



Ref: Agenda/Council – 11/04/2023

4th April 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

All Members of the Town Council are hereby summoned to the Council Meeting of Biggleswade Town Council that will take place on **Tuesday 11th April 2023** at the **Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade** commencing at **7:00pm**, for the purpose of considering and recommending the business to be transacted as specified below.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Tarrant".

Peter Tarrant
Town Clerk & Chief Executive

Distribution: All Town Councillors
Notice Boards
The Press

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Statutory Declarations of Interests from Members in relation to:

- a. Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item.
- b. Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item.

3. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

To adjourn for a period of up to 15 minutes to allow members of the public to put questions or to address the Council, through the Chairman, pertaining to matters listed on the Agenda.

Please register in advance for this webinar:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_RXTiAr1qSZGmAzDEuLOuQg

Each Speaker will give their name to the Chairman, prior to speaking, which will be recorded in the minutes, unless that person requests otherwise. Each Speaker will be allowed **(one) three-minute slot**.

5. INVITED SPEAKER

Mr Tom Leeming from Tritax Symmetry to address the Town Council in relation to Stratton Business Park.

6. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

7. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. For Members to receive the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 28th March 2023** at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

8. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 28th March 2023**.

9. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. **Preparation for Annual Statutory Meeting**

For Members to receive and consider a report by the Town Clerk & Chief Executive.

b. **Second Interim Internal Audit Report 2022/2023**

For Members to receive and consider a report from the Town Clerk & Chief Executive.

10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

You can view details of applications and related documentation such as application forms, site plans, drawings, decision notices and other supporting documents for planning applications on the Central Bedfordshire Council website. Click on the hyperlink (electronic copy) on the heading of each planning application listed below.

a. **CB/22/04252/FULL – Land at Springfield Bungalow and Stratton Farm Cottages London Road, Land at Bridleway 58 to the south of Dunton Lane and Land to the south of Stratton Business Park, Gold Road, Biggleswade (Symmetry Park Phase 3)**

For Members to receive and consider the attached correspondence from Tritax Symmetry in relation to previous planning resolutions by this Town Council as set out below.

Previously on Council Agenda 15th December 2022

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council **OBJECTS** to this planning application on the grounds of traffic congestion accessing the A1 roundabout but note that if Officers are minded to pass this application, then Biggleswade Town Council would like to see Section 106 money related specifically to speeding on Stratton Business Park, access to the A1, and in terms of sustainable transport to and from the Town Centre in terms of buses.

Previously on Council Agenda 28th March 2023

The Town Council **OBJECTS** to this planning application on the grounds of:

- Traffic congestion at the A1S roundabout, cumulative from development so far but with another 1,850 houses the east of the town already consented.
- The need for sustainable transport to and from the town centre and nearby housing.
- Over-long queues of traffic at the Pegasus Drive/London Road junction.
- Pedestrian safety on Pegasus Drive.
- The impact on Rights of Way.
- Archaeological and ecological matters as referred to in officer reports.

b. **CB/23/00745/FULL – 12 Wiseman Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8LN**

Loft conversion with two front facing flat roof dormers and roof lights to rear.

c. **CB/22/01990/FULL - Land west of Salcombe Close Biggleswade**

Flatten two existing mounds (south of the S.L.E.A.P. and the mound which includes an existing slide), erect a replacement slide, and install lighting bollards.

Previously on Council Agenda 28th June 2022

Flatten the existing mounds in the play area, install lighting columns and improve the perimeter fence.

The Town Council **RESOLVED** that it **PROVISIONALLY OBJECTS** to this planning application pending provision of the following information:

- Further information is required on the sizing of the mounds and elevations in the play areas.
- The potential effect of the proposed lighting on the exiting neighbours on Sale Mews.
- Information on why the CCTV is not under variations to conditions.

d. **CB/23/00489/FULL - The Red Lion, 1 London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8ED**

Blocking up existing access from London Road and creation of a new vehicular access from The Baulk.

e. **CB/23/00900/FULL - 4 Stoneland Avenue, Biggleswade, SG18 0EA**

Retrospective planning permission for erection of an annex.

f. **CB/22/04410/FULL – 29 Lilac Grove, Biggleswade, SG18 8TP (Planning Appeal)**

Single storey rear extension and installation of solar panels, and new front porch.

Previously on Council Agenda 13th December 2022:

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this planning application provided that the neighbours are consulted and that any comments they may make are considered by CBC in their deliberations.

g. **CB/23/00864/FULL – Biggleswade Baptist Church, 24 London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8EB**

Erection of a wooden shed/workshop and retention of two existing sheds.

11. PLANNING APPLICATION OUTCOMES

- a. A report of the Planning Application Outcomes (by exception applications only) as of **29th March 2023**.

12. ACCOUNTS

- a. **Financial Administration**

March 2023 accounts were not available for this agenda.

13. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- a. None.

14. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

To adjourn for a period of up to 15 minutes to allow members of the public to put questions or to address the Council, through the Chairman, in respect of any other business of the Town Council.

Please register in advance for this webinar:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_RXTiAr1qSZGmAzDEuLOuQg

Each Speaker will give their name to the Chairman prior to speaking, which will be recorded in the minutes unless that person requests otherwise. Each Speaker will be allowed **(one) three-minute slot**.

15. EXEMPT ITEMS

The following resolution will be **moved** that is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are excluded whilst the following exempt item issue is discussed.

(16a. Commissioning of Utilities)

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Council **resolve** to exclude the public and press by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.

16. EXEMPT ITEMS

a. Commissioning of Utilities

For Members to receive and consider a report by the Town Clerk & Chief Executive.



MINUTES OF THE BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 28TH MARCH 2023
AT 7.00PM AT BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES
THE OLD COURT HOUSE, 4 SAFFRON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE, SG18 8DL

PRESENT:

Cllr G Fage (Chairman)
Cllr M Russell (Deputy Chairman)
Cllr D Albone
Cllr F Foster
Cllr M Foster
Cllr M Knight
Cllr R Pullinger
Cllr H Ramsay
Cllr D Strachan
Cllr C Thomas

Mr P Tarrant – Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Mr K Hosseini – Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships
Ms F Gumush – Meetings Administrator

Members of the Public – 1

Meeting Formalities:

Following a reminder to meeting attendees that this is a formal meeting, the Mayor advised that members of the public will be given an opportunity to speak during public open session but not at other times. The meeting is being filmed and by being present attendees are deemed to have agreed to be filmed and to the use of those images and sound recordings. The Mayor advised that attendees should not disclose any personal information of individuals as this would infringe the Data Protection Rights of that individual.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr I Bond, Cllr M North, Cllr J Woodhead.

NO APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr K Brown, Cllr L Fage.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a. Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:

None.

b. Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:

None.

3. **TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

a. **Commonwealth War Graves Service**

On Friday 17th March, Cllr G Fage attended the official unveiling of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Plaques at Drove Road Cemetery. The plaques were placed to commemorate the 19 Commonwealth servicemen buried at Drove Road Cemetery who passed away in the First and Second World Wars. Cllr Fage noted that the ceremony was well attended by the Legion, Air and Sea Cadets and Councillors.

b. **Mr Desmond Ball**

Cllr G Fage announced the sad passing of Mr Desmond Ball. Mr Ball served the Town well by working with Community and voluntary groups and organisations such as first aiders and sports clubs. Cllr G Fage noted that Mr Ball also maintained the railway bank at the top of Lawrence Road and suggested that the Council take over the maintenance of this bank as a tribute to Mr Ball. Members paused for a few moments to remember Mr Ball.

c. **Town Council Annual Assembly**

Cllr G Fage reminded Members of the upcoming Town Council Annual Assembly to be held on Tuesday 18th April 2023. Cllr G Fage noted that Committee Chairmen would need to submit their reports to Officers by 4th April 2023.

4. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No member of the public wished to speak.

5. **INVITED SPEAKER**

Mr Mike Wells, Northill Parish Resident.

Mr Wells who addressed the Council explained about the difficulties being experienced with crossing the A1 to Biggleswade, especially from Northill. He noted that in October Northill voted for an underpass to be built.

Mr Wells explained that he had met with local MP Richard Fuller and explained the details of the matter and the outcome of Central Bedfordshire Council's Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) which said that respondents wanted to get across the A1 in a safe and sustainable way and that an underpass was the best way forward. Mr Wells asked for support from the Town Council.

Members **RESOLVED** to fully support the initiative of an underpass in line with Footpath 7, on the east side into Bells Brook as well as all the work that is being done with this initiative. The resolution to be shared with the honourable Richard Fuller MP and Central Bedfordshire Council.

6. **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

There were no Members' questions.

7. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

a. No amendments were made to the Town Council minutes.

The Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 14 March 2023.

- b. Members **NOTED** the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 17th January 2023.

8. **MATTERS ARISING**

Cllr Albane inquired about the status of the Commemorative Plaques, Benches & Memorials Policy and whether an informal meeting was held with regards to this.

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships responded that the informed meeting had not yet taken place; however, amendments have been made to the policy with a possible meeting in the coming week.

Cllr Albane also asked if any updates were available regarding the Franklins Recreation Ground vandalism.

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships indicated that the security company had advised the Council of further incursions. When approached by the security guard and warned, the intruders moved on.

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships noted that a police crime reference number was being generated and camera footage revealed intruders to be teenagers.

9. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **General Insurance Renewal Update Report**

Members discussed the report presented by the Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships.

Officers met with the BHIB broker in early March. The Broker is the largest Council provider of insurance in England and Wales. The Policy was reviewed and slightly amended to increase the fidelity guarantee. The Broker highlighted that due to a challenging market and current high inflation rates they were only able to source one quote which was the Town Council's current insurance provider.

Members **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation to suspend Section 17.2 of the Financial Regulations which states:

"The Council may, by resolution of the Council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of Council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all Members of Council."

Members also **RESOLVED** to renew the insurance policy for 3 years with the current provider. No virement was now required.

b. **Bike Hire Proposal Report**

Members discussed the report regarding the bike hire proposal and noted that Central Bedfordshire Council are proposing to install bicycle racks closer to the main road and car park entrance rather than within Dan Albane car park. They also propose using Grasmere Road/Lincoln Crescent.

Members indicated that more detailed information was needed from CBC as to which areas they intend on using for bike racks and what the impact of these would be. Members observed that the location of Grasmere Road/Lincoln Crescent was an issue due to flooding and this would need to be brought to the attention of CBC.

Members **RESOLVED** to **DEFER** the report until a more detailed rationale from CBC was given to the issues and concerns highlighted.

c. **Drove Road Chapel Update Report**

The Town Clerk & Chief Executive updated Members with regard to current restoration works at Drove Road Chapel noting that good progress had been made.

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive indicated that once the scaffolding had been erected and the top of the building was viewable some additional works were deemed essential and these were outside of the original scoping exercise, this included repointing and stone masonry. It was essential that this work be carried out whilst the scaffolding was up and any other non-essential work not requiring scaffolding delayed until year 2.

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive pointed out that these additional works amounted to an additional £15,000 after taking into consideration the Ward Councillors grant from Cllr I Bond.

Members **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation to draw down £15,000 from the year one PWLB underspend.

Members also **AGREED** that Council would receive a regular written report from the external Project Manager consistent with Officer recommendations.

d. **Play Streets Proposal Report**

Members discussed the proposal which looked to introduce play streets in Biggleswade.

Members supported the ambition but **RESOLVED** to **REJECT** this proposal on the basis of:

- Safety to children.
- Possible damage to cars and vehicles.
- Potentially teaching young children bad habits.
- Experience suggests that drivers ignore volunteers who are charged with managing road closures.

Members called for Officers to write back to CBC and propose that CBC encourage organise opportunities for children to play in much safer areas of Biggleswade such as the many green spaces and playgrounds.

10. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

a. **CB/23/00744/FULL - 2 Holme Crescent, Biggleswade, SG18 8DA**

The Town Council **OBJECTS** to this planning application on the grounds of overdevelopment.

b. **CB/23/00010/FULL - 11 Arnold Rise, Biggleswade, SG18 8UF**

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.

c. **CB/22/04808/FULL - 14 Simpson Lane, Biggleswade, SG18 8YF**

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.

d. **CB/23/00868/FULL - 107 London Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8EE**

The Town Council has **NO OBJECTION** to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.

e. **CB/22/04252/FULL - Land at Springfield Bungalow and Stratton Farm Cottages London Road, Land at bridleway 58 to the south of Dunton Lane and Land to the south of Stratton Business Park Gold Road Biggleswade SG18 8UZ**

The Town Council **OBJECTS** to this planning application on the grounds of:

- Traffic congestion at the A1S roundabout, cumulative from development so far but with another 1,850 houses the east of the town already consented.
- The need for sustainable transport to and from the town centre and nearby housing.
- Over-long queues of traffic at the Pegasus Drive/London Road junction.
- Pedestrian safety on Pegasus Drive.
- The impact on Rights of Way.
- Archaeological and ecological matters as referred to in officer report.

f. **PLANNING APPLICATION OUTCOMES**

This report was **NOTED**.

g. **ACCOUNTS**

a. **Financial Administration**

March 2023 accounts were not available for this agenda.

13. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **CCTV Update Report**

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships who presented the report noted that Officers held a meeting with CBC Officers and reiterated the points raised in the initial letter response from CBC.

It was underlined that CBC will not consider the novation of the line earlier than mid-May. Officers had contacted BT Open Reach to ask them about the timeline for a new fibre line installation, and this would be approximately 6 weeks.

Members **NOTED** the report.

14. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No one from the public wished to speak.

15. **EXEMPT**

a. **Energy Broker Update Report**

Members **RESOLVED** to **DEFER** the matter until Officer-derived quotes had been completed. It was suggested that ideally quotes valid between 5-10 days would yield the best results.

b. **Risk Management Update Report**

The Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships noted that Officers have been implementing the new framework across the business and updating risk mitigations as per the existing External Auditor's recommendation.

Members **AGREED** to adopt the Framework and Approach with the expectation that populated documents would be shared with Members at the Finance & General Purposes Committee and Full Council.

Recorded Vote

Consistent with Paragraph 10 of the Town Councils Standing Orders, Cllr M Russell (Deputy Mayor), wished her vote against Officers recommendations to be formally recorded in the minutes. The remaining Members voted in support of the proposals.

c. **Telephony Convergence Contracts Update Report**

Members discussed the report which was presented at the recent Finance & General Purposes Committee and agreed that there was not enough clarity and comparison between telephony providers.

