solicitors to take appropriate action.

13.3.2 Users should not register any new domain names or trademarks relating to our names or products anywhere in the world, unless authorised to do so. Nor should they add links from any of our web pages to any other external sites without checking first with their manager.

13.3.3 Special rules apply to the processing of personal and sensitive personal data.

13.4 Accuracy of information

13.4.1 One of the main benefits of the Internet is the access it gives to large amounts of information, which is often more up to date than traditional sources such as libraries. Be aware that, as the Internet is uncontrolled, much of the information may be less accurate than it appears.

13.5 Downloading material

13.5.1 Downloading large volumes of material from the Internet onto our network can place excessive demand on computing resources. This can result in poor network performance or the temporary loss of access to IT services on the network. Such material should not be downloaded unless necessary and preferably during a period when there is little other activity.

13.5.2 Files should not be downloaded on to PCs without using virus-checking software.

13.6 Registering on external web sites

13.6.1 Many websites require registration. Employees who wish to register as a user of a website for work purposes are encouraged to do so. If there is any doubt as to whether it is appropriate to register as a user of a website for work purposes, users should check with their Line Manager. Employees must ask their manager in advance so that we are aware of what they are committing us to and to ensure the registration will not result in us being inundated with junk mail. Any boxes should be ticked to show we do not want our data used for other marketing purposes.

13.6.2 Our business email addresses should only be supplied for access to sites needed exclusively for work purposes. For any such sites, the password should be registered with the Town Clerk, who must also be notified of any change to the password.

13.7 Personal use

13.7.1 We trust users to limit their browsing of the Internet for non-business purposes. When surfing the web for personal purposes, this must only be at times that do not interfere with the performance of their role or our daily business, i.e. during breaks or after hours with permission. It must also not include visiting websites that are of a sexual nature, include sexual, obscene, pornographic, offensive content, or which may be considered by others to cause distress is prohibited. Accessing websites for these purposes may lead to disciplinary action, including summary dismissal (without notice). In the case of an agency worker, the termination of their engagement with us.

- 13.7.2 Personal use of the Internet for conducting financial transactions, e.g. on-line banking or for the purchasing of goods, must be restricted to out of working hours.
- 13.7.3 Users should not have any expectation of privacy as to their internet usage. All use can be monitored and excessive use that results in wasting our time in this way may result in the facility being withdrawn and/or dealt with in line with our disciplinary procedure.
- 13.7.4 All users who are allowed access to the Internet must ensure that:
- they do not access any site which will result in charges being levied to Houghton Regis Town Council for such access
 - they do not use the Internet to access unlawful or inappropriate material – if unlawful or inappropriate material is accidentally accessed, the user should send an email to their manager so we know the circumstances (the access may be picked up by any monitoring system). For these purposes, unlawful material is that which breaks the law such as child pornography or harassment; inappropriate material includes searches that may not be unlawful, but which may expose us to liability for harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination by colleagues who may see the search material, such as soft pornography.
 - they do not enter into any contracts or commitments in our name or on our behalf
 - they do not order any goods for personal use in our name.

13.8 Misuse of the Internet

- 13.8.1 Those who are allowed access to the Internet at work for work purposes are expected to use it sensibly and not so that it interferes with efficient working. They may be called upon to justify the amount of time spent on the internet or the sites visited, so this should be borne in mind when browsing the internet.
- 13.8.2 We trust employees not to abuse the latitude we give them, but if this trust is abused, then we reserve the right to alter our policy in this respect.
- 13.8.3 Creating, accessing, sending, downloading or the display of inappropriate, illegal, offensive, sexual, obscene or indecent material is strictly forbidden and may lead to disciplinary action, including dismissal as a possible outcome. The accessing of and downloading of some material, for example, sexually explicit material and pornography of children is a criminal offence.
- 13.8.4 The creation or transmission of such material, or material which is designed or likely to cause annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety, is strictly forbidden.
- 13.8.5 Furthermore, our systems may not be used for any of the following (this list is not exhaustive but indicates the sort of usage we would consider to be unacceptable, and which may lead to disciplinary action, including dismissal as a possible outcome):
- gambling
 - downloading, accessing or storing large personal files which interfere with the running of the organisation, such as photographs, videos and music

- games of any kind
- copying software for personal use or using our software (including accounting programmes and/or design programmes) for personal use
- promoting non-business related religious, charitable or political material unless authorised to do so by the Town Clerk
- sending or participating in junk mail, spam mail or chain letters (this includes forwarding jokes, cartoons and video clips to groups of people and also transmitting unsolicited commercial or advertising material that is not work-related)
- bringing our name into disrepute via social networking websites
- undertaking deliberate activities that waste staff time or networked resources
- using our business email address and misrepresenting our business
- using our name, business contacts, clients or customers for personal benefit or the benefit of any other firm, company or organisation

13.8.6 IT equipment is provided as a business tool to enable users to perform their roles effectively. We expect users to have an individual and collective responsibility not to abuse any of our IT equipment or services. Damage or serious unauthorised use of or tampering with our equipment is strictly forbidden.

13.8.7 Anyone who discovers a work colleague is abusing our internet facility should inform the Town Clerk. An employee who is found to be concealing the activities of a work colleague who is abusing our internet facilities may face disciplinary action.

13.9 Removing internet access

13.9.1 We may at any time deny internet access to any employee without giving any reason, although normally we would provide reasons.

14 Houghton Regis Town Council website

14.1 Houghton Regis Town Council website is created and amended as part of defined development projects and unauthorised amendment of information on this site is prohibited.

14.2 Anyone who sees anything on our website which is not up to date should let their manager know as, for legal and public relations reasons, we need to keep it accurate and current.

15 Use of social media

15.1 Social media includes blogs; Wikipedia and other similar sites where text can be posted; multimedia or user generated media sites (YouTube); social networking sites (such as Facebook, LinkedIn, X (formerly known as Twitter), Instagram, TikTok, etc.); virtual worlds (Second Life); text messaging and mobile device communications and more traditional forms of media such as TV and newspapers. Care should be taken when using social media at any time, either using our systems or at home.

- 15.2 Personal use of social networking/media and chat sites are not permitted during working hours and should be restricted to breaks during working hours, or after hours
- 15.3 We recognise the importance of employees joining in and helping to shape sector conversation and enhancing our image through blogging and interaction in social media. Therefore, where it is relevant to use social networking sites as part of the employee's position, this is acceptable.
- 15.4 Inappropriate comments and postings can adversely affect the reputation of our organisation, even if it is not directly referenced. It should be noted that if comments/photographs are likely to be construed as linked to us or, in more direct cases, if comments about colleagues, members of the public or our business could be regarded as abusive, humiliating, sexually harassment, discriminatory or derogatory, or could constitute bullying or harassment, we will treat this as a serious disciplinary offence. Employees should be aware that other organisations may read employees' personal weblogs, to acquire information on, for example, their work, products, technical developments and employee morale. Therefore, even if the Council is not named, care should be taken with any views expressed.
- 15.5 Social networking media may be used by the Town Council as part of its means of communication with residents and service users. Such media will be used to represent the Council as a corporate body. Where members of the public are able to post to a social media page representing the Town Council, the pages will be monitored by Town Council officers to ensure that any offensive, inappropriate or discriminatory messages will be deleted.
- 15.6 Members who use social networking sites in their capacity as councillors must make it clear that they are speaking in a personal capacity and not representing the view of the Council. It is the responsibility of Members to ensure that they are adhering to the Town Council's Code of Conduct when using social networking sites.
- 15.7 To protect both the Council and the Councils interests, we ask that everyone complies with the following rules about social media, whether in relation to our employment or personal social networking sites, and irrespective of whether this is during or after working hours:
- Contacts from any of our databases should not be downloaded and connected with on LinkedIn or other social networking sites with electronic address book facilities.
 - Any blog that mentions the Council, our current or potential services, employees, partners and suppliers, should identify the author as one of our employees and state that the views expressed on the blog or website are theirs alone and do not represent the views of the Council. Even if our organisation is not mentioned, care should be taken with any views expressed on social media sites and any views should clearly be stated to be the writer's own (e.g. via a disclaimer statement such as: "The comments and other content on this site are my own and do not represent the positions or opinions of my employer."). Writers must not claim or give the impression that they are speaking on behalf of the Council.
 - Any employee who is developing a site or writing a blog that will mention Houghton Regis Town Council, our current or potential, employees, members, councillors,

volunteers, partners, visitors and suppliers, must inform the Town Clerk that they are writing this and gain agreement before going 'live'.

- We expect our employees to be respectful about our business and our current or potential services, employees, partners, members, councillors, volunteers, visitors and suppliers and not to engage in any name calling or any behaviour that will reflect negatively on our reputation. Any unauthorised use of copyright materials, any unfounded or derogatory statements, or any misrepresentation is not viewed favourably and could constitute gross misconduct.
- Photos or videos showing any employee or worker in uniform or other clothing that includes our name or logo and that could reflect negatively on the employee, his/her job, his/her colleagues or our business should not be posted on social media; neither should photos, videos or sound recordings taken on our property without explicit permission.
- Comments posted by our employees on any sites should be knowledgeable, accurate and professional and should not compromise us in any way.
- Inappropriate conversations with residents or third parties should not take place on any social networking sites, including forums.
- Any writing about or displaying photos or videos of internal activities that involves current employees, might be considered a breach of data protection and a breach of privacy and confidentiality. Therefore, their permission should be gained prior to uploading any such material. Details of any kind relating to any events, conversations, materials or documents that are meant to be private, confidential or internal to the business of the Council should not be posted. This includes manuals; procedures; training documents; databases; non-public financial or operational information; personal information regarding other employees or suppliers; anything to do with a disciplinary case, grievance, allegation of bullying/harassment or discrimination, or legal issue; any other secret, confidential, or proprietary information or information that is subject to confidentiality agreements.
- All employees must be aware that they are personally liable for anything that they write or present online (including on a competitor's blog, post, feed or website). They may be subject to disciplinary action for comments, content, or images that are defamatory, embarrassing, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libellous, or that can create a hostile work environment. They may also be sued by any individual or company that views their comments, content, or images as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libellous or creating a hostile work environment. In addition, other employees can raise grievances for alleged bullying and/or harassment.
- Postings to websites or anywhere on the Internet and social media of any kind, or in any press or media of any kind, must not breach copyright or other law or disclose confidential information, defame or make derogatory comments about the business of the Council or its employees, members, councillors, volunteers, partners, visitors and suppliers, or disclose personal data or information about any individual that could breach data protection legislation.
- Contacts by the media relating to our business, our current and potential products, employees, partners, customers, suppliers and competitors should be referred to the Town Clerk.

- Employees who use sites such as LinkedIn and Facebook must ensure that the information on their profile is accurate and up to date and must update their profile on leaving our employment to show that they are no longer employed by us.
- Employees who use X.com, LinkedIn, or other social media/networking sites for business development purposes must ensure that they inform us of their password(s) so that these sites can be accessed and updated in their absence.
- Employees who have left our employment must not post any inappropriate comments about the business of the Council or our employees on LinkedIn, Facebook, X.com or any other social media/networking sites.
- Any contacts made on such sites during the course of employment will be classed as business information and thus belong to the Council. Employees will be asked to disclose contacts on LinkedIn, or any other sites, that they have made in their capacity as an employee.