Members **AGREED** for officers to review the telephony quotes presented and provide a detailed breakdown of equipment and how it was used. Members also agreed that recommendations should entail how Officers and Councillors will benefit from the recommendation to be put forward.

The Mayor closed the meeting at **8.40pm**

BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL
Report to Full Council Meeting
11th April 2023
Preparation for Annual Statutory Meeting

Implications of Recommendations:

Corporate Strategy: GOVERNANCE: Ensure that the Town Council continues to operate within legislation, regulation, ethical guidelines and best practice.

Finance: Not applicable.

Equality: Not applicable.

Environment: Not applicable.

Community Safety: Not applicable.

Background

It is accepted good practice for Town Councils to have reviewed certain key policies prior to the Annual Statutory Meeting of Council and to have either amended or re-adopted them.

In addition, Internal and External Audit will want to satisfy themselves that these documents have been recently considered as well as adhered to. In recognition of this, the Town Council agreed that a small Member/Officer Working Group be set up.

The Working Group consisted of the following Members:

Cllr G Fage, Cllr M Russell, Cllr R Pullinger, Cllr M Knight, and Cllr M North.

The key documents include:

1. The General Powers of Competence
2. Risk Management Protocol
3. Scheme of Delegation
4. Standing Orders
5. Financial Regulations
6. Member/Officer Protocol

General Powers of Competence: The General Powers of Competence Statement was properly adopted by Council on 10th January 2023. It needs to be further adopted at the Annual Statutory Meeting.

Risk Management Protocol: The Risk Management Protocol was adopted by Council on 28th March 2023. A separate Policy will also be shared with Council shortly.

Scheme of Delegation: The Scheme of Delegation has been amended by the Working Group. Both the original and tracked changes documents are attached as appendices A and B for Members' consideration.

Standing Orders: The Standing Orders were also considered by the Working Group. It was not considered appropriate to recommend any changes at this juncture. As much as they were readopted in September 2022, it is considered wise to readopt them again to evidence that consideration has been given and to ask the new Council to consider any more fundamental change in September 2023. The current unamended copy is attached as appendix C.

Financial Regulations: The Financial Regulations have been amended by the Working Group. Both the original and tracked changes document is attached as appendices D and E for Members consideration.

Member/Officer Protocol: The Member/Officer Protocol was properly adopted by Council in June 2022. No further amendments are recommended at this juncture.

Member Induction Pack/Training: All of these documents will be shared as part of the Member Induction Pack and Members will be briefed on their use and interpretation as part of the mandatory formal training offer being commissioned from by the Council from Bedfordshire Association of Town and Parish Councils (BATPC).

Internal and External Audit: The documentation will also be shared with Internal and External Audit and be used as evidence for the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR). The Local Audit & Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015 set out the responsibilities of all local councils in respect of their accounting and auditing procedures.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that Members adopt the revised Scheme of Delegation, existing Standing Orders and revised Financial Regulations.

It is further recommended that Members note the Town Council's intention to revisit the Standing Orders and produce a Risk Management Policy.

Peter Tarrant
Clerk & Chief Executive

Appendices:

Appendix A: Scheme of Delegation (original)

Appendix B: Scheme of Delegation (revised with tracked changes)

Appendix C: Standing Orders (original)

Appendix D: Financial Regulations (original)

Appendix E: Financial Regulations (revised with tracked changes)

Scheme of Delegations & Terms of Reference

Biggleswade Town Council



Scheme of Delegations

FUNCTIONS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEES

1. DELEGATED POWERS - TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Members will be advised by the Town Clerk whether a particular item under discussion is within the Committee's delegated powers, if so then the minutes will then record the decision as "**Resolved**".

If the matter is not within the Committee's delegated powers, then the minutes will show the decision as "**Recommended**", and the matter will then be brought to the Council's particular attention by the Chairman of the Committee at the next meeting of the Council. This item can be discussed in full by the Town Council. In any case where a Committee Chairman and Vice Chairman is either unsure whether or not any matter falls within delegated powers, or whether or not any matter should be determined by them, they should refer that matter to the next highest level of decision. A Committees delegated power need not always be exercised.

It is Unlawful to delegate powers to Committee Chairs, Vice Chairs.

Town Council (15)

Public Lands and Open Spaces (10)

Town Centre Management (10)

Finance and General Purposes Committee (9)

Personnel (10)

Appeals (5)

2. Town Council

The Town Council has full authority and its responsibilities include:

- Resolving actions incurring expenditure within its budget.
- Prepare estimates of expenditure in December for the forthcoming financial year.
- To conduct a half yearly appraisal of the budgets based on September figures.
- To receive estimates of expenditure in December for the forthcoming financial year from other Committees of the Council, to set a recommendation for the Precept for approval at the January Council meeting.
- To request the agreed Precept amount from Central Bedfordshire Council, or their successors.
- To review and monitor annually, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Terms of Reference for Committees and Guidelines for Chairmanship.
- To review the internal audit procedures annually and to appoint an Internal Auditor.
- To form Sub-Committees as required.
- To elect members to outside bodies.
- To approve and monitor all tenders and contracts, after review by other Committees as relevant.
- To do anything calculated to facilitate or conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions. (LGA 1972, s 111).
- To manage policy with regard to promotion and publicity of the Council.
- To consider all planning applications on their merit and to make comment and pass resolutions in respect of these.
- When considering planning applications, to take the statements of the adopted Master Plan and Town Plan into consideration.
- To respond to Central Beds Council on all planning applications within the set timescales.
- To appoint Members or instruct officers to attend Central Beds Councils Development Control meetings to make representations on behalf of the Council where necessary.
- To request a Central Beds Council, Councillor to call in applications to be referred to the Central Beds Council's Development Control Committee for consideration.
- To monitor Central Beds Council policies and Plans that could affect the town.
- To consider all planning issues which have relevance to the Town of Biggleswade and its inhabitants and to make recommendations thereon.
- To monitor proposals from developers under Section 106 Agreements.
- To monitor and control office procedures, office facilities and equipment.
- To keep minutes.

Other responsibilities:

- Control and development repairs, maintenance, and continued improvement to the Town Hall.
- Health and Safety – to ensure compliance with all health and safety.
- Fire precautions – to ensure measures are in place to deal with fire.
- Recycling.
- Liaising with the Unitary Authority on matters pertaining to the Council.
- Liaising with the police and other outside bodies on matters pertain to the Council.

3. Public Land and Open Spaces

The Committee has delegated authority to make decisions and deal with matters listed below, only where sufficient budgetary provision exists or can be vired from within the approved budget of the Committee.

Capital projects are referred to the Town Council as an application to access the rolling capital fund.

The Committee may decide not to exercise its delegated power and may instead make recommendations to Council.

The Committee is required to submit a list of resolutions and recommendations to the next available meeting of the Council.

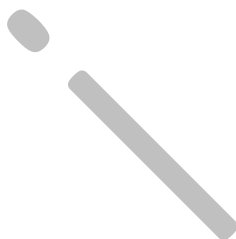
Responsible for the control and development repairs, maintenance, continued improvements to:

- All Council play areas, equipment, buildings, fences, hiring of and the leases relating to.
- All Council Sports areas, equipment, buildings, fences, hiring of and the leases relating to.
- All Council Recreation areas, equipment, buildings, fences, hiring of and the leases relating to.
- Council Allotments, tenancy agreements, rents, infrastructure and wildflower meadow and the lease relating to.
- All Council flower beds, hanging baskets and planters.
- Council work depots and the lease relating to.
- All vehicles, equipment and tools.
- All trees, hedges, bushes and shrubs under the Council's control.
- Cleanliness of sites – litter collection.
- All seats, benches, litter bins and dog bins under the Council's control.
- River and river banks under the Council's control.
- Negotiations for commuted land, equipment and maintenance monies.
- All buildings, equipment, fences, walls.
- Cemetery Chapel and the hiring of.
- Pathways, walkways and road ways.
- Trees, hedges and shrubs.
- Memorials, interments and the rules and regulations relating to.
- To ensure by regular inspection the stability of memorials.
- The grounds of St Andrews Church, flowers beds, grass and trees (under the Central Bedfordshire Council contract pertaining to).

Other responsibilities:

- 106 Monies that fall within the committee's areas of responsibility.
- Commuted sums that fall within the committee's areas of responsibility.
- Health and Safety – to ensure compliance with health and safety.
- Fire precautions – to ensure measures are in place to deal with fire.
- Chemical weeding in the areas under the Committees control.

- Recycling for areas under the Committees control.
- Liaising with the Unitary Authority on matters pertaining to the Committee.
- Liaising with the police and other outside bodies on matters pertain to the Committee.



4. Town Centre Management

The Committee has delegated authority to make decisions and deal with matters listed below, only where sufficient budgetary provision exists or can be vired from within the approved budget of the committee.

Capital projects are referred to the Town Council as an application to access the rolling capital fund.

The Committee may decide not to exercise its delegated power and may instead make recommendations to Council.

The Committee is required to submit a list of resolutions and recommendations to the of the Council.

Responsible for the control and development repairs, maintenance, continued improvements to:

- All Council owned car parks and the hiring of.
- All Council leased car parks, hiring of and the leases relating to.
- All Street lights under the Councils control.
- All Markets under the Councils control.
- All Market equipment under the Councils control.
- Public Toilets under the Committees control.
- CCTV cameras under the Councils control, and contracts relating to.
- Street furniture in the Town Centre.
- Biggleswade War Memorial.
- Trees in the Town Centre.
- Consultation and expenditure on Christmas Lighting.
- Consultation on Parking strategy, improvements and developments.
- Chemical weeding in the Town Centre and areas under the Committees control.
- All salt bins under the Councils control.
- Cleanliness of sites – litter collection.

Other responsibilities:

- Health and Safety – to ensure compliance with health and safety.
- Recycling in areas under the Committees control.
- Liaising with the Unitary Authority on matters pertaining to the Committee.
- Liaising with the police and other outside bodies on matters pertain to the Committee.
- 106 Monies that fall within the committee's areas of responsibility.
- Commuted sums that fall within the committee's areas of responsibility.

5. Finance and General Purposes

The Finance Committee has delegated authority to deal with matters listed below.

The Committee may decide not to exercise its delegated power and may instead make recommendations to Council.

The Committee is required to submit a list of resolutions and recommendations to the next available meeting of the Council.

Specific duties:

- To prepare Budgets and precepts and submit them to Council for approval.
- To ensure adequate financial controls are in place to utilise and protect the Councils finances and assets – to include insurance of Buildings, property and maintenance of asset register.
- To review and amend Councils Financial Regulations annually.
- To monitor and effect compliance with laid down internal and external audit and other financial procedures, regulations and statutes.
- To monitor facilities, equipment and where appropriate purchase of capital items.
- To make provision for future agreed capital projects.
- To monitor the Councils financial risk assessments and changes where necessary.
- To establish and effect a clear policy for grant aid administration.
- To review other Committees annual spending and budget levels.
- To monitor Councils income and expenditure quarterly.

Other responsibilities:

- To ensure reserves are being managed in line with Council policy.
- To oversee loans, leases, property and vehicle insurance, mortgages and debt recovery.
- To ensure Financial procedures are being carried out in accordance with Financial Regulations.
- To be responsible for dealing with requests for virements.

6. Personnel

The Committee has delegated authority to deal with matters listed below, only where sufficient budgetary provision exists or can be vired from within the approved budget of the committee. The Committee may decide not to exercise its delegated power and may instead make recommendations to Council.

The Committee is required to submit a list of resolutions and recommendations to the next available meeting of the Council.

Responsible for the control, development and continued improvements to:

- Recruitment, Selection and the policies, procedures and contracts relating to.
- Training, Development and the policies and procedures relating to.
- Appraisal, to ensure accurate assessments of performance is carried out.
- Absence Management and the policies and procedures relating to.
- Disciplinary, Grievance and the policies and procedures relating to.
- Maternity, Paternity and the policies and procedures relating to.
- Equal Opportunities and the policies and procedures relating to.
- Recommend policy change within their area of responsibility.

Other responsibilities:

- Health and Safety – to ensure compliance with health and safety.
- Ensuring individual work records are maintained.
- Liaising with the Unitary Authority on matters pertaining to the Committee.
- Liaising with the police and other outside bodies on matters pertaining to the Committee.

7. Appeals

Responsibilities – To Consider Evidence or Gather Further Evidence.

The Committee has delegated authority to deal with matters listed below.

The Committee may decide not to exercise its delegated power and may instead make recommendations to Council.

The Committee is required to submit a list of resolutions and recommendations to the next available meeting of the Council.

Responsible for:

- Considering and deciding whether individual appeals have established grounds for appeal according to the disciplinary or grievance procedures.
- To gather further evidence at appeal committee hearings and to decide, on the basis of that information, whether an appeal should be upheld or rejected.

Other responsibilities:

- Liaising with the Unitary Authority on matters pertaining to the Committee.
- Liaising with the police and other outside bodies on matters pertaining to the Committee.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES DELEGATED TO TOWN COUNCIL OFFICERS

Proper Officer the Town Clerk is designated and authorised to act as Proper Officer for the purposes of all relevant sections of the Local Government Act 1972 and any other statute requiring the designation of a Proper Officer or Responsible Financial Officer.

General Matters the Town Clerk is authorised:

1. to sign on behalf of the Council any document necessary to give effect to any decision of the Council.
2. to take any proceedings or other steps as may be necessary to enforce and recover any debt owing or other obligation due to the Council.
3. to institute, defend and appear in any legal proceedings authorised by the Council.
4. to appear or make representation to any tribunal or public inquiry into any matter in which the Council has an interest (in its own right or on behalf of the residents of Biggleswade).
5. to alter the date or time of a Council/committee meeting but, before doing so, shall consult with the relevant Chairman about the need for the change and about convenient alternative dates and times.
6. to decide arrangements for the closure of the Council offices in the Christmas/ New Year period, subject to consultation with the Mayor.
7. to manage the Council's facilities and assets, including allotments, open spaces, amenity areas, cemetery, and any other buildings and assets.
8. to act as the Council's designated officer for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
9. to act as the Council's proper officer as per Section 281 Local Government Act 1972.

Financial Matters the Town Clerk is authorised as follows:

1. To incur expenditure up to the amount specified in the financial regulations. on any item for which provision is made in the appropriate revenue budget provided that any action taken complies with any legislative provisions and the requirements of the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
2. To use the repairs and maintenance budgets for the maintenance, or repair of existing plant, vehicles or equipment.
3. To accept quotations or tenders (where tenders are required by the Council's Financial Regulations) for work supplies or services subject to:
 - a. the cost not exceeding the amount of the approved budget.
 - b. the tender being the lowest or the one showing best added value to the Council according to the criteria set out in the tender documentation.

- c. all the requirements of the Council's Financial Regulations being complied with.
4. To compile, approve or vary lists of approved contractors subject to the requirements of the Council's Financial Regulations.
5. Having consulted with the Council, to invest monies held by the Council with a view to obtaining the optimum financial return.

Staffing Matters

The Town Clerk is given delegated powers to manage the Council staff in accordance with the Council's policies, procedures and budget.

Property Matters

The Town Clerk is given authority to manage the land and property of the Council including:

1. agreeing the terms of any lease, licence, conveyance or transfer approved by Council, authorised to be signed by the Mayor or Deputy Mayor.
2. the granting or refusal of the Council's consent under the terms of any lease variations of restrictive covenants of a routine nature.
3. the granting of easements, wayleaves and licenses over Council Land approved by the Council.
4. initiating legal action or proceedings against unauthorised encampments on Council land.
5. hiring of open spaces for activities that benefit the residents of Biggleswade.

Urgency

The Town Clerk is authorised to act on behalf of the Council in cases of urgency or emergency. Any such action is to be reported to the next meeting of the Council or relevant committee or sub-committee. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Chairman of the relevant committee are to be consulted before such action is taken.

The Town Clerk may decide not to exercise his delegated power and may instead make recommendations to Council or the relevant Committee.

Scheme of Delegations & Terms of Reference

Biggleswade Town Council



Scheme of Delegations

Town Clerk/Policies

Reviewed
Adopted

27th January 2023
tbc

FUNCTIONS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEES

1. DELEGATED POWERS - TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Members will be advised by the Town Clerk whether a particular item under discussion is within the Committee's delegated powers, if so the minutes will then record the decision as "**Resolved**".

If the matter is not within the Committee's delegated powers, then the minutes will show the decision as "**Recommended**" and the matter will then be brought to the Council's particular attention by the Chairman of the Committee at the next meeting of the Council. This item can be discussed in full by the Town Council. In any case where a Committee Chairman and Vice Chairman is either unsure whether a matter falls within delegated powers, or whether a matter should be determined by them, they should refer that matter to the next highest level of decision. A Committee's delegated power need not always be exercised.

It is Unlawful to delegate powers to Committee Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen. The standing committees are:

Public Lands and Open Spaces

Town Centre Management

Finance and General Purposes Committee

Personnel

Appeals

2. **Town Council**

The Town Council has full authority and its responsibilities include:

- Resolving actions incurring expenditure within its budget.
- Prepare estimates of expenditure in December for the forthcoming financial year.
- To conduct a half yearly appraisal of the budgets based on September figures.
- To receive estimates of expenditure in December for the forthcoming financial year from other Committees of the Council, to set a recommendation for the Precept for approval at the January Council meeting.
- To request the agreed Precept amount from Central Bedfordshire Council, or their successors.
- To review and monitor annually, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Terms of Reference for Committees and Guidelines for Chairmanship.
- To review the internal audit procedures annually and to appoint an Internal Auditor.
- To form Sub-Committees as required.
- To elect members to outside bodies.
- To approve and monitor all tenders and contracts, after review by other Committees as relevant.
- To approve both the amount and purpose of a Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) funding prior to committing any expenditure. Council re-approval shall be re-obtained if the Council is not contractually committed to PWLB expenditure within 6 months. For PWLB expenditure, the Financial Regulations in relation to delegation of authority to Sub-Committees or Officers shall not apply.
- To do anything calculated to facilitate or conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions. (LGA 1972, s 111).
- To make provision for future agreed capital projects.
- To manage policy with regard to promotion and publicity of the Council.
- To consider all planning applications on their merit and to make comment and pass resolutions in respect of these.
- When considering planning applications, to take the statements of the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) adopted Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plan and Town Centre Masterplan into consideration.
- To respond to Central Beds Council on all planning applications within the set timescales.
- To appoint Members or instruct ~~e~~Officers to attend Central Beds Councils Development Control meetings to make representations on behalf of the Council where necessary.
- To request a Central Beds Council, Councillor to call in applications to be referred to the Central Beds Council's Development Control Committee for consideration.
- To monitor Central Beds Council policies and Plans that could affect the town.
- To consider all planning issues which have relevance to the Town of Biggleswade and its inhabitants and to make recommendations thereon.
- To monitor proposals from developers under Section 106 Agreements.
- To monitor and control office procedures, office facilities and equipment.
- To keep minutes.
- Control and development repairs, maintenance, and continued improvement to the Town Hall.
- Health and Safety – to ensure compliance with all health and safety.
- Fire precautions – to ensure measures are in place to deal with fire.
- Recycling.
- Liaising with the Unitary Authority on matters pertaining to the Council.

Town Clerk/Policies

Reviewed
Adopted

27th January 2023
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- Liaising with the police and other outside bodies on matters pertain to the Council.

3. **Public Land and Open Spaces**

The Committee has delegated authority to make decisions and deal with matters listed below, only where sufficient budgetary provision exists or can be vired from within the approved budget of the Committee.

Capital projects are referred to the Town Council as an application to access the capital fund.

The Committee may decide not to exercise its delegated power and may instead make recommendations to Council.

The Committee is required to submit a list of resolutions and recommendations to the next available meeting of the Council.

Responsible for the control and development, repairs, maintenance, continued improvements to:

- All Council play areas, equipment, buildings, fences, hiring of and the leases relating to.
- All Council Sports areas, equipment, buildings, fences, hiring of and the leases relating to.
- All Council Recreation areas, equipment, buildings, fences, hiring of and the leases relating to.
- Council Allotments, tenancy agreements, rents, infrastructure and wildflower meadow and the lease relating to.
- All Council flower beds, hanging baskets and planters.
- Council work depots and the lease relating to.
- All vehicles, equipment and tools.
- All trees, hedges, bushes and shrubs under the Council's control.
- Cleanliness of sites – litter collection.
- All seats, benches, litter bins and dog bins under the Council's control.
- River and river banks under the Council's control.
- Negotiations for commuted land, equipment and maintenance monies.
- All buildings, equipment, fences, walls.
- Cemetery Chapel and the hiring of.
- Pathways, walkways and road ways.
- Trees, hedges and shrubs.
- Memorials, interments and the rules and regulations relating to.
- To ensure by regular inspection the stability of memorials.
- The grounds of St Andrews Church, flowers beds, grass and trees (under the Central Bedfordshire Council contract pertaining to).
- To make provision for future agreed capital projects.
- Section 106 Monies that fall within the committee's areas of responsibility.
- Commuted sums that fall within the committee's areas of responsibility.
- Health and Safety – to ensure compliance with health and safety.
- Fire precautions – to ensure measures are in place to deal with fire.

Town Clerk/Policies

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27th January 2023
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- Chemical weeding in the areas under the Committees control.

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Town Clerk/Policies

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Adopted

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tbc

- Recycling for areas under the Committees control.
- Liaising with the Unitary Authority on matters pertaining to the Committee.
- Liaising with the police and other outside bodies on matters pertain to the Committee.

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Town Clerk/Policies

Reviewed
Adopted

27th January 2023
tbc

4. **Town Centre Management**

The Committee has delegated authority to make decisions and deal with matters listed below, only where sufficient budgetary provision exists or can be vired from within the approved budget of the committee.

Capital projects are referred to the Town Council as an application to access the rolling capital fund.

The Committee may decide not to exercise its delegated power and may instead make recommendations to Council.

The Committee is required to submit a list of resolutions and recommendations to the of the Council.

Responsible for the control and development repairs, maintenance, continued improvements to:

- All Council owned car parks, parking charges and permits.
- All Council leased car parks, hiring of and the leases relating to.
- All Street lights under the Councils control.
- All Markets under the Councils control.
- All Market equipment under the Councils control.
- Public Toilets under the Councils control.
- CCTV cameras under the Council's control, and contracts relating to.
- Street furniture in the Town Centre.
- Biggleswade War Memorial.
- Trees in the Town Centre.
- Consultation and expenditure on Christmas Lighting.
- Consultation on Parking strategy, improvements and developments.
- Chemical weeding in the Town Centre and areas under the Committees control.
- All salt bins under the Councils control.
- Cleanliness of sites – litter collection.
- Health and Safety – to ensure compliance with health and safety.
- Recycling in areas under the Committees control.
- Liaising with the Unitary Authority on matters pertaining to the Committee.
- Liaising with the police and other outside bodies on matters pertain to the Committee.
- To make provision for future agreed capital projects.
- [Section 106](#) Monies that fall within the committee's areas of responsibility.
- Commuted sums that fall within the committee's areas of responsibility.
- [All directly led Town Centre events.](#)

5. **Finance and General Purposes**

The Finance Committee has delegated authority to deal with matters listed below.

The Committee may decide not to exercise its delegated power and may instead make recommendations to Council.

The Committee is required to submit a list of resolutions and recommendations to the next available meeting of the Council.

Specific duties:

- To prepare Budgets and precepts and submit them to Council for approval.
- To ensure adequate financial controls are in place to utilise and protect the Council's finances and assets – to include insurance of Buildings, property and maintenance of asset register.
- To review and amend Council's Financial Regulations annually.
- To monitor and effect compliance with laid down internal and external audit and other financial procedures, regulations and statutes.
- To monitor facilities, equipment and where appropriate purchase of capital items.
- To make provision for future agreed capital projects.
- To monitor the Council's financial risk assessments and changes where necessary.
- To establish and effect a clear policy for grant aid administration.
- To award grants within budget where each individual grant is no more than £2000
- To review other Committees annual spending and budget levels.
- To monitor Council's income and expenditure quarterly.
- To ensure reserves are being managed in line with Council policy.
- To oversee loans (including Public Works Loan Board), leases, property and vehicle insurance, mortgages and debt recovery.
- To ensure financial procedures are being carried out in accordance with Financial Regulations.
- To be responsible for dealing with requests for variations.
- To oversee the management of the Orchard Community Centre.

6. **Personnel**

The Committee has delegated authority to deal with matters listed below, only where sufficient budgetary provision exists or can be vired from within the approved budget of the Ccommittee. The Committee may decide not to exercise its delegated power and may instead make recommendations to Council.

The Committee is required to submit a list of resolutions and recommendations to the next available meeting of the Council.

Responsible for the control, development and continued improvements to all HR policies and procedures relating to:

- Recruitment, Selection and the policies, procedures and contracts relating to.
- Training, Development and the policies and procedures relating to.
- Appraisal, to ensure accurate assessments of performance is carried out.
- Absence Management and the policies and procedures relating to.
- Disciplinary, Grievance and the policies and procedures relating to.
- Maternity, Paternity and the policies and procedures relating to.
- Equal Opportunities and the policies and procedures relating to.
- Recommend policy change within their area of responsibility.
- Health and Safety – to ensure compliance with health and safety.
- Ensuring individual work records are maintained.
- Liaising with the Unitary Authority on matters pertaining to the Committee.
- Liaising with the police and other outside bodies on matters pertaining to the Committee.

7. **Appeals**

Responsibilities – To Consider Evidence or Gather Further Evidence.

The Committee has delegated authority to deal with matters listed below.

The Committee may decide not to exercise its delegated power and may instead make recommendations to Council.

The Committee is required to submit a list of resolutions and recommendations to the next available meeting of the Council.

Responsible for:

- Considering and deciding whether individual appeals have established grounds for appeal according to the disciplinary or grievance procedures.
- To gather further evidence at appeal committee hearings and to decide, on the basis of that information, whether an appeal should be upheld or rejected.
- Liaising with the Unitary Authority on matters pertaining to the Committee.
- Liaising with the police and other outside bodies on matters pertaining to the Committee.

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8. RESPONSIBILITIES DELEGATED TO TOWN COUNCIL OFFICERS

Proper Officer

The Town Clerk is designated and authorised to act as Proper Officer for the purposes of all relevant sections of the Local Government Act 1972 and any other statute requiring the designation of a Proper Officer or Responsible Financial Officer.

General Matters the Town Clerk is authorised:

1. to sign on behalf of the Council any document necessary to give effect to any decision of the Council.
2. to take any proceedings or other steps as may be necessary to enforce and recover any debt owing or other obligation due to the Council limited to small claims.
3. to institute, defend and appear in any legal proceedings authorised by the Council.
4. to appear or make representation to any tribunal or public inquiry into any matter in which the Council has an interest (in its own right or on behalf of the residents of Biggleswade).
5. to alter the date or time of a Council/committee meeting but, before doing so, shall consult with the relevant Chairman about the need for the change and about convenient alternative dates and times.
6. to decide arrangements for the closure of the Council offices in the Christmas/New Year period, subject to consultation with the Mayor.
7. to manage the Council's facilities and assets, including allotments, open spaces, amenity areas, cemetery, and any other buildings and assets.
8. to act as the Council's designated officer for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
9. to act as the Council's proper officer as per Section 281 Local Government Act 1972.

Financial Matters the Town Clerk is authorised as follows:

1. To incur expenditure up to the amount specified in the ~~F~~Financial ~~R~~Regulations on any item for which provision is made in the appropriate revenue budget provided that any action taken complies with any legislative provisions and the requirements of the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
2. To use the repairs and maintenance budgets for the maintenance, or repair of existing plant, vehicles or equipment.
3. To accept quotations or tenders (where tenders are required by the Council's Financial Regulations) for work supplies or services subject to:
 - a. the cost not exceeding the amount of the approved budget.

- b. the tender being the lowest or the one showing best added value to the Council according to the criteria set out in the tender documentation.
- c. all the requirements of the Council's Financial Regulations being complied with.
- 4. To compile, approve or vary lists of approved contractors subject to the requirements of the Council's Financial Regulations.
- 5. To advise, source, and administer/manage any loans including Public Works Loan Board in order to deliver positive strategic outcomes for the Town Council and community.
- 6. 5. Having consulted with the Council, to invest monies held by the Council with a view to obtaining the optimum financial return.

Staffing Matters

The Town Clerk is given delegated powers to manage the Council staff in accordance with the Council's policies, procedures, agreed establishment, and budget.