15.7.1 Note that we may, from time to time, monitor external postings on social media sites. Any employee who has a profile (for example on LinkedIn or Facebook) must not misrepresent themselves or their role with us. Employees are also advised that social media sites are not an appropriate place to air business concerns or complaints: these should be raised with a manager or formally through our grievance procedure.

15.7.2 It is important to note that any contact details and information remain the property of the Council. In addition, employees leaving our employment will be required to delete all work-related data from any personal device/equipment.

16 Training

16.1 Any employee who feels they require training to increase their understanding of the real benefits the Internet can bring to their position, or to improve their ability to use our IT equipment and services, should contact their Line Manager.

17 Breach of this policy

17.1 Failure to adhere to this policy may be a gross misconduct offence and may result in action being taken under our disciplinary policy, which could lead to dismissal. Depending on the nature of the offence it may also be necessary to notify the police.

17.2 Anyone who discovers a user abusing our IT equipment or services must inform the Town Clerk. An employee who is found to be concealing the activities of a work colleague who is abusing our IT equipment or services may face disciplinary action themselves.

18 Related policies and documents

- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Health and Safety policy

The above list is not exhaustive.

19 Further information

- 19.1 Any queries or comments about this policy should be addressed to the Head of Corporate Services in the first instance.

20 Policy owner

- 20.1 This policy is owned and maintained by Corporate Services Committee.



Houghton Regis Town Council

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Date of Approval:	19 th December 2022
Dates of review:	2 nd October 2023; 4 th March 2024; 3 rd March 2025
Dates of Re approval:	2 nd October 2023; 17 th June 2024; TBC

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1 Purpose

- 1.1 We wholeheartedly support the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the recruitment and employment of our employees, as well as ensuring that it is afforded to all job applicants, councillors, residents, volunteers, contractors and suppliers.
- 1.2 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion is also referred to as ED&I throughout this policy.
- 1.3 We are opposed to all forms of unfair or unlawful discrimination and harassment. We will treat all job applicants, employees, residents, volunteers, contractors and suppliers. in the same way, regardless of any protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race (including nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion or philosophical belief, sex or sexual orientation).
- 1.4 The use of the word ‘harassment’ throughout this policy includes sexual harassment.
- 1.5 We seek to promote equality, diversity and inclusion in job adverts and recruitment, induction, employment, pay and benefits, training and career development (including promotions), terms and conditions of service, and also when managing any grievance or disciplinary issues. This policy can also apply to relationships with suppliers and contractors, as well as to potential employees.
- 1.6 The responsibility for observing the law and operating this policy lies with the Town Clerk but the policy can only work effectively with the support and commitment of all colleagues.
- 1.7 We believe that everyone has the right to be treated fairly and with dignity and respect at work, and to work without fear of discrimination, bullying or harassment. We welcome diversity amongst our staff, volunteers, and visitors, recognising that individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and experience can contribute a wealth of experience to achieving our objectives.
- 1.8 We will regularly review this policy to ensure its continuing compliance with relevant employment legislation and the continuing success of its implementation by:
 - ensuring there are no suspected practices in breach of this policy
 - ensuring that selection for promotion, training, work allocation etc. is carried out in a non-discriminatory manner
 - promoting a harmonious working environment and eliminating discrimination and harassment

1.9 This policy is available to all employees and workers are required to read this policy to ensure they understand what types of behaviour may amount to bullying, harassment and sexual harassment.

1.10 This policy should be read together with our Bullying and Harassment Policy.

1.11 This policy is not contractual but indicates the way we wish to address diversity in the workplace.

2 Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all employees at all levels within our business working at our premises, at home, or elsewhere as well as agency workers, consultants, casual workers and volunteers.

2.2 It covers all aspects of employment including job adverts, recruitment, induction, pay and benefits, terms and conditions of service, training and development, promotion, change management, grievance and disciplinary issues and ending employment.

2.3 It also applies to the way we manage relationships with councillors, volunteers, residents, suppliers and contractors as well as to potential employees.

3 Principles

3.1 All employees have a responsibility to apply good equality, diversity and inclusivity practices across our business. All employees, irrespective of their job or seniority, should familiarise themselves with this policy, and be aware of their responsibility and role in promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion and in not discriminating unfairly or harassing colleagues, job applicants or ex-employees, nor encouraging others to do so or tolerating such behaviour.

3.2 Employees are also encouraged to challenge any unacceptable behaviour should they either witness or experience it directly. Disciplinary action, including dismissal, may be taken against any employee found guilty of unfair discrimination, harassment and/or victimisation.

3.3 Employees should be aware that not only are we, as the employer, liable for any cases of discrimination or harassment that occur, but individuals may also be held personally liable for their own acts and behaviour.

3.4 Managers are responsible for ensuring that all individuals within their team/department receive fair treatment throughout the course of their employment.

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- 3.5 We will also obtain commitments from other persons or organisations such as consultants, sub-contractors or agencies that they will also comply with this policy in their dealings with us and our employees.
- 3.6 We fully accept our responsibilities under current legislation, but we aim to go beyond this by:
- recognising that everyone has a right to their distinctive and diverse identity
 - understanding how ED&I can improve our ability to deliver better services
 - providing all employees with the necessary training and development they need to contribute to our goals
 - Ensuring we offer a supportive, open environment for all employees so that they can use their talents fully and where they are treated fairly and with dignity and respect, in an environment free from abuse or offensive behaviour, bullying or harassment or intimidation. This is regardless of any protected characteristic held, their social background or caring responsibilities they may have, or any other individual characteristic which may unfairly affect their opportunities in life.
- 3.7 We also recognise the benefits of helping our employees to lead a healthy work life balance, and that work life balance is unique to each individual.
- 3.8 Learning to work with people's differences, visible or not, enables us to work together effectively and helps us to recruit, retain and develop the best people; to fulfil our legal commitments; and to act responsibly in the communities of which we are a part.

4 Actions

- 4.1 The actions we will take to make this policy work include:
- providing training and communications to raise awareness and understanding of diversity and equal opportunities issues, to show their impact on the business and individuals
 - ensuring that decisions on recruitment, access to training and promotion are based on ability only
 - regularly reviewing our employment policies to ensure that people are treated fairly, equitably, and consistently with their skills and abilities
 - developing patterns of work which are consistent with the ability to maintain an appropriate work-life balance
 - reviewing working arrangements to ensure that they do not restrict the opportunity for employment or career progression of members of disadvantaged groups
 - monitoring the composition of our workforce to provide us with robust data to evaluate the effect of our policies

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- routinely monitoring all actions under the grievance and disciplinary procedures by gender, race, disability, age, and any other criteria we deem to be appropriate
 - providing employees who believe they have been treated in any way contrary to this policy with the opportunity to raise and resolve issues.

5 Types of discrimination

5.1 Definition

- 5.1.1 Discrimination is unfair treatment on the grounds of a “protected characteristic” (age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race (including nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion or philosophical belief, sex or sexual orientation) and it is usually against the law.

5.2 Direct discrimination

- 5.2.1 This occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic.

5.3 Indirect discrimination

- 5.3.1 This is where the application of a provision (policy), criterion or practice (PCP) is discriminatory in relation to a protected characteristic which an individual has, and:
- it is (or would be) applied equally to others who do not have that characteristic
 - it puts (or would put) those who share the individual’s characteristic at a particular disadvantage to those who do not have the characteristic
 - it puts (or would put) the individual at that disadvantage
 - it cannot be shown that the PCP is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

5.4 Discrimination by association

- 5.4.1 This is discrimination against a person because they associate with someone who possesses a protected characteristic (e.g., discrimination against an employee who is not disabled themselves, but who has a disabled child).

5.5 Discrimination by perception

- 5.5.1 This is discrimination against a person because the discriminator perceives the person possesses that protected characteristic, even if the perception is incorrect.

5.6 Harassment

5.6.1 This occurs when a person is subjected to unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating their dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. Harassment can be regarded as behaviour that is offensive, frightening or in any way distressing and it is the impact on the individual that is important. It may be intentional, obvious, or violent, but it can also be unintentional or subtle and insidious.

5.6.2 Forms of harassment can include, but not limited to:

- racial slurs
- personal insults
- derogatory jokes and banter
- offensive or insensitive messages (including email)
- isolation or non-cooperation and exclusion
- ‘outing’ someone as transgender
- asking intrusive questions about someone’s gender identity or transition
- persistent and/or malicious use of the incorrect pronoun or ‘deadnaming’

5.7 Sexual Harassment

5.7.1 Sexual harassment is unlawful and will not be tolerated. Complaints resulting in the finding of sexual harassment having taken place will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including summary dismissal (without notice). Or in the case of a worker, their engagement with us may be terminated.

5.7.2 Examples of sexual harassment include, but not limited to:

- unwanted physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature
- displaying pornographic or explicit images
- indecent exposure
- using e-mail or social media to make inappropriate, derogatory or offensive content that is of a sexual nature, which can include sexual innuendos, sexual solicitation, sexual assault. This can include sharing, posting, liking or tagging someone in a post
- unwanted physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature that is towards another person, such as a colleague, visitor, supplier, contractors
- or any other third party associated with us

5.8 Third party harassment and discrimination

5.8.1 Third party harassment and discrimination refers to harassment and/or discrimination of an employee or worker, that is carried out by someone who is not. Third party harassers and discriminators may include:

- visitors
- councillors
- volunteers
- suppliers and
- independent contractors and consultants.

5.8.2 Third party harassment will not be tolerated.

5.8.3 Any employee who believes that they have been the victim of third-party harassment and/or discrimination should immediately inform their manager of the incident, and we will take such steps as are reasonably practicable to prevent any recurrence. For the purposes of third-party harassment or discrimination, it is immaterial whether the harasser and/or discriminator is a different person in each instance of harassment and/or discrimination.

5.8.4 If an employee harasses and/or discriminates against a visitor, councillor, volunteer, supplier or an independent contractor or consultant the employee will be subject to disciplinary action.

5.8.5 For further details, see our Bullying and Harassment policy.

5.9 General requirements

5.9.1 Employees and workers should be aware that individuals may be held personally liable for their own acts and behaviour.

5.9.2 Harassment may be persistent, or an isolated incident and can take many forms, from relatively mild ‘banter’ to actual physical violence.

5.9.3 Employees may not always realise that their behaviour constitutes bullying or harassment, but they must recognise that what is acceptable to one person may not be acceptable to another. The fact that bullying or harassment was not intended does not mean that it cannot have occurred; however, bullying or harassment will not have taken place if the claimant’s perception of the conduct in question is unreasonable in all the circumstances.

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- 5.9.4 The person complaining of bullying or harassment need not necessarily be the person towards which the behaviour is directed. For example, a person who overhears comments made to someone else, and who is offended by those comments, may still make a complaint of bullying or harassment.
- 5.9.5 Such conduct is employment related if, for example, submission to, or rejection of, the conduct is used as a basis for an employment decision; or if the conduct interferes with the affected person's work performance; or if it creates an intimidating hostile, humiliating or offensive working environment.
- 5.9.6 Bullying or harassment can be a single serious incident or persistent and repeated, continuing after the person subjected to it makes it clear that they wish it to stop.
- 5.9.7 All employees and workers should be aware that any act or acts of bullying or harassment committed by them in the course of their employment will be dealt with under the disciplinary policy. This includes not only situations occurring whilst at work, but also at any time on our premises, or externally whilst attending social functions or training courses, etc in the course of the employment. It also covers emails, phone calls and texts sent by employees and workers outside of work using either our equipment or their own personal equipment, as well as posts on social networking sites.
- 5.9.8 Employees and workers should also consider how their behaviour or conduct would appear to a senior manager, or if it were reported in the press or on TV, and to refrain from any language or behaviour which would reflect unfavourably on them.
- 5.9.9 Legitimate, reasonable and constructive criticism of an employee's performance or behaviour, or reasonable instructions given during the course of employment will not, on their own, amount to bullying.
- 5.9.10 Examples of behaviour that may constitute harassment or bullying include (but are not limited to):
- **unwanted physical conduct** - such as unnecessary touching, patting, pinching, brushing against another person's body; insulting behaviour or obscene gestures; physical threats, aggressive behaviour and/or assault.
 - **unwanted verbal conduct** - such as unwelcome advances; patronising titles or nicknames; persistent and/or malicious use of the incorrect pronoun or 'deadnaming'; offensive or insulting comments; 'outing' someone as transgender; propositions or remarks; innuendo; lewd or suggestive comments; over-familiar behaviour; slogans or songs; insensitive jokes, gossip and slander (including speculation about a person's private life and sexual activities); banter or abusive/offensive language which is either threatening or refers to a person's sex,

race (including colour and ethnic or national origins), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, marital status or civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity or gender reassignment.

- **unwanted non-verbal conduct** - such as racially or sexually based graffiti or graffiti referring to an individual's characteristics or private life; abusive or offensive gestures; leering, whistling, creation, distribution or display of suggestive or offensive pictures, objects or written materials (including "pin-up" calendars) or videos through any means.
- **bullying** - includes unwanted physical contact or assault but also verbal bullying such as insulting or threatening comments; comments intended to undermine, belittle, embarrass or humiliate the recipient; personal abuse, either in public or private, which humiliates or demeans the individual involved.
- **virtual bullying** - includes distribution of unwanted emails, texts, images or humiliating data published on social networking internet sites or abusing our technology or using the employee's own technology to contact a colleague in an intimidating or malicious manner.
- **conduct of a sexual nature** – includes unwanted physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct as discussed above; further examples include displaying pornographic or explicit images, indecent exposure, e-mails with sexual content, sexual innuendo, sexual solicitation, sexual assault; see also, coercion.
- **coercion** - including threats of dismissal or loss of promotion etc for refusal of sexual (or other) favours (or promises made in return for sexual or other favours); pressure to participate in political or religious groups etc.
- **isolation or non-co-operation at work** - deliberate exclusion from communications including group emails, conversations or social activities; setting unrealistic deadlines; substituting responsible tasks with menial or trivial ones; withholding information or giving false information; constantly undervaluing effort.

5.10 We also take reasonable steps to prevent 3rd party harassment.

This includes: Warning notices to our all our visitors

5.10.1 Any employee or worker who believes that they have been the victim of third-party harassment and/or discrimination should immediately report the incident to their manager. In the case of an agency worker, they should immediately report it to both their recruiting agency and to their point of contact within our organisation.

5.10.2 Where an employee or worker has been harassed and/or discriminated against by a third party, we will take reasonable steps to prevent any recurrence. The options may include:

- Issuing a warning about their behaviour
- Banning a visitor/or other type of 3rd party
- Reporting criminal acts to the police

5.11 Victimisation

5.11.1 Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably because they have committed, or it is believed they may commit a "protected act". "Protected acts" include bringing legal proceedings related to discrimination against the employer or the perpetrator, or the giving of evidence at a disciplinary or grievance hearing or at tribunal, or making complaints about the perpetrator or the employer about their alleged discriminatory practices, etc.

6 Further guidance on unlawful discrimination

6.1 **Age** – note that this covers people of all ages and age groups, and someone's perceived age. Age-related bands are still however permitted in the National Minimum Wage bands and when calculating statutory redundancy payments.

6.2 **Disability** - it is unlawful to treat a disabled person unfavourably because of something 'arising in consequence of their disability'. Reasonable adjustments (see below) must be made if these would enable the disabled person to access any services or the ability to be employed, trained, or promoted to the same extent as a non-disabled person. A disabled person is defined as: *"someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities"*.

- "substantial" means neither minor nor trivial
- "long term" means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least 12 months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions)
- "normal day-to-day activities" include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

People with progressive conditions, such as HIV, cancer and multiple sclerosis, are covered from the point of diagnosis rather than from the point when the condition has some adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

- 6.3 **Race** - this includes colour, nationality and ethnic origin. It is unlawful to treat a person less favourably on grounds of the colour of someone's skin, nationality or ethnic origin.
- 6.4 **Religion or belief** – this covers not only any religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief but also the lack of any religion or belief. A philosophical or political belief is not covered unless it is similar to a religious belief.
- 6.5 **Sex** – this covers both men and women. However, in the field of employment, a Genuine Occupational Requirement (GOR) can be lawful if a person of a particular gender is specifically required for a job.
- 6.6 **Sexual orientation** – this covers any sexual orientation, including homosexual, heterosexual and bisexual.
- 6.7 **Gender reassignment** – an employee is protected from discrimination on the grounds of gender reassignment if they are proposing to undergo a process or part of a process, are currently undergoing a process or part of a process or have undergone a process or part of a process. Furthermore, employees who choose to not undergo medical procedures when transitioning will also be protected.
- 6.8 **Part-time workers** – a part-time worker is defined as someone who is 'not identifiable as a full-time worker'. Part-time workers are entitled to be treated on the same basis and are entitled to the same benefits, pro-rata, as their full-time colleagues.
- 6.9 **Fixed-term employees** - a 'fixed-term employee' is one with a contract of employment which is due to end when a specified date is reached, a specified event does or does not happen or a specified task has been completed. It is unlawful to treat a fixed-term employee less favourably than a comparable permanent employee, unless this is objectively justifiable. The use of successive fixed term contracts for any individual is limited to four years.
- 6.10 **Equal pay** - men and women should receive equal pay for work of equal value where work is the same or rated as equivalent regardless of the hours worked.

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- 6.11 **Genuine Occupational Requirement (GOR)** - in very limited circumstances it will be lawful to treat people differently if it is a genuine occupational requirement that the job holder must possess a particular protected characteristic. When deciding if this applies, we will consider the nature of the work and the context in which it is carried out.

7 Responsibilities

7.1 Managers' responsibility

- 7.1.1 The Heads of Services have overall responsibility for ensuring the implementation of this policy.
- 7.1.2 As employers, we are liable for the actions of our employees and workers and therefore all our managers and supervisors are responsible for the successful implementation of this policy within their own departments and should take steps to ensure that people working for them understand and follow this policy.

7.2 Employees' responsibility

- 7.2.1 All our employees are required to comply with this policy, together with our associated policies.
- 7.2.2 Any employee who witnesses behaviour or decisions that seem to be contrary to this policy should challenge these or raise the issue with their Manager, the Head of Corporate Services or the Town Clerk.

8 The working environment

- 8.1 We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that our working environment does not prevent people from taking up positions for which they are suitably qualified. This may include physical adaptations or more flexible ways of working, including home working (where appropriate and practical).
- 8.2 We will also take reasonable steps to prevent discrimination and harassment from occurring. Instances of this are a violation of employment and health and safety laws, and a contravention of criminal and/or civil law in some circumstances, this type of behaviour can create a hostile or threatening environment. Therefore, all complaints of bullying or harassment will be treated very seriously.

9 Employment policies

- 9.1 Our employment policies and procedures will be continually reviewed to ensure compliance with this policy, to reflect current best practice and to remove barriers experienced by members of disadvantaged social groups in seeking employment with us and working for us.

10 Reasonable adjustments for those with a disability

- 10.1 All employers have a duty to consider and make reasonable adjustments to facilitate the employment of a disabled person. These may include:

- making adjustments to premises
- re-allocating some of a disabled employee's duties
- transferring a disabled employee to a role better suited to their ability
- relocating a disabled employee to a more suitable office or location
- giving a disabled employee time off work for medical treatment or rehabilitation
- providing training or mentoring for a disabled employee
- supplying or modifying equipment, instruction and training manuals for disabled employees.

- 10.2 We will consider and make any other reasonable adjustment to the employment arrangements or our premises if these substantially disadvantage a disabled employee or a disabled applicant. However, a number of factors will be taken into account in deciding if it is reasonable to make any changes. These include:

- the extent to which an alteration will improve the situation for the disabled employee or applicant
- how easy it is to make the change
- the cost of the measure, both financially and in terms of the disruption it will cause
- our resources
- any financial or other help that may be available.

- 10.3 If an employee has a disability, or becomes disabled during the course of their employment, and feels that any such adjustments are appropriate, they should discuss this with their manager in the first instance.

11 Gender reassignment

- 11.1.1 Transgender or 'trans' is an umbrella term for somebody who experiences gender incongruence, gender diversity or gender dysphoria, meaning they do not align to the sex they were assigned at birth. It includes someone who:

- intends to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment

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- identifies that their gender is not the one assigned at birth. This is both someone who is planning, or has had medical interventions, as well as someone who does not plan or has not had medical interventions
 - is non-binary, meaning they do not solely consider themselves to be male or female. They may or may not have had medical interventions to align their body with their non-binary gender identity.

11.1.2 We will support employees who inform us of their intention to transition by working with them to create their own personal transition plan. We are mindful that for someone who is transitioning, there will be many practical steps that will need considering to help them through it. We also respect that our discussions with the employee are best when they are led by the employee themselves. We support their personal choices in how they wish to manage their transition within the workplace and both the employee, and their line manager will jointly agree the support measures and practical actions that may be needed.

12 Recruitment and promotion

- 12.1 Our recruitment and promotion process must result in the selection of the most suitable person for the job, whether this on a full-time, part-time, casual, temporary, seasonal or contract basis. Our focus is on the skills, abilities, qualifications, aptitude, and potential of individuals to do their jobs.
- 12.2 Our recruitment procedures are kept under review and are developed as necessary so that we can continue to encourage applications from, and the employment of people from a range of backgrounds.
- 12.3 We aim to ensure that our recruitment practices are free from unlawful discriminatory criteria. Questions relating to a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race (including nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion or philosophical belief, sex or sexual orientation), but also current or future family responsibilities, or unrelated criminal convictions will not form part of our selection process.
- 12.4 Job descriptions will properly reflect the responsibilities of the jobholder and person specifications will include only requirements that are necessary and justifiable for the effective performance of the job.