Recruitment of Tier 1 and Tier 2 staff will be conducted in collaboration with Members.

Property Matters

The Town Clerk is given authority to manage the land and property of the Council including:

- 1. negotiating the terms of any lease, licence, conveyance or transfer approved in principle by Council prior to authorisation by Council and signature, authorised to be signed by the Mayor or Deputy Mayor. (rewrite)
- 2. the granting or refusal of the Council's consent under the terms of any lease variations of restrictive covenants of a routine nature.
- 3. the granting of easements, wayleaves and licenses over Council Land approved by the Council.
- 4. initiating legal action or proceedings against unauthorised encampments on Council land.
- 5. letting of open spaces for activities that benefit the residents of Biggleswade.

Urgency

The Town Clerk is authorised to act on behalf of the Council in cases of urgency or emergency. Any such action is to be reported to the next meeting of the Council or relevant committee or sub-committee. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Chairman of the relevant committee are to be consulted before such action is taken.

The Town Clerk may decide not to exercise his delegated power and may instead make recommendations to Council or the relevant Committee.

VESO

Town Clerk/Policies

Reviewed
Adopted

27th January 2023
tbc

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STANDING ORDERS

Some of the following Standing Orders are compulsory as they are laid down in Acts of Parliament. These are printed in **BOLD** type. These standing orders cannot be altered.

1. **Meetings of the Council and its Committees**

- a. Meetings of the Council shall be held on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month, commencing at 7.00 pm unless the Council otherwise decides at a previous meeting.
- b. Smoking of any kind is not permitted at any meeting of the Council.

2. **The Statutory Annual Meeting**

- a. **In an election year the Annual Statutory Meeting shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the Councillors are elected to take office; and**
- b. **In a year which is not an election year the Annual Town Meeting shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.**

3. **In addition to the Statutory Annual Meeting, at least three other statutory meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times and at such place as the Council may direct.**

4. **Chairman of the Meeting**

The person presiding at a meeting may exercise all the powers and duties of the Chairman in relation to the conduct of the meeting.

5. **Proper Officer**

Where a statute, regulation or order confers function or duties on the proper officer of the Council in the following cases he/she shall be the Clerk or nominated officer:

- To receive declarations of acceptance of office
- To receive and record notices disclosing interests at meetings
- To receive and retain plans and documents
- To sign notices or other documents on behalf of the Council
- To receive copies of bylaws made by another local authority
- To certify copies of bylaws made by the Council
- To sign and issue the summons to attend meetings of the Council
- To keep proper records for all Council meetings

6. Quorum of the Council

Three members or one third of the total membership, whichever is the greater, shall constitute a quorum at meetings of the Council.

7. If a quorum of 5 Councillors is not present or if during a meeting the number of councillors present (not counting those debarred by reason of a declared interest) falls below the required quorum, the meeting shall be adjourned, and business not transacted shall be transacted at the next meeting or on such other day as the Chairman may affix.
8. For a quorum relating to a committee or sub-committee, please refer to Standing Order 42.

9. Voting

Members shall vote by show of hands or, if at least two members so request, by signed ballot.

10. **If a member so requires, the Clerk shall record the names of the members who voted on any question so as to show whether they voted for or against it. Such a request must be made before moving on to the next business.**
11. (1) **Subject to (2) and (3) below the Chairman may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in any case of an equality of votes must give a casting vote whether or not he/she gave an original vote.**
- (2) **If the person presiding at the annual meeting would have ceased to be a member of the Council but for the statutory provisions which preserve the membership of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor until the end of their term of office he/she may not give an original vote in an election for Mayor.**
- (3) **The person presiding must give a casting vote whenever there is an equality of votes in an election for Mayor.**

12. Order of Business

At each Annual Town Council Meeting the first business shall be:

- a. To elect a Chairman of the Council.
- b. To receive the Chairman's declaration of acceptance of office or, if not received, to decide when it shall be received.
- c. In the ordinary year of election of the Council to fill any vacancies left unfilled at the election by reason of insufficient nominations.
- d. To decide when any declarations of acceptance of office which have not been received as provided by law shall be received.
- e. To elect a Vice Chairman of the Council.
- f. To receive the Vice Chairman's declaration of acceptance of office or, if not received to decide when it shall be received.

- g. To appoint representatives to outside bodies.
- h. To appoint committees and sub-committees.
- i. For Committees to appoint the Chairman and Vice Chairman of those Committees.
- j. For the programme of meetings of those Committees to be approved for the municipal year.

and shall thereafter follow the order set out in the Standing Order 16.

- 13. At every meeting other than the Annual Council Meeting the first business shall be to appoint a Chairman if the Chairman and Vice Chairman be absent and to receive such declarations of acceptance of office (if any) and undertaking to observe the Council's Code of Conduct as are required by law to be made or, if not then received, to decide when they shall be received.**
- 14.** In every year, not later than the meeting at which the estimates for next year are settled, the Council shall review the pay and conditions of service of existing employees. The Council shall be notified formally when this has been done.
- 15.** Standing Order 34 must be read in conjunction with this requirement.
- 16.** After the first business has been completed, the order of business shall be in the order set out in the Agenda unless the Council otherwise decides on the grounds of urgency, and shall be as follows:
 - a. To receive apologies from members not able to be present and the reasons for absence. To note absent members from whom no apology has been received.
 - b. To receive Declarations of Interests or to consider requests for dispensation.
 - c. To receive such communications as the person presiding may wish to lay before the Council.
 - d. To receive members' questions.
 - e. To adjourn for a period of up to 15 minutes to allow members of the public to put questions or to address the Council, through the Chairman, pertaining to matters listed on the Agenda.

Each speaker will give their name to the Chairman prior to speaking, which will be recorded in the minutes, unless that person requests otherwise. Each Speaker will be allowed (one) three-minute slot.

 - f. To read and consider Minutes; provided that if a copy has been circulated to each member not later than the day of issue of the summons to attend the meeting, the Minutes may be taken as read.
 - g. After consideration to approve the signature of the Minutes by the Chair as a correct record.**

- h. To deal with matters arising from the Minutes unless such matters are specified on the agenda.
- i. **To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done.**
- j. To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
- k. To receive and consider reports and minutes of committees.
- l. To receive and consider resolutions or recommendations in the order in which they have been notified.
- m. To adjourn for a period of up to 15 minutes to allow members of the public to put questions or to address the Council, through the Chairman, in respect of any other business of the Town Council.
- n. Each speaker will give their name to the Chairman prior to speaking, which will be recorded in the minutes, unless that person requests otherwise. Each speaker will be allowed (one) three-minute slot.
- o. To authorise the sealing of documents.
- p. To receive at the last meeting every second month, a report of the Council's performance against the Business Plan.
- q. To receive a record of any previous minutes that remain to be actioned and of any decisions made by officers under delegation.

17. Urgent Business

A motion to vary the order of business on the grounds of urgency:

- a. may be proposed by the Chairman or by any member and, if proposed by the Chairman, may be put to the vote without being seconded, and
- b. shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c. If a matter of genuine unexpected urgency arises, any necessary action may be decided by the Town Clerk in accordance with Terms of Reference and Delegation approved by the Council.

18. Resolutions Moved on Notice

Except as provided by these Standing Orders, no resolution may be moved unless the business to which it relates has been put on the Agenda by the Clerk or the mover has given notice in writing of its terms and has delivered the notice to the Clerk at least 6 clear days before the next meeting of the Council.

- 19.** The Clerk shall date every notice of resolution or recommendation from members when received, shall number each notice in the order in which it was received and shall enter it in a book which shall be open to the inspection of every member of the Council.

20. The Clerk shall insert in the summons for every meeting all notices of resolution or recommendation properly given in the order in which they have been received unless the member giving a notice of resolution has stated in writing that he/she intends to move at some later meeting or that he/she withdraws it.
21. If a resolution or recommendation specified in the summons is not moved either by the member who gave notice of it or by any other member, it shall, unless postponed by the Council, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.
22. Every resolution or recommendation shall be relevant to some subject over which the Council has power or duties which affects its area.
23. Resolutions Moved without Notice

Resolutions dealing with the following matters may be moved without notice:

- a. To appoint a Chairman of the meeting.
- b. To correct the minutes.
- c. To approve the minutes.
- d. To alter the order of business.
- e. To proceed to the next business.
- f. To close or adjourn the debate.
- g. To refer a matter to a committee.
- h. To appoint a committee or any members thereof.
- i. To adopt a report.
- j. To authorise the sealing of documents.
- k. To amend a motion.
- l. To give leave to withdraw a resolution or amendment.
- m. To extend the time limit for speeches (See Order 28d below).
- n. To exclude the press and public (See Order 58 below).
- o. To silence or eject from the meeting a member named for misconduct (see Order 31 below).
- p. To give the consent of the Council where such consent is required by these Standing Orders.
- q. To suspend any Standing Order (see Order 69 below).
- r. To adjourn the meeting.

24. Questions

A member may ask the Chairman or the Clerk any question concerning the business of the Council.

25. No questions not connected with business under discussion shall be asked except during the part of the meeting set aside for questions.

26. Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.

27. A person to whom a question has been put may decline to answer.

28. Rules of Debate

No discussion of the minutes shall take place except upon their accuracy. Corrections to the Minutes shall be made by resolution and must be initialed by the Chairman.

- a. A resolution or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded, and, unless proper notice has already been given, it shall, if required by the Chairman, be reduced to writing and handed to him/her before it is further discussed or put to the meeting.
- b. A member when seconding a resolution or amendment may, if he/she then declares his/her intention to do so, reserve his/her speech until a later period of the debate.
- c. A member shall direct his/her speech to the question under discussion to a personal explanation or to a question of order.
- d. No speech by a mover of a resolution shall exceed 3 minutes and no other speech shall exceed 3 minutes except by consent of the Council.
- e. An amendment shall be either:
 - i. To leave out words
 - ii. To leave out words and insert others
 - iii. To insert or add words
- f. An amendment shall not have the effect of negating the resolution before the Council.
- g. If an amendment be carried, the resolution, as amended, shall take the place of the original resolution and shall become the resolution upon which any further amendment may be moved.
- h. A further amendment shall not be moved until the Council has disposed of every amendment previously moved.
- i. The mover of a resolution or of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding 2 minutes.

- j. A member, other than the mover of a resolution, shall not, without leave of the Council, speak more than once on any resolution except to move an amendment or further amendment, or on an amendment, or on a point of order, or in personal explanation, or to move a closure.
- k. The mover of a resolution shall have a right of reply immediately before the resolution is put to the vote. If an amendment is proposed the mover of the amendment shall be entitled to reply immediately before the amendment is put to the vote.
- l. A member exercising a right of reply shall not introduce a new matter. After the right of reply has been exercised or waived, a vote shall be taken without further discussion. A member may, with the consent of his seconder; move amendments to his/her own resolution.
- m. A member may speak on a point of order or a personal explanation. A member speaking for these purposes shall be heard forthwith. A personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of a former speech by him, her which may have been misunderstood.
- n. A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer with the consent of the Council, which shall be signified without discussion, and no member may speak upon it after permission has been asked for its withdrawal unless such permission has been refused.
- o. When a resolution is under debate no other resolution shall be moved except the following:
 - i. To amend the resolution
 - ii. To proceed to the next business
 - iii. To adjourn the debate
 - iv. That the question be now put
 - v. That a member named be not further heard
 - vi. That a member named leave the meeting
 - vii. That the resolution be referred to a committee
 - viii. To exclude the public and press
 - ix. To adjourn the meeting

29. A member shall stand when speaking at Council meetings unless permission to remain seated is given by the Chairman.

- a. The ruling of the Chairman on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be discussed.
- b. Members shall address the Chairman. If two or more members wish to speak, the Chairman shall decide who to call upon.
- c. Whenever the Chairman speaks during a debate all other members shall be silent.
- d. Members wishing to speak should raise their hand until acknowledged by the Chairman of the meeting.

30. **Closure**

At the end of any speech a member may, without comment, move “that the question be now put”, “that the debate be now adjourned” or “that the Council do now adjourn”. If such motion is seconded, the Chairman shall put the motion but, in the case of a motion “that the question is now put”, only if he/she is of the opinion that the question before the Council has been sufficiently debated. If the motion “that the question be now put” is carried, he/she shall put the question immediately after that right has been exercised or waived. The adjournment of a debate or of the Council shall not prejudice the mover’s right of reply at the resumption.

31. **Disorderly Conduct**

- a. **All members must observe the Code of Conduct currently adopted by the Council, a copy of which is included in the Constitution.**
- b. No member shall at a meeting persistently disregard the ruling of the Chairman, willfully obstruct business, or behave irregularly, offensively, improperly or **in such a manner as to bring the Council into disrepute.**
- c. If, in the opinion of the Chairman, if a member has broken the provisions of paragraph a. or b. of this Order, the Chairman shall express that opinion to the Council and thereafter any member may move that the member named be no longer heard or that the member named do leave the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forth with and without discussion.

If a member reasonably believes another member is in breach of the Code Conduct the member is under a duty to report that member to the Monitoring Officer for the Unitary Authority for a breach of Section 29 to 34 of the Localism Act 2011.

- d. If either of the motions mentioned in paragraph c. is disobeyed, the Chairman may adjourn the meeting or take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce them.

32. **Rescission of Previous Resolution**

- a. A decision (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within 6 months except by a special resolution, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least 5 members of the Council, or by a resolution moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.
- b. When a special resolution or any other resolution moved under the provisions of paragraph a. of this Order has been disposed of, no similar resolution may be moved within a further six months.

33. **Voting on Appointments**

Where more than two persons have been nominated for any position to be filled by the Council and of the votes given there is not an absolute majority in favor of one person, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken, and so on until a majority of votes is given in favor of one person.

34. Discussions and Resolutions Affecting Employees of the Council

If at a meeting there arises any question relating to the appointment, conduct, promotion, dismissal, salary or conditions of service, of any person employed by the Council, it shall not be considered until the Council or committee (as the case may be) has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded. (See Standing Order No. 58).

35. Resolutions on Expenditure

Any resolution (which is moved otherwise than in pursuance of a recommendation of the Finance and General Purposes Committee or of another committee after recommendation by the Finance and General Purposes Committee) and which, if carried, would, in the opinion of the Chairman, substantially increase the expenditure upon any service which is under the management of the Council or reduce the revenue at the disposal of any committee, or which would involve capital expenditure, shall, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council, and any committee affected by it shall consider whether it desires to report thereon (and the Finance and General Purposes Committee shall report on the financial aspect of the matters).