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- 12.5 All adverts will be carefully worded to ensure that no intent of either direct or indirect discrimination is interpreted nor is there indication of stereotyping of roles. They will normally state "We are an equal opportunity employer and value diversity and inclusion". When advertising a position which has traditionally been done by one sex, adverts should specify they are open to both sexes.
- 12.6 We will ensure that our job adverts encourage applications from all suitably qualified and experienced people, through either internal and/or external advertising.
- 12.7 We will provide full and fair consideration for all job applicants, based on merit and ability. All managers involved in recruitment will be trained appropriately.
- 12.8 We will guarantee an interview to all candidates who have a disability where they meet the minimum criteria for a job.
- 12.9 Selection criteria and procedures are intended to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted, and treated based on their individual relevant merit, ability, and suitability for the post. Membership of an under-represented group will not influence the appointment. Shortlisting and interviewing will normally be carried out by more than one person, to minimise the risk of conscious or unconscious bias.
- 12.10 The selection process will be carried out consistently for all jobs at all levels and will be fair and non-discriminatory. Interviews will be undertaken with an unbiased approach towards candidates and only questions which relate to the job, and which are non-discriminatory will be asked. Questions about marriage plans; family intentions; religious or political commitments; caring responsibilities intention to join our pension scheme or to opt out; or about any other issues which may give rise to suspicions of unlawful discrimination should not be asked.
- 12.11 Procedures for testing or assessment will be reviewed so as not to disadvantage any applicant and will be specifically related to the job and measure an individual's actual, or inherent, ability to do or train for the job.
- 12.12 We will ensure that other opportunities such as work experience and apprenticeships that we may offer, are open to people from a wide range of backgrounds and we will work to create good education/industrial links to encourage a broad range of applicants.

13 Terms and conditions of employment

- 13.1 We will ensure that all our employment policies associated with terms and conditions of employment, are formulated, and applied in such a way as to remove/minimise any discrimination on the grounds of a protected characteristic or indeed any other characteristic unrelated to the performance of the job.
- 13.2 These will be reviewed regularly to ensure there is no discrimination.
- 13.3 Employees will not be subjected to any detriment if they wish to join our pension scheme, nor will they be offered any inducement not to do so.

14 Training and diversity awareness

- 14.1 We are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in terms of access to training to increase employees' knowledge and skills and to provide them with opportunities to develop their potential.
- 14.2 All employees are encouraged to discuss their career prospects and training needs with their manager on a regular basis. Opportunities for promotion and training will be communicated and made available to everyone on a fair and equal basis.
- 14.3 The provision of training will be reviewed to ensure that part-time workers, shift or remote workers or those returning to work following a break are able to benefit from training.
- 14.4 It is our policy not to unfairly discriminate in the provision of training. No age limits apply for entry to training or development schemes - these are open to all employees.
- 14.5 We will ensure that this aim is implemented through:
- continuous review and updating of training courses and literature
 - ensuring training materials are free from bias and do not discriminate, e.g., by showing minority groups or disabled people in lower skilled roles only
 - ensuring promotion and transfer criteria are justifiable
 - ensuring assessment criteria is transparent and unbiased
 - ensuring staff conducting appraisal interviews are aware of their obligations to carry these out fairly and consistently in line with this policy.
- 14.6 Appropriate training will be provided to enable staff to perform their jobs effectively.

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- 14.7 Induction training will be tailored to individual needs but will in all cases include awareness of our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion policy and how it applies to individuals. We will then continue to take specific steps to raise awareness of ED&I throughout employment and within the council's business.

15 Career development, training, and redeployment

- 15.1 We will take all appropriate steps to ensure that all employees receive fair consideration of their training and development needs and promotion opportunities to enable them to develop their full potential within our employment.
- 15.2 Any employees whose circumstances change whilst employed by us (for example, who become disabled, who take family leave, or who face new caring responsibilities) will be given full support to maintain or return to a job appropriate to their experience and abilities.

16 Flexible and hybrid working

- 16.1 We will consider any requests for flexible and hybrid working in a way which aims to balance the needs of the individual and the council's business.

17 Retirement

- 17.1 We have no fixed retirement age and anyone who wishes to work beyond State Pension Age may choose to do so.

18 References

- 18.1 We will not discriminate against individuals who have left our organisation, either by failing to provide references that are based on accurate, factual information or by failing to provide a reference when we would normally do so.

19 Involvement

- 19.1 We encourage the participation of all employees to ensure that, wherever possible, our employment practices recognise and meet their needs and will involve our staff in determining what can be done to make sure they develop and use their abilities at work.

20 Complaints

- 20.1 Harassment, discrimination, and bullying will not be tolerated. We recognise that making a complaint can be embarrassing and stressful. Sometimes the complainant simply wants the conduct or behaviour to stop and sometimes they want stronger action to be taken and therefore to take account of this we offer various routes of action.
- 20.2 When dealing with general disciplinary matters, care is to be taken that employees or workers who have, are perceived to have, or are associated with someone who has, a protected characteristic, are not dismissed or disciplined for performance or behaviour which could be overlooked or condoned in other employees or workers.
- 20.3 Employees who believe they have either been discriminated against or have witnessed discrimination, should bring this to our attention as soon as possible, either informally or formally in accordance with our grievance procedure or bullying and harassment policy and procedure. An employee who, in good faith, brings a complaint of discrimination must not be victimised or less favourably treated as a result. (However, false allegations that are found to have been made in bad faith will be dealt with under our disciplinary procedure.)

21 Monitoring performance

- 21.1 We will monitor our progress towards diversity by:
- monitoring applicants for jobs, training and development, grievances, disciplinary hearings, dismissals and other reasons for leaving

22 Breach of this policy

- 22.1 Any employee who feels they have been treated in a manner contrary to this policy should raise this either formally through the grievance procedure and / or bullying and harassment procedure set out within that specific policy, or informally with a senior manager.
- 22.2 Any breaches of this policy by employees will be fully investigated and may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including summary dismissal (without notice).

23 Related policies and documents

- Bullying and harassment policy
- Flexible working policy

The above list is not exhaustive.

24 Further information

Any queries or comments about this policy should be addressed to the Head of Corporate Services.



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

Date of Approval:	5 th December 2016
Date of Review:	2 nd March 2020; 22 nd November 2021; 3 rd March 2025
Date of Re-approval:	5 th October 2020; 21 st March 2022; TBC

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1 Purpose

- 1.1 We aim to ensure that employees achieve and maintain a high standard of performance, attendance, and conduct whilst at work and operate a zero-tolerance stance on any form of bullying, harassment or discrimination. It is expected that employees treat their colleagues, members of the public and others with respect and behave in a way that does not conflict with our activities or business dealings, or which may adversely affect or undermine our reputation.
- 1.2 Whilst we recognise that most of our employees conduct themselves in a responsible manner, it is important that any breaches of our rules, or failure to achieve and maintain satisfactory standards of conduct, attendance, or job performance, are dealt with effectively, fairly and consistently.
- 1.3 We will treat all matters as confidential between the employee and any individuals directly involved in the process. Witness statements and decisions will be kept confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation.
- 1.4 Minor issues concerning performance, attendance or behaviour will normally be dealt with as they arise on a day-to-day basis, without the need to resort to the formal disciplinary procedure. However, where more difficult or serious situations arise, or where the informal route does not result in the required improvement, the formal procedure may be deemed to be appropriate.
- 1.5 This policy is non-contractual and does not form part of any employee's terms and conditions of employment. It sets out the procedure that will normally be followed, although we reserve the right, at our discretion, to vary, replace or terminate the procedure at any stage.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy and procedure applies to all employees including managers and supervisors and is designed to ensure that anyone whose performance, attendance, or conduct falls below the required standards is aware of the procedure that we will follow.
- 2.2 Whilst this policy is most frequently used for conduct issues, it will also be used where there are concerns regarding performance that are unrelated to conduct, with the aim of supporting the individual to achieve the most positive outcome. Employees with a pattern of persistent absence may also be subject to this policy.
- 2.3 It will also apply to any incidents of misconduct that occur whilst working on or off our premises, including attending work organised social events, both during and outside of working hours unless otherwise stated.

2.4 However, there are a limited number of exceptions as listed below.

2.4.1 **Employees on probationary periods:** the formal disciplinary procedure will not apply to a probationary employee who fails to meet the required standards of performance, attendance, or behaviour. However, the employee will normally be informed of any shortfalls in performance, attendance or behaviour and given the opportunity to address the issues and thereafter, if no satisfactory improvement is made, the individual's contract may be terminated.

2.4.2 **Employees with less than two years' service:** we also reserve the right not to follow this procedure where the employee has less than two years' service.

2.4.3 **Long-term ill-health, redundancy, and fixed-term contracts:** this procedure does not apply to dismissals due to long-term ill-health, redundancy, or the non-renewal of a fixed-term contract on its expiry.

3 General misconduct

3.1 It is not practical to list all types of misconduct, therefore the following list serves as a guide, however it is not exhaustive:

- absence from place of work without permission
- bad behaviour
- breach of our policies or procedures
- failure to adhere to our rules including failure to follow our absence notification procedures and failure to provide Statements of Fitness for Work (fit note/medical certificate) when absent through illness or injury
- failure to notify us promptly of any endorsements to the driving licence or any diagnosis of a health condition that may affect the employee's ability to drive safely (if they drive on business)
- using a hand-held mobile whilst driving or in control of a company vehicle at any time, or whilst driving or in control of any vehicle whilst on our business
- minor damage to our property, or that belonging or other employees
- persistent extended breaks
- persistent poor timekeeping and/or attendance
- poor work performance, capability, or effort
- wilful failure to carry out a reasonable request from a manager including refusing to undertake a task for which the employee is accountable (insubordination)
- undertaking unauthorised external employment.

4 Gross misconduct

4.1 It is not practical to list all types of gross misconduct, therefore the following serves as a guide, and is not exhaustive:

General:

- failure, neglect, refusal or otherwise to perform any normal duties or to comply with a reasonable management instruction
- wilful breach of any of our rules, policies or expected standards
- any action in serious breach of legislative requirements which may affect our business
- bringing, or anything that may bring, our business or any individuals connected to the business, into disrepute - this includes taking part in activities which result in adverse publicity to ourselves, or which cause us to lose faith in the employee's integrity
- conviction of a criminal offence that is relevant to the employee's employment with us and renders them unsuitable for their work
- any other misconduct which, in the circumstances, is considered serious enough to warrant summary dismissal.

Conduct:

- dishonesty
- false declarations regarding work completed by computer, manual records or any other means
- falsification of time sheets, attendance/sickness claims, expense claims, shared parental leave declarations or other documents for personal or another's gain
- serious breach of our cash handling procedures
- fraudulent behaviour
- the inclusion of incorrect or misleading information on the employee's job application documents (including our application form) or the provision of false references
- frivolous or vexatious claims made under the grievance procedure
- use of foul language or any act that violates commonly accepted standards of behaviour
- threatening, intimidating or abusive behaviour
- physical violence and/fighting
- assault or causing bodily harm to another employee, manager, visitor or any other third party, either on our premises or whilst engaged on our business or where the act committed irrevocably damages the required trust and mutual confidence between employer and employee
- misuse of our property or name
- any act, or failure to report an incident or suspicion, of bribery or corruption.
- receiving or procuring for another, a commission, bonus, rebate, kickback, other payment, reward, or benefit in kind arising from any transaction connected with a business relationship between us and any person or organisation (bribery)
- deliberate sabotage and/or damage of our property, business, or business relationships or that of our employees.
- theft or unauthorised possession of property belonging to us, our employees, contractors, visitors, or any other third party
- removal of any of our property from the premises without permission

- gambling of any kind when on work premises, or when using work equipment or during working time, including but not limited to, accessing or downloading online gambling sites
- accessing or downloading online games when using work equipment or during working time contravention of the Obscene Publications Act 1959
- unauthorised disclosure or misuse of confidential information internally and/or externally to the media or any other third party
- possession, selling, attempting to sell or transfer, any intoxicating liquor, drugs (other than those medically prescribed) or any other substances, including solvents or volatile substances
- serious negligence which causes or might cause unacceptable loss, damage or injury
- setting of an alarm, such as a burglar or fire alarm, deliberately and without good cause
- sleeping on duty
- smoking/vaping on our premises or in our vehicles or outside a designated smoking/vaping area
- undertaking private work on our premises and/or during working hours without express permission
- contravention of data protection and/or copyright laws.
- covert recording of meetings and/or conversations that include employees or representatives of the Council, its visitors, partners or other associated businesses or individuals which may be viewed as a breach of trust and confidence.

Discrimination/equal opportunity:

- any act of bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, victimisation, or any other form of unlawful discrimination
- any discrimination on any of the grounds listed in our equality, inclusion and diversity policy. This includes any discrimination related to a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin) religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation)

Health and safety:

- serious breach of health and safety rules, irrespective of whether this resulted in an accident
- attending work unfit through alcohol, non-prescribed drugs, or other substance abuse (including “legal highs”)
- carrying or using any explosives or weapons
- failure to notify us of any driving ban or any diagnosis of a health condition that may result in a driving ban (where the employee drives on business)
- driving any vehicle on business whilst intoxicated
- disqualification from driving, if relevant to the employee’s duties

IT misuse:

- accessing and using unauthorised internet sites during working hours (including chat and social networking / social media sites)
- using social media to make inappropriate, derogatory, or offensive comments, or making comments of a sexual nature (which can include sharing, posting or liking inappropriate videos and/or images) about us, our colleagues, or our suppliers, contractors or any other third party associated with us
- accessing or downloading material that could offend others because of its racist, religious, political or violent nature, or material deemed to incite hatred, violence or slander towards a specific individual or group
- creating, accessing, or downloading inappropriate, offensive, sexual, obscene or indecent (i.e. pornographic, or sexually explicit) material on any of our computers and/or systems
- downloading and/or installing unauthorised software
- unauthorised accessing or use of computer data
- failure to comply with our IT policy
- installing unauthorised software that subsequently destroys part or all of our operating systems
- unauthorised use of, or tampering with, our IT equipment or other equipment
- unauthorised use of another employee's or user's password or keys to gain access to confidential information.

5 Capability

- 5.1 Employees with a pattern of regular, or persistent, absence may be subject to action under this policy.
- 5.2 This policy will also be followed in situations where employees are finding it difficult to meet our minimum performance standards, despite making every effort to do so. An example would be where an adjustment in technology results in the fundamental nature of the role being the same, but the skills required have changed and the employee is finding it difficult to develop the required skills.
- 5.3 Managers will provide clear guidance on what is expected in each role. A job description will outline the key responsibilities.
- 5.4 Managers will also provide relevant support, such as coaching and training, as well as regular constructive 'example led' feedback. This will be discussed in performance appraisals where objectives will be reviewed and fresh ones set.

6 Procedure

- 6.1 Recording Meetings

- 6.1.1 Meetings will take place either face to face where it is possible to do so or remotely.
- 6.1.2 Where it is necessary to record a meeting using a recording device the interviewing manager will always ask the employee's permission to do so before recording the meeting. It is strictly forbidden for either party to record meetings covertly.
- 6.1.3 If a manager records a meeting using a recording device this will be for the purpose of taking notes of the meeting and a transcript will be produced. The employee will be provided with a copy of the transcript of the meeting for their records.

6.2 Informal procedure – counselling

- 6.2.1 Counselling will not be regarded as action taken under the formal disciplinary procedure. Its main purpose is to find a solution to the problem that benefits both us and the employee.
- 6.2.2 Employees who are aware that they are finding their jobs difficult, or who are unwell, and this is impacting on their performance, should raise this with their manager who will try to help in a supportive and constructive way.
- 6.2.3 If the manager has concerns regarding capability and the employee has not already raised these, the manager will discuss these with the employee as soon as possible to try to establish the reasons. It may be, for example, that some coaching, training, occupational health support or career guidance is all that is required. The manager should always try to address any concerns informally in the first instance by offering the appropriate support.
- 6.2.4 If a performance appraisal/review has not been held in the last 12 months, then this will be completed before progressing to any formal stage. This will allow for an in-depth discussion to take place to help clarify the concerns and agree upon objectives and development to help address these.

- 6.2.5 The employee and manager will then jointly agree an action plan, which clearly lays out what they are going to do to try to resolve the situation and which confirms an appropriate timescale for this. The agreed action plan should be realistic, clear and measurable and may relate to required skill levels, key results expected, job characteristics (e.g. relationship building) or a combination of these. The support or action that the manager will take will also be agreed. This might include arranging training where this is deemed appropriate. If training is agreed, a timescale for when this will be delivered and the method of training should be included within the action plan (e.g. coaching, one to one training, self-development, a formal course). The manager will be responsible for ensuring this is carried out.
- 6.2.6 Unsatisfactory performance, attendance or conduct may be improved by informal guidance or coaching. This can often be the most effective way to improve this without the need to initiate the formal disciplinary procedure.
- 6.2.7 Any counselling will be either confirmed in writing, or brief notes will be made and recorded on the employee's personnel file for reference purposes. The employee may be requested to sign this record to confirm its accuracy and may also be provided with a copy of the notes. If the problem continues, these may be used as a basis for formal disciplinary action.
- 6.2.8 If the informal approach has been exhausted, but no (or insufficient) improvement has occurred, then the formal stages will be followed.
- 6.2.9 Employees should note that, if the issue is considered to be very serious, then the informal action stage may be bypassed, and formal disciplinary procedures will be started immediately.

6.3 Suspension

- 6.3.1 We may, at our absolute discretion, suspend you from work, and as a protective measure in order to carry out investigations, where we have reasonable grounds to believe you may be guilty of a serious misconduct offence(s). For example (and not an exhaustive list):
- where relationships have broken down
 - where allegations of sexual harassment or any other form of harassment, bullying or discrimination is raised
 - where we have any grounds to consider that our property or responsibilities to other parties are at risk,
 - where we consider that your continued presence at our premises would hinder an investigation
 - ensure impartiality
 - to prevent the risk of the reoccurrence of the behaviour in question

- the employee's ability to continue working has been adversely affected by the situation being investigated.
- 6.3.2 During any such suspension employees will be paid at the rate of pay to which they would be entitled to if you were not subject to the suspension.
- 6.3.3 Alternatives to suspension will always be considered which may include undertaking alternative duties during the relevant period, or temporarily removing access to either systems, equipment, or individuals.
- 6.3.4 When carrying out a suspension, the Council, will ensure that it is carefully and sensitively handled to minimise distress and to preserve, as far as possible, the working relationship.
- 6.3.5 The suspension will be confirmed verbally at the time, with confirmation in writing being sent as soon as is reasonably practical and ideally within two working days.
- 6.3.6 Suspension will only be imposed after careful consideration, where there is no other alternative, it will last no longer than is reasonably necessary or for a period agreed with the individual, dependent upon the nature of the investigation or availability of witnesses. Suspension will be kept under review.
- 6.3.7 If a suspension meeting is held, there is no legal right for an employee to be accompanied.
- 6.3.8 We will consider whether there is a case of gross or serious misconduct to answer and whether suspension remains appropriate. If this is the case, the employee will be informed of the continued suspension and the reasons.
- 6.3.9 During a period of paid suspension, the employee will be expected to be available for interviews during normal working hours. They will not be permitted to enter our premises, undertake any activity on our behalf nor have any contact with other employees. Exceptions to this can occur only with the permission of their manager.
- 6.3.10 In the event of sickness absence either due to sickness or an injury; the employee will be provided with the normal pay they would have been entitled to if they had not been suspended. Further details contained in section Absence during disciplinary proceedings.
- 6.3.11 Every effort will be made to arrange any disciplinary hearing as soon as possible to minimise unnecessary anxiety and disruption.
- 6.3.12 Suspension on its own does not constitute formal action.

6.4 Investigation

- 6.4.1 In most cases, an investigation will take place before formal disciplinary action is put into process.
- 6.4.2 The employee will be invited to an investigation meeting to discuss the matters surrounding the alleged incident. The employee will be informed of the investigator's name, job title and contact details, any suspension, or restrictions, that the matter is to be kept confidential and that any breach may be a disciplinary matter.
- 6.4.3 Investigations should be carried out promptly before memory fades, to ensure all statements are as accurate as possible and to prevent any evidence being altered or destroyed.
- 6.4.4 The manager or person undertaking the investigation will not chair the disciplinary hearing.
- 6.4.5 At this stage, information relating to any witnesses to an alleged incident (such as other employees or external individuals) should be checked and statements taken from these witnesses. All witnesses will be informed of the reason for this. Employees are required to fully co-operate with such investigations in a professional manner and to provide all information that may be relevant to the investigation.
- 6.4.6 Other employees are required not to discuss any information relating to the case with anyone outside of the meeting, either inside or outside our organisation: this will be regarded as a breach of confidentiality.
- 6.4.7 A witness may add written comments to be attached to their statement. The manager will inform the witness if their statement is to be presented at the disciplinary hearing, if so, they may be requested to attend the hearing.
- 6.4.8 The investigation may also include examination of written or physical evidence, such as documents, photographs, CCTV footage or equipment.
- 6.4.9 Within the investigation, employees will have the opportunity to respond to any allegations and provide their version of events. It is important to note that the right to be accompanied by a colleague or union representative does not apply to meetings held at the investigatory stage.

- 6.4.10 Witnesses and informants may request to remain anonymous in certain instances. In order that a fair procedure is followed, we will, in such circumstances, explore the reasons for this request and decide whether the statements should be anonymous, disregarded or considered as holding less weight than statements from other named witnesses/informants. Where we agree to protect the identity of the witness/informant, statements and documents will be anonymised and relevant sections redacted.
- 6.4.11 When taking statements from a witness/informant who wishes to retain their anonymity, we will make them aware that this cannot be guaranteed at a later stage in the process and that if the matter results in legal proceedings, they may be subject to a witness order requiring their attendance at an employment tribunal to provide evidence in the proceedings.
- 6.4.12 The manager responsible for conducting the investigation will review the case including all the evidence collected to determine if a formal disciplinary hearing seems warranted.

6.5 Formal procedure – disciplinary hearing

- 6.5.1 In most cases, formal disciplinary action will not be taken until the case has been fully investigated.
- 6.5.2 The employee will be advised in writing of the nature of the issue and provided with any relevant evidence that may exist.
- 6.5.3 To enable them to prepare, they will be given adequate notice (normally at least three working days) of any formal disciplinary hearing and provided, in writing, with full details of the case to answer, including all evidence gathered as part of the investigation process, and a copy of our disciplinary policy. This may be extended in serious or more complicated cases to ensure that the employee has every opportunity to consider all the facts and prepare their response.
- 6.5.4 Employees have the right to be accompanied at all formal disciplinary hearings by a fellow worker of their choice, a trade union representative, or an official employed by a trade union. Any trade union representative must be certified in writing by their union as having experience of, or having received training in, acting as a worker's companion at disciplinary hearings. The employee should tell the person conducting the hearing in advance whom they have requested to act as a companion. If they do not wish to be accompanied, this will be noted. Fellow workers may not be compelled to attend as a companion.