36. Sealing of Documents

- a. A document shall not be sealed on behalf of the Council unless its sealing has been authorised by a resolution.
- b. Any two members of the Council, one of whom must be the Chairman or Vice Chairman may seal on behalf of the Council any document required by law to be issued under seal.
- c. Approved written minutes are the definitive record of the Town Council and the Town Councils Committees.

37. Committees and Sub Committees

The Council may at its Annual Meeting appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such other committees as are necessary, but subject to any statutory provision in that behalf:

- a. No Councillor may be appointed to a Committee unless they have completed the minimum training as prescribed. Additional training may be prescribed from time to time by resolution of the Council.
- b. Standing Order 37 (a) will not apply to appointments made at the Annual Statutory Meeting immediately following and election.
- c. For the purposes of Standing Order 37 (a) the prescribed minimum training is;
 - *Legal Requirements and Constraints – “New Councillor Induction Training” or “The Town Council and its Councillors” if induction training has been previously completed.*
 - *Local Council Finance - provided by accountants familiar with local government accounting and audit procedures.*

The listed training must have been completed no more than three years prior to the relevant Annual Meeting or since joining the Council if the Councillor has served for a period shorter than three years.

- d. Shall not appoint any member of a committee so as to hold office later than the next Annual Meeting.
 - e. May appoint persons other than members of the Council to any Committee; and
 - f. May subject to the provisions of Standing Order 32 above at any time dissolve or alter the membership of committee.
- 38.** The Chairman and Vice Chairman, ex-officio, shall be voting members of every committee, unless they signify that they do not wish to serve.

39. Extraordinary meetings of the council and committees

- a **The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
- b **If the Chairman of the Council does not call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting shall be signed by the two councillors.**
- c The chairman of a committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee at any time.
- d If the chairman of a committee does not call an extraordinary meeting within 7 days of having been requested to do so by two members of the committee, any 2 members of the committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee.

40. Sub-Committees

Every committee may appoint sub-committees for purposes to be specified by the committee.

- 41.** The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the committee shall be members of every sub-committee appointed by it unless they signify that they do not wish to serve.
- 42.** Except where ordered by the Council in the case of a committee, or by the Council or by the appropriate committee in the case of a sub-committee, the quorum of a committee or sub-committee shall be three or one third of its members whichever is the greater.
- 43.** The Standing Orders on rules of debate (except those parts relating to standing and to speaking more than once) and the Standing Order on interests of members in contracts and other matters shall apply to committee and sub-committee meetings.

44. Voting in Committees

Members of committees and sub-committees entitled to vote, shall vote by show of hands, or, if at least two members so request, by signed ballot.

45. Chairmen of committees and sub-committees shall in the case of an equality of votes have a second or casting vote.

46. Working Groups

The Council or a committee may create a working group to look at specific issues and to advise it accordingly. It must determine the terms of reference and membership. Usually a working group will operate on a task and finish basis. Voting will be as for a committee.

47. Presence of Non-Members of Committees at Committee Meetings

- a. A member who has proposed a resolution, which has been referred to any committee of which he/she is not a member, may explain his/her resolution to the committee but shall not vote.
- b. Any Council member shall, unless the Council otherwise orders, be entitled to be present as a spectator on the public benches at the meetings of any committee or sub-committee of which he/she is not a member, but he/she shall not be entitled to vote and he/she shall not take part in the consideration of any business save by leave of the person presiding.

48. Interests and Dispensations

A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest, or another interest as set out in the Council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter.

Members must disclose Interests as defined by the Code of Conduct currently adopted by the Council, as soon as it becomes apparent, disclosing the nature and extent of that interest.

49. The Clerk will be required to compile and hold a register of member's interests in accordance with agreement reached with the Monitoring Officer of the Responsible Authority and/or as required by the Localism Act 2011 Sections 29 to 34.

50.
 - a. If a member has declared a Disclosable Pecuniary interest he/she must withdraw from the meeting during consideration of the item to which the interest relates. If the member has been granted a dispensation by the Council, he/she must still declare the interest but may take part in the discussion and vote.
 - b. Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.

- c. **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
 - d. A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Proper Officer, and that decision is final.
 - e. A dispensation request shall confirm:
 - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
 - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
 - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
 - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
 - f. Subject to standing orders 13(c) and (e), a dispensation request shall be considered by the Proper Officer before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required OR at the beginning of the meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required.
 - g. **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 50(d) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:**
 - i. **without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;**
 - ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or**
 - iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**
 - h. Councillors must keep their registered interests up to date by completing the appropriate form and delivering this to the Town Clerk.
 - i. The Clerk will send out forms prior to the Annual Statutory meeting each year, to give members the opportunity to update their interests in the Register if necessary.
- 51.** If a candidate for any appointment under the Council is to his/her knowledge related to any member of or the holder of any office under the Council, he/she and the person to whom he/she is related shall disclose the relationship in writing to the Clerk.

A candidate who fails so to do shall be disqualified for such appointment and if appointed, may be dismissed without notice.

The Clerk shall report to the Council or to the appropriate committee and such disclosure. Where a relationship to a member is disclosed, Standing Orders 48 and 49 shall apply as appropriate.

The Clerk shall make known the purpose of Standing Order 52 to every candidate.

52. Canvassing of and Recommendations by Members

- i. Canvassing of members of the Council or of any committee, directly or indirectly, for any appointment under the Council shall disqualify the candidate for such appointment. The Clerk shall make known the purport of this sub-paragraph of this Standing Order to every candidate.
- ii. A member of the Council or of any committee shall not solicit for any person any appointment under the Council or recommend any person for such appointment or for promotion; but nevertheless, any such member may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.

- 53.** Standing Order No's 51 and 52 shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.

54. Inspection of Documents

A member may for the purpose of his/her duty as such (but not otherwise), inspect any document in possession of the Council or a committee and if copies are available shall, on request, be supplied for the like purpose with a copy.

- 55. All minutes kept by the Council and by any committee shall be open for the inspection of any member of the Council.**

- 56.** All requests for information held by the Council shall be processed in accordance with the Council's Publication Scheme and Information Guide and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

57. Unauthorised Activities

No individual member of the Council or of any committee or sub-committee shall in the name of or on behalf of the Council:

- a. inspect any lands or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
- b. issue orders, instructions or directions or commit to any expenditure unless authorised to do so by the Council or the relevant committee or sub-committee.

58. Admission of the Public and Press to Meetings

The public and press shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council and its committees which may, however, temporarily exclude the public by means of the following resolutions:

That in view of the (special) (confidential) nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw".

59. The Council shall state the special reason for exclusion. (**Pursuant** to Section 1(2) of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Council resolve to exclude the public and press by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted).

Where the public are excluded from a meeting of a relevant government body under Subsection (2) the body may also prevent any person from reporting on the meeting using methods which can be used without that person's presence at the meeting and which will enable persons not present at the meeting to see or hear the proceedings at the meeting as it takes place later.

60. At all meetings of the Council the Chairman may at his/her discretion and at a convenient time in the transaction of business, suspend standing orders so as to allow any members of the public or a representative of the local Constabulary to address the meeting in relation to the business to be transacted at that meeting.
61. Any person who attends a meeting for the purposes of reporting on the meeting may use any communication method, including the internet, to publish, post or otherwise share the results of the persons reporting activities.

Filming, photography and audio recording should be carried out from a static position in the public area, so as not to impede other members of the public.

Oral reporting, commentary and flash photography on a meeting will not be permitted.

Publication and dissemination may take place at the time of the meeting or occur after the meeting.

This shall not be without prejudice to any power of exclusion to suppress or prevent disorderly conduct or other misbehaviour at a meeting.

62. If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Chairman may, after warning, order that he/she be removed from the meeting and may adjourn the meeting for such period as is necessary to restore order.

63. **Petitions**

At any meeting any Member may present a petition, signed by persons other than Members of the Council, which is relevant to some matter for which the Council has a responsibility or which affects the Parish.

- a. A Member wishing to present a petition shall give notice of his/her intention to do so to the Town Clerk at least twenty-four hours before the beginning of the meeting at which it is to be presented.
- b. The presentation of a petition will last for no more than three minutes.
- c. No discussion will take place on any petition, but any Member may move that a matter raised be included on a future agenda.

64. Confidential Business

- a. No member of the Council or of any committee or sub-committee shall disclose to any person not a member of the Council any business declared to be confidential by the Council, the committee or the sub-committee as the case may be.
- b. Any member in breach of the provisions of paragraph a. of this Standing Order shall be removed from any committee or sub-committee of the Council by the Council.

65. Liaison with Unitary Councilor's

A summons and Agenda for each meeting shall be sent to the Unitary Councillor for the appropriate division or ward.

66. Planning Applications

Planning applications received shall be considered by the first available meeting of the Council.

The Clerk shall, as soon as it is received, enter in a book kept for the purpose the following particulars of every planning application notified to the Council:

- i. the date on which it was received
- ii. the planning application number
- iii. the place to which it relates
- iv. the date of the committee at which it will be considered
- v. In the event of a planning amendment being received for consideration by the Council, where the amendment is a minor amendment related to a Planning Application that previously received **No Objection** from the Council, then the Clerk in consultation with or any three members of the Council, which should include either the Chairman or the Vice Chairman of the Council, may, if necessary, take a majority decision on the amendment without the need to summon a Council Meeting, such decision to be recorded at the next meeting of the Council.

67. Annual Town Meeting

- a. The Annual Town Meeting will be held in May each year.
- b. Proceedings shall not begin before 7.30. pm.
- c. The Chairman shall preside or in his/her absence the Vice Chairman.
- d. In the absence of the Chairman and the Vice Chairman the meeting shall appoint a Chairman before proceeding to any other business.
- e. The Clerk to the Council shall record the proceedings and in his/her absence the person presiding may record the proceedings or may appoint another to do so.
- f. The Minutes of the previous meeting shall be considered and, if correct, signed by the person presiding at the meeting.

- g. Subsequent business of the Annual Meeting shall be as follows:
- i. To receive the Annual Report of the Town Council.
 - ii. To receive Statement of the Accounts for the year ended the previous 31st March.
 - iii. To receive the Council's observations on its finances for the current year.
 - iv. To consider items previously resolved by the Town Council to be added to the agenda.
 - v. Where 7 days' written notice has been given by Local Government Electors for this parish:
 - to consider subjects affecting this parish
 - to consider resolutions affecting this parish
 - vi. To receive reports from Unitary Authority Councillors'.
 - vii. To receive reports from the Chair of the Council Committees unless reports are included in the Annual Report and reports from Representatives of other bodies etc.
- h. Questions and comments can now be put by the Local Government Electors -the person presiding at the meeting may call upon Town Councillors', Unitary Authority Councillors', representatives of other bodies who are present to answer questions.
- i. Any relevant items raised to go to the next available meeting of the Council.

68. Code of Conduct on Complaints

The Council shall deal with complaints of maladministration allegedly committed by the Council or by any officer or member in accordance with the Complaints Code and Vexatious Policy, except for those complaints which should be properly directed to the Monitoring Officer of the Unitary Council.

69. Variation, Revocation and Suspension of Standing Orders

Any or every part of the Standing Orders except those printed in **bold type** may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.

70. A resolution permanently to add, vary or revoke a Standing Order shall when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council, unless a written draft of the changes has been prepared by the Town Clerk and has been circulated with the Agenda.

71. Standing Orders to be given to Members

A copy of these Standing Orders shall be given to each member by the Town Clerk upon delivery to him/her of the member's declaration of acceptance of office and written undertaking to observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council or following any amendment or revision as part of the Constitution.

72. Training and Development

The Council will determine and execute an annual training plan for its Members.

73. General Power of Competence

- a. The General Power of Competence permits principal councils and eligible local councils to do anything that individuals generally may do. The Council will adopt this power when it becomes eligible.
- b. Before exercising the General Power of Competence, the full Council must have passed a resolution at an ordinary meeting, that they meet the relevant eligibility criteria: A Clerk who holds a recognised qualification and the number of Councillors elected at the last ordinary election or subsequent by-elections is equal to or exceeds two thirds of the total number of Councillors. If adopted, the General Power becomes the power of first resort.
- c. Local Councils are also required by regulation to pass a resolution at each subsequent relevant annual meeting that it meets the conditions of eligibility. Relevant annual meeting is the one following an ordinary election.

74. Contracts

Every contract relating to the sale or purchase of any land or buildings shall be in writing and be signed on behalf of the Council by the Proper Officer and the Chairman of the Council, or their deputies. Purchases of land should not be above the current market value as determined by the Council's appointed Valuer and sales of land should not be below the current market value as determined by the Council's appointed Valuer. Where this is not the case a report should be made to Council setting out the reasons for such variation, which may take into account any community benefits or justification on the grounds that it helps fulfil a wider objective of the Council.

75. Every contract made by or on behalf of the Council shall comply with these Standing Orders and the Council's Financial Regulations. (see Financial Regulations 11).
76. Where tenders are required, one of the following methods shall be used:

Open competitive tender

Tenders shall be invited after giving at least 14 days' public notice in at least one local newspaper circulating in the area of the Authority and in such trade journals as the Town Clerk considers appropriate stating the nature and purpose of the contract, inviting tenders and stating the last date when tenders will be accepted.

Any notice issued shall contain a Statement of the effect of Standing Orders 51 & 52.

Ad hoc approved list

Tenders shall be invited after giving notice in the manner set out for Open Competitive tenders seeking applications to be placed on a list from which selected contractors will be invited to submit tenders.

Standing approved list

Tenders shall be invited from persons included in a list approved by the Council for the supply of goods or materials of specified categories values or amounts or for the carrying out of specified categories of work.

The list shall be compiled in the following manner:

- Notices inviting applications for inclusion in the list shall be published not less than 28 days before the list is compiled in at least one local newspaper and one trade journal.
- No person shall be included in the list unless, at the time of compilation of the list, the Responsible Financial Officer is satisfied as to his or her financial status and suitability.
- The approved list may be amended as required from time to time by the Council or Town Clerk under delegated authority and shall be reviewed at intervals not exceeding two years.

Approved list of another Council

Tenders shall be invited from persons included in a list approved by Central Bedfordshire Council for the supply of goods or materials of specified categories

values or amounts or for the carrying out of specified categories of work.