- 6.5.5 Should the date and time not be convenient for the representative, and/or the employee is unable to attend due to valid reasons that are beyond their control, we will reschedule the hearing to a date within five working days of the original date set.
- 6.5.6 The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the disciplinary hearing; failure to attend the hearing without notifying us or providing genuine reasons may be considered an act of misconduct itself. Where an employee is persistently unable or unwilling to attend an agreed or rescheduled disciplinary hearing, without good reason, a decision may be made in their absence based on the evidence available at that time. We may consider in exceptional and reasonable circumstances where an employee is unable to attend the hearing, for them to submit written representations instead.
- 6.5.7 Should, following the outcome of the investigation it is decided that there is a case to answer, the Chair of Corporate Services will be requested to establish a Disciplinary, Grievance & Appeals Sub-Committee comprising of six councillors. Three of which will form the Disciplinary Sub Committee to formally hear the allegations. The remaining three councillors will form the Appeals Sub Committee should it be necessary. The Disciplinary, Grievance and Appeals sub-committee will appoint a Chairman from one of its members. The Investigator shall not sit on the sub-committee. No councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the sub-committee. Where no internal person of sufficient seniority or confidential status is available, or where preferred, an external party may be invited to attend in this capacity. The Council may, at any time during the disciplinary process, engage with external consultants to conduct any or all the stages of the disciplinary procedure. This may include acting as chair of the hearing. This may be considered if the case is complex or there is no one internally suitable who is available to carry out the process.
- 6.5.8 Both parties have the right to request witnesses to give evidence at the disciplinary hearing. However, it is recognised that this may not always be appropriate. If it is deemed that the witness(es) may have relevant information about the alleged offence(s), we will invite them to attend.
- 6.5.9 At every stage in the formal procedure, the employee will be advised, in writing, of the nature of the allegation(s) and provided with the relevant evidence gathered.
- 6.5.10 The employee will be given the opportunity to state their case and respond to the allegation(s) at the hearing before any decision is made.

- 6.5.11 The hearing will normally be adjourned to allow for full consideration of the evidence before a decision is made. It should be noted that further investigation may be required following the hearing, should new information/evidence emerge that was not previously known.
- 6.5.12 The employee and/or companion may also request an adjournment as required. The companion is there to act as a witness to what is said, to provide moral support and to assist and advise the employee in presenting the case. They may address the hearing (provided the employee wishes this), ask questions on the employee's behalf and confer with the employee but not answer questions on their behalf, nor may they prevent us from explaining our case.
- 6.5.13 The employee will be informed of the outcome verbally (either in person or remotely) and then in writing.
- 6.5.14 At all stages of the formal disciplinary procedure, if meetings have not been recorded, notes will be taken. These will detail the nature of any breach of disciplinary rules or unsatisfactory performance, the employee's defence or mitigation, the action taken and the reasons for our decision. The notes may not be verbatim but should be an accurate reflection of the hearing. The employee will be requested to sign the notes and/or a copy of the transcript to confirm their accuracy and will be provided with a copy of them. Under no circumstances should any hearing or conversation be recorded without the prior permission of those present.
- 6.5.15 An employee who is not happy with the accuracy of the notes can request, in writing, amendments to be made and we will consider this request. Where it is agreed to revise the notes, a copy will then be provided to the employee with an additional copy retained on their personnel file. Where the suggested amendments are not agreed, a copy of the employee's written comments will be filed alongside the original notes.

6.6 Approach

- 6.6.1 A disciplinary penalty will only be issued once a formal hearing has taken place and all the evidence and the employee's defence has been heard and considered. Before making any decision on disciplinary action, we will consider the employee's disciplinary and general record; length of service; any similar precedents; any mitigating circumstances or explanations given; what would be reasonable under the circumstances and whether any training, additional support or adjustments to the role or workload are necessary.
- 6.6.2 Under normal circumstances, the formal disciplinary procedure will begin with a first written warning (or improvement note) and then will progress through the stages as necessary.

6.6.3 However, if the matter is of a particularly serious nature, then we reserve the right to escalate the procedure, by omitting one or more stages, if it is appropriate to do so in the circumstances. This means that, on occasion, we may proceed directly to a final written warning for a first offence if this is viewed as a serious disciplinary matter which may, for example, fall just short of gross misconduct. In such cases we will consider the seriousness of the conduct or poor performance, any past disciplinary history, length of service, the likelihood of effective corrective action by the employee and the extent to which our concerns have been notified to the employee other than through this procedure.

6.6.4 It is also important to recognise that any offence which constitutes gross misconduct may, following an investigation and disciplinary hearing, result in summary dismissal (dismissal without notice or payment in lieu of notice).

6.7 First written warning (or improvement note)

6.7.1 Following a disciplinary hearing, if we decide to issue a first written warning (or improvement note) this will be confirmed to the employee. This will provide details of the offence(s), the improvement required and the agreed timescales in which the improvement will be expected as well as the right to appeal. The employee will also be advised of the potential consequences of any further misconduct or unsatisfactory improvement.

6.7.2 A copy of this first written warning (or improvement note) will be retained on the employee's personnel file. Subject to future satisfactory conduct, attendance and/or performance and, where appropriate, no repetition of the offence or a similar offence this warning will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after 12 months from the date of issue.

6.8 Final written warning

6.81 Where there is a reoccurrence or a further disciplinary offence which is of a similar nature, or where the gravity of the offence warrants this, the employee will be invited to attend a disciplinary hearing, following which the employee may be given a final written warning. This will provide details of the offence(s), the improvement required and the agreed timescales in which the improvement will be expected as well as the right to appeal.

- 6.8.2 This formal written warning will be retained on the employee's personnel file. Subject to future satisfactory conduct and performance, and no repetition of the offence or a similar offence, this warning will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes, after 12 months from the date of issue.
- 6.8.3 The employee will be informed that dismissal may be considered if there is either no satisfactory improvement, a repetition of the offence or if a similar offence occurs during the following 12 months. This period may be extended at our discretion or may be of an indefinite duration – the employee will be informed if this applies.

Dismissal

- 6.8.4 Dismissal will be considered if an employee is found to have committed an act or acts of gross misconduct or has failed to improve their performance, attendance and/or conduct despite a previous warning.
- 6.8.5 The employee will be provided with written reasons for dismissal, the date on which employment will terminate and details of the right of appeal.
- 6.8.6 All records of the process and the outcome will be retained on the employee's personnel file.

6.9 Penalties other than dismissal

- 6.9.1 There may be circumstances where we consider alternative disciplinary sanctions to dismissal to be appropriate. These could include:
- a period of disciplinary suspension without pay;
 - loss of seniority;
 - loss of increment;
 - demotion (which may result in a reduction in pay for the employee);
 - redeployment to another position or working pattern which may result in a reduction in pay.
- 6.9.2 Demotion, as an alternative to dismissal, would constitute a permanent change to the employee's terms and conditions of employment including, but not limited to, job title, pay and other remuneration. This penalty will usually be accompanied by a final written warning. An employee who does not accept this alternative will be dismissed from our employment.

6.10 Appeals

- 6.10.1 At any stage of the formal disciplinary procedure, including dismissal, employees have the right to appeal the outcome of the hearing.

- 6.10.2 When making an appeal, the employee will need to clearly state the grounds for the appeal. Typically, this will be based on procedural issues, new evidence, or a belief that the penalty imposed is disproportionate to the offence.
- 6.10.3 All appeals must be made as soon as is reasonably practicable – we would normally expect this to be within five working days from receipt of the outcome letter.
- 6.10.4 On receipt of the appeal letter, acknowledgement will be made, and an appeal hearing will be arranged without unreasonable delay.
- 6.10.5 Where possible, the Appeal will be heard by a panel of three members of the Disciplinary, Grievance & Appeals sub- committee who have not previously been involved in the case. There may be insufficient members of the sub-committee who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel will be a committee of three members of the Council who may include members of the sub-committee. The appeal panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members. This may result in a full review of the evidence. The person conducting the appeal is advised to be accompanied by a suitable employee who will act as a witness and take full notes of everything that is said.
- 6.10.6 An independent external person (such as a professional adviser) may be appointed to attend the appeal or review the matter impartially and provide advice.
- 6.10.7 The employee will have the right to be accompanied by a fellow worker of their choice, a trade union representative, or an official employed by a trade union. As with a disciplinary hearing, the companion will be able to address the hearing, ask questions on the employee's behalf and confer with the employee but not answer questions on their behalf.
- 6.10.8 Should the date and time not be convenient for the companion, we will reschedule the hearing to a date within five working days of the original date set.
- 6.10.9 The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the appeal hearing. The grounds of the appeal will be considered when deciding the extent of any new investigation: it may be that a complete re-hearing will be held, should there be any suspected procedural defects.
- 6.10.10 Where possible, the employee will be informed verbally of the decision reached. The findings of the appeal will then be notified in writing as soon as reasonably practicable, unless otherwise notified.
- 6.10.11 The outcome of the appeal is final.

6.10.12 Decisions previously imposed may be upheld or removed, or alternative sanctions may be imposed, but any sanction or penalty will not be increased.

6.10.13 In cases where a decision to dismiss is upheld, the termination date will be the original date of termination. If a decision is taken to overturn a dismissal, both parties revert to the position as it was on the day of dismissal and continuity of service is preserved.

7 Overlapping disciplinary and grievance cases

7.1 If an employee or worker raises a grievance, a complaint of bullying, harassment or discrimination or a whistleblowing complaint during disciplinary/capability proceedings, and/or they believe that they are subject to or threatened to conduct or capability related disciplinary action which is unlawfully discriminatory then it may be appropriate to:

- temporarily suspend the disciplinary/capability process to deal with the grievance, bullying, harassment or discrimination, or whistleblowing complaint
- deal with both issues concurrently or
- deal with the issues of concern as mitigating factors in the disciplinary/capability hearing.

7.2 The individual will be informed in writing of the way in which we propose to deal with the issues.

8 Sickness absence during disciplinary proceedings

8.1 We aim to ensure that all matters relating to discipline are dealt with fairly and promptly and will, wherever possible, follow the principles set out in the disciplinary procedure. However, circumstances may arise when an employee's ill health prevents the disciplinary procedure from being followed because they are too ill or have an injury, to participate in the investigation, are unable to adequately prepare for a hearing or cannot attend the hearing itself. Where this is the case, we will act consistently with the following principles:

- The ill health of an employee will not usually be a ground for abandoning any ongoing disciplinary procedures.
- If an employee fails to attend work due to sickness or injury during a disciplinary investigation or any part of the disciplinary process, they may not be entitled to occupational sick pay, if applicable.
- If the employee is signed off due to sickness or an injury during a period of suspension, they will receive their normal pay they would have been entitled had they not been suspended in accordance with the company absence policy.
- Where the absence is likely to be short, we will usually wait until the employee recovers and are able to take a full part in the process.