Established procurement specialist

Where large, high value tender exercises take place, in areas in which the Council have limited expertise, it may be necessary to engage the use of established procurement specialists. These specialists will undertake the tender process on behalf of the Council, subject to compliance with Financial Regulations for the opening of tenders.

77. Selection of Tenderers or Invitees

The selection of persons from whom tenders shall be invited shall be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee.

In inviting applications for inclusion in a list of approved tenderers or in selecting persons from whom tenders are to be invited, steps shall be taken to ensure fair competition. It may be necessary to supplement approved lists in cases where the specialist nature of the work or goods indicates that competition will be limited, subject to a resolution of Council which embodies the reason for doing so.

Where a contract will involve a design element, or in the case of other construction works, the chosen process may be varied minimally to ensure that the quality of the design is properly taken in to account.

78. Form of Invitation to tender and submission of tenders

A specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up.

All tenders shall be required to be submitted on a Form of Tender approved by the Town Clerk. This Form shall include a statement that the Council will not be bound to accept any tender and reserves the right to accept a tender other than the one which is the lowest price or not to accept any tender at all.

The invitations to tender shall state that no tender will be considered unless contained in an unmarked plain sealed envelope and endorsed "Tender" followed by the subject to which it relates.

Every tender shall be addressed to the Town Clerk and the tender shall remain in his custody, or that of his nominated representative, until the time appointed for its opening.

79. Extension of time

Where the Town Clerk considers it to be in the best interests of the Council the time within which tenders must be received may be extended after giving written notice of such extension of time to all contractors.

80. Opening of tenders

All tenders for a contract shall be opened in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

The Town Clerk shall prepare and maintain a register of tenders received and shall record in that register the following particulars:

- the last date and time for the receipt of tenders.
- the date and time the tender was actually received.
- the name of the tenderer and the amount of the tender.
- the date and time they were opened and by whom.
- the signature of the officer to whom the tenders were handed after opening.

All persons required to be present at the opening of tenders shall immediately sign against the relevant particulars in the register and shall also sign each page of the tender as evidence of such tenders having been opened by them or in their presence.

Following the opening of tenders invited the Town Clerk shall write to all persons who were invited to tender but who failed to tender to ascertain the reasons for that failure.

81. Late tenders

Any tender received late will be returned promptly to the tenderer by the Town Clerk. A late tender which has been received may be opened in the presence of the two Members to ascertain the name and address of the tenderer, but no details of the tender shall be disclosed.

82. Errors and discrepancies

Where the tender reveals errors or discrepancies, which would affect the tender figure in an otherwise successful tender, the tenderer shall be told of the errors and discrepancies and given an opportunity of confirming, correcting or withdrawing the offer.

83. Acceptance of tenders

In accepting a tender, consideration will be given to price and quality. A suitable pre-determined price-quality model (Evaluation Model) will be devised by the Town Clerk or representative in accordance with the Council's Procurement Policy. Selection of the best tender will be based on this evaluation.

If no tenders are received or if all tenders are identical, the Council may make such arrangements for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works as it thinks fit.

84. Contracts to be in writing

Every contract which exceeds £5000 shall be in writing in a form approved by the Town Clerk.

85. Responsibilities to provide information

See also standing order 86.

- a **In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.**
- b. **The Council shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.**

86. Management of information

See also standing order 87.

- a **The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.**
- b **The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).**
- c **The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

- d Councillors, staff, the Council’s contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

87. Responsibilities under data protection legislation.

(Below is not an exclusive list).

See also standing order 86.

- a The Council shall appoint a Data Protection Officer.**
- b The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning his personal data.**
- c The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**
- d The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.**
- e The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.**
- f The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**

88. Approval of Standing Orders

The foregoing Standing Orders were adopted by Biggleswade Town Council on **27 September 2022.**

Town Mayor:

Assistant Town Clerk to the Council:



BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

General	2
Accounting and audit (internal and external)	4
Annual estimates (budget) and forward planning	6
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These Financial Regulations were adopted by the Council at its meeting held on 24.05.2022.

1. General

1.1. These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council. Financial regulations are one of the Council's three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the Council's standing orders and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.

1.2. The Council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that the Council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.

1.3. The Council's accounting control systems must include measures:

- for the timely production of accounts;
- that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money;
- to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
- identifying the duties of officers.

1.4. These financial regulations demonstrate how the Council meets these responsibilities and requirements.

1.5. At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the Council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.

1.6. Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.

1.7. Members of Council are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of Councillor into disrepute.

1.8. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office to be appointed by the Council. The Clerk has been appointed as RFO for this Council and these regulations will apply accordingly.

1.9. The RFO;

- acts under the policy direction of the Council;
- administers the Council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
- determines on behalf of the Council its accounting records and accounting control systems;
- ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
- maintains the accounting records of the Council up to date in accordance with proper practices;

- assists the Council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
- produces financial management information as required by the Council.

1.10. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the Council's transactions and to enable the RFO to ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipts and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or management information prepared for the Council from time to time comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations¹.

1.11. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall in particular contain:

- entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the Council and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate;
- a record of the assets and liabilities of the Council; and
- wherever relevant, a record of the Council's income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.

1.12. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:

- procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the Council are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible;
- procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records;
- identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions. The principle of separation of duties will be observed wherever possible in respect of financial transactions;
- procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the Council for approval to be written off except with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records; and
- measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.

1.13. The Council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain specified decisions. In particular any decision regarding:

- setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);
- approving accounting statements;
- approving an annual governance statement;
- borrowing;
- writing off bad debts;
- declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and
- addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors,

¹ Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011/817

shall be a matter for the full Council only.

1.14. In addition, the Council must:

- determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all Council bank accounts;
- approve any grant or a single commitment in excess of £2000; and
- in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant committee in accordance with its terms of reference.

1.15. In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or 'the regulations' shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.

In these financial regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - a Practitioners' Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG).

2. Accounting and audit (internal and external)

2.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the Council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate guidance and proper practices.

2.2. On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chairman [or a cheque signatory] shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the Council [Finance Committee].

2.3. The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the Council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to the Council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

2.4. The Council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the Council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the Council to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the Council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the Council considers necessary for that purpose.

2.5. The Council's system of internal controls shall cover the following:

- Appointment of the Proper Officer & Responsible Financial Officer;

- Proper book-keeping and financial reporting arrangements;
- Financial Regulations & Standing Orders;
- Payment Controls (including use of Internet Banking);
- Risk Management Arrangements;
- Budgetary Controls;
- Income Controls;
- Petty Cash Controls;
- Payroll Controls;
- Capital Controls (covering asset management, investment & borrowings);
- Bank Reconciliation;
- Other areas identified from time to time in risk assessments

2.6. The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the Council in accordance with proper practices.

2.7. The internal auditor shall:

- be competent and independent of the financial operations of the Council;
- report to Council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year;
- to demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
- has no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the Council

2.8. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:

- perform any operational duties for the Council;
- initiate or approve accounting transactions; or
- direct the activities of any Council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.

2.9. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.

2.10. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

2.11. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all Councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

3. Annual estimates (budget) and forward planning

3.1. The RFO must each year, by no later than November, prepare detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year in the form of a budget to be considered by the [relevant committee and the] Council.

3.3. The Council shall consider annual budget proposals in relation to the Council's three year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments including recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding and update the forecast accordingly.

3.4. The Council shall fix the precept (council tax requirement), and relevant basic amount of Council tax to be levied for the ensuing financial year not later than by the end of January each year. The RFO shall issue the precept demand to the billing authority and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved annual budget.

3.5. The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

4. Budgetary control and authority to spend

4.1. Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:

- the Council for all items over £30,000;
- the Town Clerk, in conjunction with the Chair of the appropriate committee for items £15,00 - £30,000
- the Town Clerk for items up to £15,000

Such authority is to be evidenced by a minute or by an authorisation slip duly signed by the Town Clerk, and where necessary also by the appropriate Chair.

Contracts may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by these regulations.

4.2. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure other than by resolution of the Council, or duly delegated committee. During the budget year and with the approval of Council having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate ('virement').

4.3. Unspent provisions in the revenue or capital budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year.

4.4. The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually in October for the following financial year and such review shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chair of Council or relevant committee. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.

4.5. In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of Council services, the clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the Council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £10000. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.

4.6. No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the Council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.

4.7. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations relating to contracts.

4.8. The RFO shall regularly provide the Council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared monthly presented at the end of each financial quarter to Council and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose "material" shall be in excess of or 15% of the budget.

4.9. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by Council as part of the budgetary control process.

5. Banking arrangements and authorisation of payments

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.

5.2. The RFO shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation by two of the Council's Authorised Signatories. The Authorised Signatories shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself shall authorise payment by signing the schedule. This shall be deemed as authorisation by the RFO or Town Clerk to activate the electronic payments using the Council's Electronic Banking System. At every Council meeting the RFO shall present a full list of payments which have been authorised by the Authorised Signatories for formal ratification.

5.3. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the RFO to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the Council.

5.4. The RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted.

5.5. The Town Clerk (with the exception of 4.5 above) and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of items only in the following circumstances:

- a) If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled Meeting of Council, where the Clerk and RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of Council [or finance committee];
- b) An expenditure item authorised under 5.6 below (continuing contracts and obligations) provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of Council [or finance committee]; or
- c) Fund transfers within the Councils banking arrangements.

5.6. For each financial year the Clerk and RFO shall draw up a list of due payments which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation (such as but not exclusively) Salaries, PAYE and NI, Superannuation Fund and regular maintenance contracts and the like for which Council may authorise payment for the year provided that the requirements of regulation 4.1 (Budgetary Controls) are adhered to, provided also that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of Council.

5.7. A record of regular payments made under 5.6 above shall be drawn up and be signed by two members on each and every occasion when payment is authorised - thus controlling the risk of duplicated payments being authorised and / or made.

5.8. In respect of grants a duly authorised committee shall approve expenditure within any limits set by Council and in accordance with any policy statement approved by Council. Any Revenue or Capital Grant in excess of £2,000 shall before payment, be subject to ratification by resolution of the Council.

5.9. Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the Council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.

5.10. The Council will aim to rotate the duties of members in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.

5.11. Any changes in the recorded details of suppliers, such as bank account records, shall be approved in writing by the RFO.

5.12. The Council shall retain a file with the details of all suppliers whose invoices are paid by regular Direct Debit. The nominated Councillor in 2.2 above shall take a random sample of invoices to ensure that the details match those held in the Council's accounting software

5.13. Bank Statements shall be received on a regular basis and reconciled with the Council's Cashbook. A copy of the Bank Reconciliation for each month shall be presented to the Council as part of a monthly Financial Report.

6. Instructions for the making of payments

6.1. The Council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.

6.2. Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 5 above, the Council, a duly delegated committee or, if so delegated, the Clerk or RFO shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.

6.3. All payments shall be affected by cheque or other instructions to the Council's bankers, or otherwise, in accordance with a resolution of Council [or duly delegated committee].

6.4. Due to the volume of payments from the Council's bank, the primary method of payment shall be via electronic banking as set out in 5.2 above. The schedule of payments shall be signed by two Authorised Signatories and those schedules shall then be presented to the next Council meeting for ratification

6.5. In the event that a payment is required by cheque, they shall be signed by two Authorised Signatories. To indicate agreement between the details shown on the cheque and the invoice or other supporting documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.

6.6. If thought appropriate by the Council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates may be made by variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed by two Authorised Signatories and any payments are reported to Council as made. The approval of the use of a variable direct debit shall be renewed by resolution of the Council at least every two years.

6.7. If thought appropriate by the Council, payment for certain items may be made by banker's Standing Order provided that the instructions are signed, or otherwise evidenced by two Authorised Signatories are retained and any payments are reported to Council as made. The approval of the use of a banker's Standing Order shall be renewed by resolution of the Council at least every two years.

6.8. If thought appropriate by the Council, payment for certain items may be made by BACS or CHAPS methods provided that the instructions for each payment are signed, or otherwise evidenced, by two authorised bank signatories, are retained and any payments are reported to Council as made. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the Council at least every two years.

6.9. If thought appropriate by the Council payment for certain items may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained showing which members approved the payment.

6.10. No employee or Councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the Council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the Council or a duly delegated committee.

6.11. Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely away from the computer in question, and preferably remotely.

6.12. The Council, and any members using computers for the Council's financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.

6.13. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate approved by the Council shall identify a number of Councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts.

6.14. Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under "favourites"), and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for Council banking work. Breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.

6.15. Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written hard copy notification by the supplier and supported by authority for change signed by two Authorised Signatories. A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.

6.16. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £5000 unless authorised by Council.

6.17. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the Council. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to the Council and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the Council.

6.18. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the Council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.

6.19. The RFO may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made shall be forwarded to the RFO with a claim for reimbursement.

a) The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float of £300 for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept to substantiate the payment.

b) Income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.

c) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on the schedule of payments presented to Council under 5.2 above.

7. Payment of salaries

7.1. As an employer, the Council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salary rates shall be as agreed by Council, or duly delegated committee.

7.2. Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be required to be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to the next available Council meeting, as set out in these regulations above.

7.3. No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Council.

7.4. Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential record (confidential cash book). This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:

- a) by any Councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;
- b) by the internal auditor;
- c) by the external auditor; or
- d) by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.

7.5. The total of such payments in each calendar month shall be reported with all other payments as made as may be required under these Financial Regulations, to ensure that only payments due for the period have actually been paid.

7.6. An effective system of personal performance management should be maintained for the senior officers.

7.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and reported to the Council. Termination payments shall only be authorised by Council.

8. Loans and investments

8.1. All borrowings shall be affected in the name of the Council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The application for borrowing approval, and subsequent arrangements for the loan shall only be approved by Full Council.

8.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State/Welsh Assembly Government (such as Hire Purchase or Leasing of tangible assets) shall be subject to approval by the Full Council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Council in respect of value for money for the proposed transaction.

8.3. The Council will arrange with the Council's banks and investment providers for the sending of a copy of each statement of account to the RFO.

8.4. All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Council and shall be for a set period in accordance with Council policy.

8.5. The Council shall consider the need for an Investment Strategy and Policy which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the Council at least annually.

8.6. All investments of money under the control of the Council shall be in the name of the Council.

8.7. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.

8.8. Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with Regulation 5 (Authorisation of payments) and Regulation 6 (Instructions for payments).