- When the absence is ongoing and it appears to us that the employee is likely to remain off sick for an extended period, we may require the employee to cooperate with their GP or medical practitioner, in compliance with the Absence procedures. This is to determine whether the employee is sufficiently fit to take part in the disciplinary process. This may include providing a letter from the employee's GP/medical practitioner explicitly stating that they are unfit to participate in a disciplinary hearing.
- 8.2 Following consultation with a GP or registered medical practitioner, if it appears to us that the employee is fit to take part in the disciplinary process, the process will continue. Although we may at our discretion also implement reasonable adjustments as requested.
- 8.3 Where there is a disability in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 or where it appears, an employee may not be well enough to effectively participate in the disciplinary process, we will consider taking any of the reasonable adjustments noted below:
- **Venue.** We will consider holding the disciplinary hearing at a venue other than our premises, either to reduce the stress caused to the employee by attending the hearing or to accommodate any physical or mental health needs that the employee may have.
 - **Written representations.** In exceptional circumstance, where an employee may have difficulty in explaining their case, consideration will be given to allowing the employee to submit their response in writing.
 - **Companion.** In exceptional circumstances, we may allow for an employee to be accompanied by a companion who does not fall within the categories, defined within this policy in order to provide support. This is limited to a family member or health care professional.
 - **Documentation.** We will take particular care to ensure that the employee receives all documentation relating to the disciplinary process sufficiently in advance to allow the employee to prepare fully, taking into account any effect that their health may have on their ability to analyse the information and prepare a response.
 - **Timings.** While being committed to the principle that matters should be dealt with promptly, we may allow extra time for any stage of the disciplinary process to ensure that the employee can participate effectively. Particular attention will be given to the duration of any disciplinary hearing and its impact on the employee and the need to take appropriate breaks.

Holding the hearing in the employee's absence

- 8.4 We believe that, in most cases, it should be possible by using any or all of the measures outlined above to conduct a fair disciplinary process in which the employee can reasonably and fully participate. However, there may be exceptional circumstances when

the employee will not be able to attend a disciplinary hearing, whatever measures are taken.

8.5 In such circumstances, we reserve the right to proceed with a disciplinary hearing in the employee's absence, although full consideration will be given as to whether this is necessary in the circumstances. Where this is the case:

- The employee will have been forewarned in advance that a hearing could take place in their absence and a decision made based on all available evidence.
- The outcome of the hearing will be communicated in writing to the employee, paying particular attention to the need to explain the details of any factual findings made and the basis of the decision reached.
- The employee will be given a full opportunity to appeal against any decision in accordance with the Disciplinary procedure.

9 Mediation

- 9.1 There may be circumstances where we consider that it may be beneficial to use mediation to help resolve an issue. Mediation is not suitable in all circumstances and will not necessarily be offered, but where appropriate and offered, may be introduced at any stage of the process where both parties agree that this could be an effective approach.
- 9.2 Where mediation is introduced before or during the disciplinary process, the disciplinary procedure may be adjourned whilst the mediation is being undertaken. Should mediation prove unsuccessful the disciplinary procedure will be resumed.

10 Confidentiality and data protection

- 10.1 We aim to deal with disciplinary matters sensitively and with respect for the privacy of the individuals involved. All staff must treat as confidential any information communicated to them in connection with an investigation or a disciplinary matter.
- 10.2 We process personal data collected during the investigation stage and any subsequent stages in accordance with our data protection policy. In particular, data collected as part of the investigation stage and any subsequent stages is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of completing the disciplinary procedure.
- 10.3 Inappropriate access or disclosure of staff data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with our data protection policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under this disciplinary procedure.

11 Related policies and documents

- Sickness Absence policy

- Bullying and harassment policy
- Data protection policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy
- Grievance policy
- Health and safety policy
- IT policy
- Whistleblowing policy

The above list is not exhaustive.

12 Further information

Any queries or comments about this policy should be addressed to the Head of Corporate Services in the first instance.

13 Policy owner

This policy is owned and maintained by Corporate Services Committee.



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Social Media Policy

Date of approval:	9 th October 2017
Date of review:	23 rd August 2017; 3 rd March 2025
Dates of re-approval:	TBC

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Implementation
3. Compliance
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10. Breach
11. Review

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The overriding principle of this policy is to minimise the risks to our business through social media.
- 1.2 This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media, including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+, Wikipedia, Instagram and all other social networking sites, internet postings and blogs. It applies to use of social media for business purposes as well as personal use that may affect our business in any way.
- 1.3 This policy covers all employees, consultants, contractors, casual workers and agency workers.
- 1.4 Councillors – Misuse of social media will be dealt with through Code of Conduct.
- 1.5 This policy does not form any part of an employee's contract of employment, and we may amend it at any time.

2. Implementation

- 2.1 The Corporate Services Committee has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy but has delegated day-to-day responsibility for its operation to the Town Clerk.
- 2.2 Managers have a specific responsibility for operating within the boundaries of this policy, ensuring that all employees understand the standards of behaviour expected of them and taking action when behaviour falls below its requirements.
- 2.3 All employees are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it. Any misuse of social media should be reported to the Town Clerk. Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed to the Head of Corporate Services.

3. Compliance

- 3.1 Social media should never be used in a way that breaches any other Town Council policies. For example, you are prohibited from using social media to:
 - (a) breach the Town Council's IT Policy;
 - (b) breach the Town Council's Disciplinary Policy;
 - (c) harass or bully other staff in any way;
 - (d) sexually harass other staff in any way;
 - (e) unlawfully discriminate against other staff or third parties;
 - (f) breach the Town Council's Data Protection Policy (for example, never disclose personal information about a colleague online);or
 - (g) breach any other laws or regulatory requirements.

- 3.2 Employees should never provide references for other individuals on social or professional networking sites, as such references, positive or negative, can be attributed to the organisation and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and the organisation.
- 3.3 Employees who breach any of the above policies will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
- 3.4 Only employees who have been trained in using social media are permitted to post content to the Council's own social media channels or post content to other people's social networks on behalf of the Council.

4. Personal Use of Social Media

- 4.1 Personal use of social media during working hours should be kept to a minimum and must not involve unprofessional or inappropriate content, does not interfere with your employment responsibilities or productivity and complies with this policy.
- 4.2 Employees are encouraged not to have current Councillors on their personal social networking accounts.

5. Prohibited Use

- 5.1 You must not make any social media communications that could damage our business interests or reputation, even indirectly.
- 5.2 You must not use social media to defame or disparage us, or employees or any third party; to harass, sexually harass, bully or unlawfully discriminate against staff or third parties; to make false or misleading statements; or to impersonate colleagues or third parties.
- 5.3 You must not express opinions on the Town Council's behalf via social media, unless expressly authorised to do so.
- 5.4 You must not post comments about sensitive business-related topics, such as the Town Council's performance, confidential information and intellectual property. You must not include the Town Crest/logo in any social media posting or in your profile on any social media.
- 5.5 You are not permitted to add business contacts made during the course of your employment to personal social networking accounts.
- 5.6 Any misuse of social media should be reported to the Town Clerk.

6. Business Use of Social Media

- 6.1 If your duties require you to speak on behalf of the Town Council in a social media environment, you must still seek approval for such communication from the Town Clerk, who may require you to undergo training before you do so and impose certain requirements and restrictions with regard to your activities.
- 6.2 Likewise, if you are contacted for comments about the Town Council for publication anywhere, including in any social media outlet, direct the enquiry to the Town Clerk do not respond without written approval.
- 6.3 The use of social media for business purposes is subject to the remainder of this policy.

7. Guidelines for Responsible Use of Social Media

- 7.1 You should make it clear in social media postings, or in your personal profile, that you are speaking on your own behalf. Write in the first person and use a personal email address.
- 7.2 Be respectful to others when making any statement on social media and be aware that you are personally responsible for all communications which will be published on the internet for anyone to see.
- 7.3 If you disclose your affiliation with us on your profile or in any social media postings, you must state that your views do not represent those of your employer (unless you are authorised to speak on our behalf as set out in Paragraph 5.3). You should also ensure that your profile and any content you post are consistent with the professional image you present to clients and colleagues.
- 7.4 If you are uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, refrain from posting it until you have discussed it with the Town Clerk.
- 7.5 If you see social media content that disparages or reflects poorly on us, you should contact the Town Clerk.

8. Monitoring

- 8.1 We reserve the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, staff activities using our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, to ensure that our rules are being complied with and for legitimate business purposes and you consent to such monitoring by your use of such resources and systems.
- 8.2 For further information, please refer to the Town Council's IT Policy.

9. Recruitment

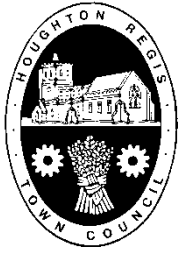
- 9.1 We do not permit the use of internet searches for recruitment purposes.

10. Breach of this policy

- 10.1 Breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Any member of staff suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to co-operate with our investigation, which may require handing over relevant passwords and login details.
- 10.2 You may be required to remove any social media content that we consider to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may in itself result in disciplinary action.

11. Review

- 11.1 Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy and making recommendations for change to minimise risks lies with the Corporate Services Committee who will review this policy every 4 years (or as required).



CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 14

Date:	3rd March 2025
Title:	Holidays and Other Absences Policy update
Purpose of the Report:	To provide to members information to allow for the Holidays and Other Absences Policy to be updated.
Contact Officer:	Debbie Marsh, Head of Corporate Services

1. RECOMMENDATION

To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Town Councils Holidays and Other Absences Policy.

2. BACKGROUND

Members are informed that following an enquiry by a member of staff in regard to the Town Councils Policy on Reservists, the Town Councils Holidays and Other Absences Policy has been revised.

3. INFORMATION

Members will see that this policy was not due to be reviewed until 2027 however, following the recent enquiry, revisions have been made to section 9.5 of the document.

Members are advised that the proposed changes have been agreed by the Town Councils HR provider.

Members will find a track change policy attached, as Appendix A.

4. HRTC CORPORATE PLAN

Aspirations 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

- There are no corporate implications arising from the recommendation.

Legal Implications

- There are no legal implications arising from the recommendation.

Financial Implications

- There are no financial implications arising from the recommendation.

Risk Implications

- Service Delivery - By requesting current and intended Reservists to inform line managers of leave of absences allows the Council to mitigate any impact on service delivery.

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

- There are no press implications.

6. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The revisions in this policy equalises the leave of absence regardless of the employees payscale and thereby does not discriminate and by including a section on requiring employees to inform Line Managers of their intentions to become a Reservist or for those who are already a Reservist, allows for the continuation of service delivery, at times of absence.

The revisions to this policy supports and encourages staff to explore the opportunities in their own personal development.

7. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Holidays and Other Absences Policy – revised.



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

HOLIDAYS AND OTHER ABSENCES

Date of Approval:	19 th June 2023
Dates of Review:	27 th February 2023
Dates of Re approval:	

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3	Holiday entitlement	2
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1 Purpose

- 1.1 This policy aims to outline Houghton Regis Town Councils general rules relating to holidays and absences, other than those due to sickness or injury.
- 1.2 This policy is non-contractual but outlines the way in which Houghton Regis Town Council deal with general holiday and other absences. Houghton Regis Town Council reserves the right to alter, modify, suspend or withdraw this policy at any time. Such changes will be notified to all employees.

2 Scope

This policy applies to all employees and workers, such as those on casual or zero hours contracts. Agency workers must refer to their agency when requesting paid holiday.

3 Holiday entitlement

- 3.1 Full-time employees will receive the full annual holiday entitlement, as specified in their “contracts of employment” with a further three days entitlement after five years of continuous service. Employees become eligible for this additional leave on the first day of the month following the anniversary of their start date. This additional leave is accrued on a pro rata basis at the rate of 1/12th for each whole month up until the following 1st April when the full 3 additional days (as above) will be granted. In addition to the annual leave shown above, employees are entitled to a further 2 statutory days, which can be taken as the same as annual leave. An additional half day (Council Day) is also usually granted on the last working day before Christmas.
- 3.2 Part-time employees, will have an entitlement (including public and bank holidays, the extra 2 statutory days and the Council Day) which is pro-rated, dependent on the number of hours and days they work.

3.3 Employees on fixed-term contracts lasting less than 12 months will have their entitlement pro-rated according to the length of the fixed term during the holiday year.

3.4 Where appropriate, annual leave may be expressed in hours rather than days.

4 Calculating holiday entitlement for employees who work flexible patterns

4.1 Leave is calculated on a pro-rata basis for those employees who work flexible patterns such as part-time and job-share i.e. directly proportional to the hours / days worked. This calculation includes bank and public holidays, the 2 extra statutory days and the Council Day.

4.2 If an employee works less than 37 hours per week but their hours are equally divided over 5 days then their leave entitlement is the same as for a full-time employee. The only difference is that each leave day will be proportionately shorter.

4.3 If an employee works less than 5 days per week but works the same number of hours each day then their leave entitlement will be equal to 1/5th of the full time leave entitlement for each day worked, e.g. an employee who works 21 hours per week – 3 days at 7 hours - then their leave entitlement would be 3/5th of the full time entitlement to the nearest half-day.

4.4 For employees whose work pattern is not equally distributed throughout the week it may be easier to calculate leave entitlement in hours rather than days.

*Part-time employees who work days of varying lengths but who work the same hours each week are entitled to a pro-rata allowance based on 1/37th of the above entitlement for each hour worked per week, e.g. an employee who works 20 hours per week would be entitled to 20 / 37th of the above entitlement.

4.5 For employees who do not work the same hours each week or who are employed on an as-and-when basis it is not possible to calculate a leave entitlement in advance. Leave entitlement for these employees has to be calculated retrospectively. For each hour worked an employee will earn 0.08438 hours leave.

5 Process for booking holiday.

The holiday year runs from 1st April to 31st March each year.

5.1 Holiday entitlement is detailed in the contract of employment.

- 5.2 The entitlement for employees who join or leave during the holiday year will be calculated on a pro rata basis using the total holiday entitlement (including bank and public holidays, the 2 extra statutory days and the Council Day) and according to the number of weeks worked in the holiday year (and hours worked for part time employees).
- 5.3 Houghton Regis Town Council reserves the right to require employees to take up to three annual leave days as necessary, to cover the closure over the Christmas period.
- 5.4 All employees are required, wherever possible, to give at least two weeks' notice of any holiday they wish to take of one week or more and two days of any proposed holiday dates in respect of holidays of less than a week. Failure to do so may result in the holiday request being declined.
- 5.5 Holiday arrangements must be approved by the employees' line manager before any binding commitments are entered into. Holidays are authorised on a "first come, first served" basis ensuring that there is sufficient cover and in order not to prejudice the Town Councils operational requirements.
- 5.6 No more than 2 weeks holiday shall be taken at any time, without prior approval of the Town Clerk in conjunction with the employees' line manager.
- 5.7 Employees should attempt to use their annual leave allocation within the holiday year to which it relates. Employees may carry over up to 5 days annual leave from one year to the next with the approval of the Town Clerk. Payment in lieu will not be made for holiday accrued but not taken during that specific holiday year unless the employment is terminated during that year.
- 5.8 Exceptions to the above may be made if specific consent is given under special circumstances or if the employee is absent from work on long-term sickness absence or family leave (adoption leave, maternity leave or shared parental leave).
- 5.9 Whilst Houghton Regis Town Council will keep records, it is the employee's responsibility to also keep track of the holiday taken in each year.
- 5.10 Annual leave continues to accrue during periods of sickness absence and family leave (as above).
- 5.11 Unpaid authorised absence due to a career break or sabbatical will not qualify for holiday accrual purposes, unless otherwise agreed.

5.12 If an employee joins the Council part way through a leave year, they will be given a proportion of the allowance based on 1/12 for each whole month remaining in the leave year. However, if holiday arrangements have already been made the Council will endeavour to honour them. If employees transfer from the service of another local authority, then their leave entitlement may be transferred.

5.13 Employees who leave employment will be paid for any leave which has accrued but not been taken in that holiday year. However, Houghton Regis Town Council reserves the right to deduct a sum that is equivalent to the salary payment for any leave that has already been taken in excess of the accrued amount.

6 Unpaid leave

6.1 Requests for short periods of unpaid leave will be considered on their merits. The request should be discussed with the employee's manager and, if granted, the Absence Report form should be completed.

6.2 Other than emergency time off to care for a dependant, time off for public duties, or in situations such as bad weather or transport strikes which disrupt normal travel arrangements, unpaid leave will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and normally only when the annual leave entitlement has been exhausted. Entitlement to unpaid leave is at the discretion of each employee's manager. Houghton Regis Town Council reserves the right to refuse a request for unpaid leave and will give reasons for doing so.

7 Religious observance

7.1 Time off for attendance at religious festivals or for the observance of the employee's faith may only be taken by agreement with the employee's manager, who will make every effort to grant a reasonable request.

7.2 Time off may be requested from annual holiday entitlement, or alternatively, time off in lieu, may be granted.

8 Compassionate leave

8.1 Houghton Regis Town Council aims to extend sympathy, compassion and understanding should employees suffer a bereavement. At all times, Houghton Regis Town Council will try to assist employees to come to terms with their loss.

8.2 Application for bereavement leave should be made on the Absence Request Form, after discussing this with a manager.

- 8.3 Houghton Regis Town Council will normally grant up to 5 days' paid leave in the event of the death of an immediate relative. For the purpose of this policy an immediate relative will include a husband, wife, partner, child, or parent, or person standing in loco parentis to the employee or to whom the employee stands in that relation. A family member will include grandparent, aunt, uncle, brother or sister.
- 8.4 Any time off in addition to this should be discussed with the employee's manager. Reasonable unpaid compassionate leave will be granted taking into account such factors as the relationship with the deceased person and the timing and location of the funeral.
- 8.5 Houghton Regis Town Council accepts that sometimes the need to take this leave can arise at very short notice, but request that employees should discuss their requirements with their manager before taking any time off and, in any event, at the earliest opportunity.
- 8.6 All requests for compassionate leave will be dealt with on a confidential basis.

9 Public service leave

- 9.1 Houghton Regis Town Council supports employees who wish to take up public duties. Employees who take up certain public duties as defined below will be entitled to paid time off to carry out these duties, where such duties cannot reasonably be carried out in the employee's own time.
- 9.2 For the purposes of this policy public duties are defined as:
- Jury service
 - Election duties
 - Service in non-regular forces
 - School governor
 - Magistrate
 - Council member (Local Authority)
 - Special Constable or retained firefighter

9.3 Jury Service:

- Any Houghton Regis Town Council employee receiving a summons to serve on a jury should notify the Town Clerk in the first instance.
- The employee will be able to claim an allowance for loss of earnings; this will be reflected in the employee's pay.
- Employees are responsible for keeping the Town Clerk updated and informed at all times.
- If for whatever reason an employee is not required to attend proceedings on a particular day, they are to return back to work as soon as possible.

The Town Clerk is responsible for maintaining a record of leave taken and informing Payroll to ensure appropriate adjustments are made to an employee's pay.

9.4 Election duties:

- Employees who act as presiding officers, poll clerks or counting officers (where the count takes place during normal working hours) are entitled to paid leave.
- Employees should consult the Town Clerk and obtain permission before accepting the appointment, as the needs of the service should not be affected.
- Leave will be given for the hours, which normally would have been worked that day.
- The Town Clerk is responsible for maintaining a record of leave taken.

9.5 Service in non-regular forces

- The Council requests that employees who are current Reservists or who wish to become Reservists inform their line manager as soon as possible that they are, or intend to become, Reservists. This request is to allow the Council to understand the level of Reservist activity within the organisation currently, and in the foreseeable future; allowing us to prepare for any practical implications that may arise.
- Reservists who notify the Council of their current Reservist Status or intention to become a Reservist will not be disadvantaged in any way.
- Employees who are members of the non-regular forces who are required to attend ~~summer-annual~~ camp will receive two weeks' paid leave of absence.
- ~~Two week's leave will be given to those employees who have less than five years local government service or are on spinal column point 22 or below.~~
- ~~One week's leave will be given to those employees who are on spinal column point 23 or above.~~
- Any extra time required should be taken from annual holiday entitlement. To minimise the disruption to the business, this time off should be arranged in

advance. A certificate of attendance must be provided by the employee's Commanding Officer.

- Employees who are members of the ~~Territorial Army Reservists~~ who are required to undertake training in addition to ~~summer-annual~~ camp should arrange for such training to be on days when they would not normally be working.
- If this is not possible then the employee should provide the Town Clerk with alternative dates so that agreement can be reached on when the employee can be absent on paid annual holiday entitlement leave.
- In the event of call-up, the employee's employment will be protected, but such employees will be paid for this period by the MOD. They are entitled to remain a member of the Town Councils Local Government Pension Scheme, and provided that they agree to continue to pay their own contributions, the MOD will pay the employer contributions that Town Council would have made.

10 Other public duties

10.1 Employees who undertake certain public duties (for example, as a Justice of the Peace, Member of a Local Authority (Councillor), Member of a Statutory Tribunal, School Governor, Special Constable or Retained Fire-fighter etc) are entitled to paid leave of up to five days per annum, pro-rata for part-time employees; subject to the following:

- Employees should inform the Town Clerk of their intention to take up public duties before accepting the appointment.
- Employees must request time off in advance and support the request by evidence.
- Employees will not unreasonably be prevented from taking time off to fulfil their public duties but agreement must be reached with the Town Clerk about the timing of their absence to minimise the impact on service delivery.
- There must be no conflict of interest between the employee's work for the Council and their public duties as set out in the Code of Conduct.
- Employees have a responsibility to ensure that undertaking both public duties and their job role at the Council does not breach the statutory rest entitlements as published in the Working Time Regulations (WTR).
- The Town Clerk is able to grant additional time off for public duties at their absolute discretion.

11 Related policies and documents

- Disciplinary policy
- Flexible working policy
- Family friendly policy

The above list is not exhaustive.

12 Further information

Any queries or comments about this policy should be addressed to the Corporate Services Manager.

13 Policy review

This policy will be reviewed by the Corporate Services committee every 4 years or as required.