9. Income

9.1. The collection of all sums due to the Council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.

9.2. Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the Council, notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Council.

9.3. The Council will review all fees and charges at least annually, following a report of the Town Clerk.

9.4. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the Council and shall be written off in the year.

9.5. All sums received on behalf of the Council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the Council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.

9.6. The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.

9.7. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council.

9.8. The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.

9.9. Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the Council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the Council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

10. Orders for work, goods and services

10.1. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained.

10.2. Order books shall be controlled by the RFO.

10.3. All members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimis provisions in Regulation 11.1 below.

10.4. A member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the Council.

10.5. The RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the minutes can record the power being used.

11. Contracts

11.1. Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:

a) Every contract shall comply with these Financial Regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that this regulation need not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:

- i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
- ii. for specialist services such as are provided by legal professionals acting in disputes;
- iii. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;
- iv. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council;

v. for additional audit work of the external auditor up to an estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum the Clerk and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council); and

vi. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and / or are only sold at a fixed price.

b) Where the Council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 ("the Regulations") which is valued at £25,000 or more, the Council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations².

c) The full requirements of The Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU (which may change from time to time)³.

d) When applications are made to waive Financial Regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the Council.

e) Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.

f) All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of Council.

g) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Orders of the Council and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.

h) When it is to enter into a contract of less than £25,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk or RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £3,000 the Clerk or RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10.3 above shall apply.

i) The Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.

² The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website to advertise contract opportunities, set out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and to publicise the award of new contracts

³ Thresholds currently applicable are:

a) For public supply and public service contracts 209,000 Euros (£181,302)

b) For public works contracts 5,225,000 Euros (£4,551,413)

j) Should it occur that the Council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the Council requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.

12. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

12.1. Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).

12.2. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case where it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum of 5% or more a report shall be submitted to the Council.

12.3. Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the Council and Clerk to the contractor in writing, the Council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

13. Stores and equipment

13.1. The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section.

13.2. Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.

13.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.

13.4. The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

14. Assets, properties and estates

14.1. The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the Council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties held by the Council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.

14.2. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the Council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £15,000.

14.3. No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the Council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).

14.4. No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full Council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).

14.5. Subject only to the limit set in Regulation 14.2 above, no tangible moveable property shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full Council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Council with a full business case.

14.6. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

15. Insurance

15.1. Following the annual risk assessment (per Regulation 17), the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers.

15.2. The Clerk shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.

15.3. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the Council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.

15.4. The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim and shall report these to Council at the next available meeting.

15.5. All appropriate members and employees of the Council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually by the Council, or duly delegated committee.

16. Risk management

16.1. The Council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Clerk with the RFO shall prepare, for approval by the Council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the Council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the Council at least annually.

16.2. When considering any new activity, the Clerk with the RFO shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the Council.

17. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

17.1. It shall be the duty of the Council to review the Financial Regulations of the Council from time to time. The Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the Council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these Financial Regulations.

17.2. The Council may, by resolution of the Council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of Council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all members of Council.



BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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These Financial Regulations were adopted by the Council at its meeting held on ~~24xx.xx05.2023~~2.

1. General

1.1. These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council. Financial regulations are one of the Council's three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the Council's standing orders and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.

1.2. The Council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that the Council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.

1.3. The Council's accounting control systems must include measures:

- for the timely production of accounts;
- that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money;
- to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
- identifying the duties of officers.

1.4. These financial regulations demonstrate how the Council meets these responsibilities and requirements.

1.5. At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the Council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.

1.6. Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.

1.7. Members of Council are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of Councillor into disrepute.

1.8. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office to be appointed by the Council. The Clerk has been appointed as RFO for this Council and these regulations will apply accordingly.

1.9. The RFO;

- acts under the policy direction of the Council;
- administers the Council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
- determines on behalf of the Council its accounting records and accounting control systems;
- ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
- maintains the accounting records of the Council up to date in accordance with proper practices;

- assists the Council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
- produces financial management information as required by the Council.

1.10. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the Council's transactions and to enable the RFO to ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipts and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or management information prepared for the Council from time to time comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations¹.

1.11. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall in particular contain:

- entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the Council and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate;
- a record of the assets and liabilities of the Council; and
- wherever relevant, a record of the Council's income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.

1.12. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:

- procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the Council are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible;
- procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records;
- identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions. The principle of separation of duties will be observed wherever possible in respect of financial transactions;
- procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the Council for approval to be written off except with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records; and
- measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.

1.13. The Council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain specified decisions. In particular any decision regarding:

- setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);
- approving accounting statements;
- approving an annual governance statement;
- borrowing;
- writing off bad debts;
- declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and
- addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors,

¹ Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011/817

shall be a matter for the full Council only.

1.14. In addition, the Council must:

- determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all Council bank accounts;
- approve any grant or a single commitment in excess of £2000; and
- in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant committee in accordance with its terms of reference.

1.15. In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or 'the regulations' shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.

In these financial regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - a Practitioners' Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG).

2. Accounting and audit (internal and external)

2.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the Council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate guidance and proper practices.

2.2. On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chairman [or a cheque signatory] shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the Council [Finance Committee].

2.3. The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the Council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to the Council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

2.4. The Council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the Council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the Council to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the Council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the Council considers necessary for that purpose.

2.5. The Council's system of internal controls shall cover the following:

- Appointment of the Proper Officer & Responsible Financial Officer;

- Proper book-keeping and financial reporting arrangements;
- Financial Regulations & Standing Orders;
- Payment Controls (including use of Internet Banking);
- Risk Management Arrangements;
- Budgetary Controls;
- Income Controls;
- Petty Cash Controls;
- Payroll Controls;
- Capital Controls (covering asset management, investment & borrowings);
- Bank Reconciliation;
- Other areas identified from time to time in risk assessments

2.6. The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the Council in accordance with proper practices.

2.7. The internal auditor shall:

- be competent and independent of the financial operations of the Council;
- report to Council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year;
- to demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
- has no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the Council

2.8. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:

- perform any operational duties for the Council;
- initiate or approve accounting transactions; or
- direct the activities of any Council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.

2.9. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.

2.10. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

2.11. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all Councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

3. Annual estimates (budget) and forward planning

3.1. The RFO must each year, by no later than November, prepare detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year in the form of a budget to be considered by the [relevant committee and the] Council.

3.3. The Council shall consider annual budget proposals in relation to the Council's three year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments including recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding and update the forecast accordingly.

3.4. The Council shall fix the precept (council tax requirement), and relevant basic amount of Council tax to be levied for the ensuing financial year not later than by the end of January each year. The RFO shall issue the precept demand to the billing authority and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved annual budget.

3.5. The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

4. Budgetary control and authority to spend

4.1. Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:

- the Council for all items over £30,000;
- the Town Clerk, in conjunction with the Chair of the appropriate committee for items £15,00 - £30,000
- the Town Clerk for items up to £15,000

Such authority is to be evidenced by a minute or by an authorisation slip duly signed by the Town Clerk, and where necessary also by the appropriate Chair.

Contracts may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by these regulations.

4.2. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure other than by resolution of the Council, or duly delegated committee. During the budget year and with the approval of Council having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate ('virement').

4.3. Unspent provisions in the revenue or capital budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year.

4.4. The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually in October for the following financial year and such review shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chair of Council or relevant committee. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.

4.5. In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of Council services, the clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the Council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £10000. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.

4.6. No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the Council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.

4.6-4.7. Prior to committing any expenditure funded via externally sourced borrowing including Public Works Loan Board (PWL) loans, the Council must specifically approve both the amount and use of PWLB for that purpose. For such spend, the provisions of Financial Regulations in relation to delegation of authority to committees or officers shall not apply. The approval of the Council should be re-sought if the Council is not contractually committed to the spend within 6 months.

4.7-4.8. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations relating to contracts.

4.8-4.9. The RFO shall regularly provide the Council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared monthly presented at the end of each financial quarter to Council and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose "material" shall be in excess of or 15% of the budget.

4.9-4.10. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by Council as part of the budgetary control process.

5. Banking arrangements and authorisation of payments

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.

5.2. The RFO shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation by two of the Council's Authorised Signatories. The Authorised Signatories shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself shall authorise payment by signing the schedule. This shall be deemed as authorisation by the RFO or Town Clerk to activate the electronic payments using the Council's Electronic Banking System. ~~At every Council meeting~~ The RFO shall present a full list of payments monthly which have been authorised by the Authorised Signatories for retrospective formal ratification.

5.3. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the RFO to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the Council.

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5.4. The RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted.

5.5. The Town Clerk (with the exception of 4.5 above) and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of items only in the following circumstances:

a) If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled Meeting of Council, where the Clerk and RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of Council [or finance committee];

b) An expenditure item authorised under 5.6 below (continuing contracts and obligations) provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of Council [or finance committee]; or

c) Fund transfers within the Councils banking arrangements.

5.6. For each financial year the Clerk and RFO shall draw up a list of due payments which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation (such as but not exclusively) Salaries, PAYE and NI, Superannuation Fund and regular maintenance contracts and the like for which Council may authorise payment for the year provided that the requirements of regulation 4.1 (Budgetary Controls) are adhered to, provided also that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of Council.

5.7. A record of regular payments made under 5.6 above shall be drawn up and be signed by two members on each and every occasion when payment is authorised - thus controlling the risk of duplicated payments being authorised and / or made.

5.8. In respect of grants a duly authorised committee shall approve expenditure within any limits set by Council and in accordance with any policy statement approved by Council. Any Revenue or Capital Grant in excess of £2,000 shall before payment, be subject to ratification by resolution of the Council.

5.9. Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the Council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.

5.10. The Council will aim to rotate the duties of members in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.

5.11. Any changes in the recorded details of suppliers, such as bank account records, shall be approved in writing by the RFO.

5.12. The Council shall retain a file with the details of all suppliers whose invoices are paid by regular Direct Debit. The nominated Councillor in 2.2 above shall take a random sample of invoices to ensure that the details match those held in the Council's accounting software

5.13. Bank Statements shall be received on a regular basis and reconciled with the Council's Cashbook. A copy of the Bank Reconciliation for each month shall be presented to the Council as part of a monthly Financial Report.

6. Instructions for the making of payments

6.1. The Council will adhere to make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.

6.2. Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 5 above, the Council, a duly delegated committee or, if so delegated, the Clerk or RFO shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.

6.3. All payments shall be ~~affected by~~ BACS, transfer, cheque, direct debit, and standing orders or other instructions to the Council's bankers, or otherwise, in accordance with a resolution of Council [or duly delegated committee].

6.4. Due to the volume of payments from the Council's bank, the primary method of payment shall be via electronic banking as set out in 5.2 above. The schedule of payments shall be signed by two Authorised Signatories and those schedules shall then be presented to the next Council meeting for ratification.

6.5. In the event that a payment is required by cheque, they shall be signed by two Authorised Signatories. To indicate agreement between the details shown on the cheque and the invoice or other supporting documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.

6.6. If thought appropriate by the Council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates may be made by variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed by two Authorised Signatories and any payments are reported to Council as made. The approval of the use of a variable direct debit shall be renewed by resolution of the Council at least every two years.

6.7. If thought appropriate by the Council, payment for certain items may be made by banker's Standing Order provided that the instructions are signed, or otherwise evidenced by two Authorised Signatories are retained and any payments are reported to Council as made. The approval of the use of a banker's Standing Order shall be renewed by resolution of the Council at least every two years.

6.8. If thought appropriate by the Council, payment for certain items may be made by BACS or CHAPS methods provided that the instructions for each payment are signed, or otherwise evidenced, by two authorised bank signatories, are retained and any payments are reported to Council as made. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the Council at least every two years.

~~6.9. If thought appropriate by the Council payment for certain items may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained showing which members approved the payment.~~

~~6.10.~~ 6.9. No employee or Councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the Council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the Council or a duly delegated committee.

~~6.11.~~ 6.10 Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall

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| be stored securely away from the computer in question, and preferably remotely.

~~6.12.~~ 6.11 The Council, and any members using computers for the Council's financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.

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~~6.13.~~ Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate approved by the Council shall identify a number of Councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts.

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~~6.14.~~ 6.13 Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under "favourites"), and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for Council banking work. Breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.

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~~6.15.~~ 6.14 Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written hard copy notification by the supplier and supported by authority for change signed by two Authorised Signatories. A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.

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~~6.16.~~ 6.15 Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £5000 unless authorised by Council.

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~~6.17.~~ 6.16 A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the Council. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to the Council and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the Council.

~~6.18.~~ 6.17 Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the Council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month- end. Personal credit or debit cards of ~~##~~Members or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.

~~6.19.~~ 6.18 The RFO may provide petty cash to ~~O~~officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made shall be forwarded to the RFO with a claim for reimbursement.

a) The ~~RFO~~ Finance Manager shall maintain a petty cash float ~~up to of~~ £300 for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept to substantiate the payment.

b) Income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.

c) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on the schedule of payments presented to Council under 5.2 above.

7.7 Payment of salaries

7.4.7.1 As an employer, the Council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salary rates shall be as agreed by Council, or duly delegated committee.

7.2.7.2 Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be required to be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to the next available Council meeting, as set out in these regulations above.

7.3.7.3 No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Council.

7.4.7.4 Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential record (confidential cash book). This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:

- a) by any Councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;
- b) by the internal auditor;
- c) by the external auditor; or
- d) by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.

7.5.7.5 The total of such payments in each calendar month shall be reported with all other payments as made as may be required under these Financial Regulations, to ensure that only payments due for the period have actually been paid.

7.6.7.6 An effective system of personal performance management should be maintained for the senior officers.

7.7.7.7 Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and reported to the Council. Termination payments shall only be authorised by Council.

8.8 Loans and investments

8.1.8.1 All borrowings shall be affected in the name of the Council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The application for borrowing approval, and subsequent arrangements for the loan shall only be approved by Full Council.

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8-2-8.2 Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State/Welsh Assembly Government (such as Hire Purchase or Leasing of tangible assets) shall be subject to approval by the Full Council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Council in respect of value for money for the proposed transaction.

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8-3-8.3 The Council will arrange with the Council's banks and investment providers for the sending of a copy of each statement of account to the RFO.

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8-4-8.4 All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Council and shall be for a set period in accordance with Council policy.

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8-5-8.5 The Council shall consider the need for an Investment Strategy and Policy which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the Council at least annually.

8-6-8.6 All investments of money under the control of the Council shall be in the name of the Council.

8-7-8.7 All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.

8-8-8.8 Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with Regulation 5 (Authorisation of payments) and Regulation 6 (Instructions for payments).

9.9 Income

9-1-9.1 The collection of all sums due to the Council shall be the responsibility of and under the ~~management~~supervision of the RFO.

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9-2-9.2 Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the Council, notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Council.

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9-3-9.3 The Council will review all fees and charges at least annually, following a report of the Town Clerk.

9-4-9.4 Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the Council and shall be written off in the year.

9-5-9.5 All sums received on behalf of the Council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the Council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.

9-6-9.6 The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.

9-7-9.7 Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council.

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~~9.8.9.8~~ The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.

~~9.9~~ Where any ~~significant~~ sums of cash are regularly received by the Council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the Council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance ~~and~~ that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, ~~and that a~~

~~9.10~~ When the level of cash is more than £500, ~~A~~ appropriate care ~~including deploying two staff members,~~ is taken in the security and safety of individuals ~~during banking transactions, market, car park operations and others, when such cash is in transit.~~

~~9.9.~~

~~10.10~~ Orders for work, goods and services

~~10.1.10.1~~ An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained.

~~10.2.10.2~~ Order books shall be controlled by the RFO.

~~10.3.10.3~~ All ~~M~~members and ~~O~~officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An ~~O~~fficer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimis provisions in Regulation 11.1 below.

~~10.4.10.4~~ A ~~m~~Member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the Council.

~~10.5.10.5~~ The RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved. ~~This is~~ so that the minutes can record the power being used.

~~11.11~~ Contracts

~~11.1.11.1~~ Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:

a) Every contract shall comply with these Financial Regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that this regulation need not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:

- i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
- ii. for specialist services such as are provided by legal professionals acting in disputes;
- iii. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;

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iv. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council;

v. for additional audit work of the external auditor up to an estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum the Clerk and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council); and

vi. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and / or are only sold at a fixed price.

b) Where the Council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 ("~~the~~ Regulations") which is valued at £25,000 or more, the Council shall comply with the relevant requirements of "~~the~~ Regulations"².

c) The full requirements of "~~the~~ Regulations", as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in "~~the~~ Regulations" set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU (which may change from time to time)³.

d) When applications are made to waive Financial Regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the Council.

e) Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.

f) All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one ~~M~~member of Council.

g) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Orders of the Council, and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.

h) When it is to enter into a contract of less than £25,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk or RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £3,000 the Clerk or RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10.3 above shall apply.

i) The Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest ~~of~~ any tender, quote or estimate.

² The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website to advertise contract opportunities, set out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and to publicise the award of new contracts

³ Thresholds currently applicable are:

a) For public supply and public service contracts 209,000 Euros (£181,302)

b) For public works contracts 5,225,000 Euros (£4,551,413)

j) Should it occur that the Council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the Council requires further pricing. This is provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.

42.12 Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

42.1.12.1 Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).

42.2.12.2 Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case where it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum of 5% or more, a report shall be submitted to the Council.

42.3.12.3 Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the Council and Clerk to the contractor in writing, the Council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

43.13 Stores and equipment

43.1.13.1 The Officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section.

43.2.13.2 Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made. This will be checked to the invoice to ensure the Council is not being overcharged.

43.3.13.3 Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.

43.4.13.4 The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

44.14 Assets, properties and estates

44.1.14.1 The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the Council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties held by the Council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.

44.2.14.2 No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the Council, together with

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any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £15,000.

~~14.3.14.3~~ No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the Council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case~~;~~ (including an ~~adequate~~appropriate level of consultation with the electorate).

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~~14.4.14.4~~ No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full Council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case~~;~~ (including an ~~adequate~~appropriate level of consultation with the electorate).

~~14.5.14.5~~ Subject only to the limit set in Regulation 14.2 above, no tangible moveable property shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full Council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Council with a full business case.

~~14.6.14.6~~ The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

~~15.15~~ Insurance

~~15.1.15.1~~ Following the annual risk assessment (per Regulation 17), the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers.

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~~15.2.15.2~~ The Clerk shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.

~~15.3.15.3~~ The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the Council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.

~~15.4.15.4~~ The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage~~;~~ or of any event likely to lead to a claim and shall report these to Council at the next available meeting.

~~15.5.15.5~~ All appropriate ~~M~~members and ~~e~~Employees of the Council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually by the Council, or duly delegated committee.

~~16.16~~ Risk management

~~16.1.16.1~~ The Council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Clerk ~~as with~~ the RFO shall prepare, for approval by the Council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the Council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the Council at least annually.

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~~16.2~~ When considering any new activity, the Clerk ~~as with~~ the RFO shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the

Council.

16.3 The Finance Manager will act as the Deputy RFO. They will maintain an additional and complementary overview of the financial function and will act to critique and challenge full and proper adherence to the Council's Financial Regulations. This will also act to increase the Council's capacity, specialist functional knowledge and coverage of this important statutory role. Any concerns must be escalated to Members.

8.1

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17.17 Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

17.17.1 It shall be the duty of the Council to review the Financial Regulations of the Council from time to time. The Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the Council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these Financial Regulations.

17.17.2 The Council may, by resolution of the Council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of Council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all Members of Council.

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BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUCIL
Report to Full Council Meeting
11th April 2023
Second Interim Internal Audit Report 2022/2023

Implications of Recommendations

Corporate Strategy: FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE: Ensure that the Town Council continues to operate within legislation, regulation, ethical guidelines and best practice.

Finance: Not applicable.

Equality: Not applicable.

Environment: Not applicable.

Community Safety: Not applicable.

Background

The second Interim Internal Audit Report from Auditing Solutions Limited is attached for Members to consider.

They have concluded that, based on the programme of work undertaken this year to date the Council has again maintained more than adequate and effective internal control arrangements.

They have also acknowledged the quality of records maintained by the staff and thanked them for their assistance.

Members will note that the AGAR report will be the last from Auditing Solutions Limited. The new provider being Heelis & Lodge.

Recommendation:

For Members to consider.

Peter Tarrant
Clerk & Chief Executive

Appendix:

Appendix A: Second Interim Internal Audit Report 2022/2023



Biggleswade Town Council

Internal Audit Report 2022-23 (2nd Interim)

Sally King

For Auditing Solutions Ltd

Background

All town and parish councils are required by statute to make arrangements for an independent internal audit examination of their accounting records and system of internal control and for the conclusions to be reported each year in the Annual Return. Auditing Solutions Ltd has provided this service to Biggleswade Town Council since 2004,

This report sets out the work undertaken in relation to the 2022-23 financial year, during our visits on 21st December 2022 and 8th March 2023.

Internal Audit Approach

In undertaking our review for the year to date, we have had regard to the materiality of transactions and their susceptibility to potential mis-recording or misrepresentation in the year-end Annual Governance and Accountability Return. We have employed a combination of selective sampling techniques (where appropriate) and 100% detailed checks in several key areas to gain sufficient assurance that the Council's financial and regulatory systems and controls are appropriate and fit for the purposes intended.

Our programme of cover has been designed to afford appropriate assurance that the Council's financial systems are robust and operate in a manner to ensure effective probity of transactions and to afford a reasonable probability of identifying any material errors or possible abuse of the Council's own and the national statutory regulatory framework. The programme is also designed to facilitate our completion of the 'Annual Internal Audit Report' in the Council's Annual Return, which requires independent assurance over several internal control objectives.

Overall Conclusion

We have concluded that, based on the programme of work undertaken this year to date the Council has again maintained more than adequate and effective internal control arrangements. We are again pleased to acknowledge the quality of records maintained by the staff and thank them for their assistance, which has ensured the smooth progress of our review process.

Detailed Report

Maintenance of Accounting Records & Bank Reconciliations

Our objective here is to ensure that the accounting records are being maintained accurately and currently and that no anomalous entries appear in cashbooks or financial ledgers. To that end, we have: -

- Noted that the Council's financial transactions are now processed mainly in house; with some support from third party contractors (DCK Accounting Services Ltd).
- Ensured that an appropriate coding structure remains in place on the Omega accounting system to meet the needs of the Council's reporting requirements.
- Agreed the year's opening balances on the Omega accounting records to those reported in the closing Statement of Accounts and Annual Return for 2021-22.
- Ensured that the financial ledger remains in balance at the present date.
- Noted that the Council has changed its current account from Lloyds to Unity bank from 22nd November 2022, with the salary account to follow a month later.
- Checked and agreed transactions the Council's Current account cashbooks to the relevant bank account statements for April 2022, August 2022, and December 2022.
- Checked detail on the Omega based bank account reconciliations for the year to December 2022 ensure that no long-standing, uncleared cheques, or other anomalous entries exist.

Conclusion

We are pleased to report that there are no issues to date in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation. Further work will be undertaken at our final visit.

Review of Corporate Governance

Our objective here is to ensure that the Council has a robust regulatory framework in place; that Council and Committee meetings are conducted in accordance with the adopted Standing Orders; those financial transactions are made in accordance with the extant Financial Regulations and that we have a reasonable chance of identifying any actions of a potentially unlawful nature that have been or may be considered for implementation. Consequently: -

- We have continued our review of the full Council and standing Committee minutes for the financial year to ensure that no issues affecting the Council's financial stability either in the short, medium, or long term exist; and
- We note that Financial Regulations were amended and readopted at the Full Council meeting held on 24th May 2022 (minute ref 22/0030.1. 2022).
- Standing Orders are under review.

- Reviewed the external auditor's report, issued since our last visit, and noted comments made.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no issues have been identified in this area, warranting further comment.

Review of Expenditure

Our aim here is to ensure that, in addition to confirming that sound financial control procedures are in place: -

- Council resources are released in accordance with the Council's approved procedures and budgets.
- Appropriate procedures are in place to ensure compliance with the Council's SOs and FRs regarding tendering and quotation action noting that the FRs require a revised formal tender for procurement as detailed above.
- Payments are supported by appropriate documentation, either in the form of an original trade invoice or other appropriate form of document confirming the payment as due and/or an acknowledgement of receipt, where no other form of invoice is available.
- Where applicable, appropriate contracting arrangements are in place and that they comply with the Council's current Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
- All discounts due on goods and services supplied are identified and appropriate action taken to secure the discount.
- The correct expense codes have been applied to invoices when processed; and
- VAT has been appropriately identified and coded to the control account for periodic recovery.

To ensure compliance with the above criteria, we have examined a sample of 76 payments processed in the financial year from April 2022 to February 2023. Our test sample provides a broad cross section of payments and supplier invoices totalling £391,514.35.

It was noted that VAT Returns continue to be filed electronically on a quarterly basis.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no matters have arisen in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation. Further work will be undertaken in this area on our final visits.

Assessment and Management of Risk

Our aim here is to ensure that the Council has put in place appropriate arrangements to identify all potential areas of risk of both a financial and health and safety nature, whilst also

ensuring that appropriate arrangements exist to monitor and manage those risks to minimise the opportunity for their coming to fruition.

The Financial Risk Assessment Registers were reviewed by F & GP Committee on 15th March 2022 (ref 9c).

We note that the Council's insurance cover is provided by Local Councils, have examined the current year's policy schedule effective from 10th August 2022 to 31st March 2023. Both Public and Employer's Liability are set at £10 million and Fidelity Guarantee at £1 million.

Conclusion

We consider that the Council has effective risk management processes in place.

Review of Income

Our objective in this area is to ensure that all income due to the Council is identified for prompt recovery and banking. In addition to the precept, the Council receives income from a variety of other sources including playing field hire, allotments, car parking, cemetery, general and farmers markets.

On our visit on 21st December 2022, we have examined the procedures relating to Cemetery Fees, reviewing the Burials Register, Exclusive Rights of Burial and Memorials records examining a sample of entries relating to each area covering the period from April 2022 to November 2022. This is to ensure that each is supported by all relevant and legally required documentation and that the appropriate fees have been levied and recovered within a reasonable time. Also examined on this visit was the collection of parking monies from the car park ticket machines, testing a sample of ticket receipts to the collection summary and bank statements.

On our second interim visit we examined income streams of allotments, hire of football pitches and the Orchard Community Centre.

Allotment rent letters are issued using Rialtus software. We are pleased to note at the time of the audit there were only 5 invoices outstanding, 4 of these were being new tenants. The Council has implemented a new booking system for the Orchard Community Centre and football pitches, this is managed by the Accounts Administrator. The Council also now accepts card payments through Stripe.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no matters have arisen in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Petty Cash, Credit Cards & Fuel Cards

We are required, as part of the annual Internal Audit Certification process on the Annual Return, to indicate the soundness of controls in this area of the Council's financial activities and note that there is an imprest style petty cash scheme. Use of the petty cash is being

discouraged; a physical check of the cash held was undertaken on this visit which had been reconciled to the end of February 2023.

The Council uses a credit card held by The Clerk for certain purchases, we are pleased to note that robust procedures have been implemented regarding its use. As part of our testing procedures the January 2023 entries were checked to the statement.

We note that the fuel card receipts are not attached to the invoices received from the provider and advise that it is good practice to do so.

Conclusions

There are no matters arising in this area to warrant formal comment or recommendation.

Salaries and HR

We note that payroll services continue to be produced by a local bureau provider (GH Online). The Council has implemented a new HR system (Citrus HR). This is also used to manage overtime payments, using email approval by the line manager before submission to the payroll provider.

We are pleased to report that no matters have arisen in this area of our review process warranting formal comment or recommendation. Further work will be undertaken in this area on our final visit.

Investments and Loans

Our objectives here are to ensure that the Council is investing “surplus funds”, be they held temporarily or on a longer term basis, in appropriate banking and investment institutions and that the Council is obtaining the best rate of return on the funds held, with any interest earned brought to account correctly and appropriately in the accounting records, also that any loan repayments due to or payable by the Council are transacted in accordance with the relevant loan agreements.

During our visits we test repayments of PWLB loans as recorded in the Council’s accounts to independent PWLB statements. We have agreed the repayments to the bank statements as in relation to our work on accounting and bank reconciliation.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no matters have arisen in this area of our review process to date warranting formal comment or recommendation. Further work will be undertaken in this area at our final visit to ensure the accurate balances are recorded in the AGAR.

Asset Register

The Governance and Accountability Manual requires all councils to develop and maintain a register of assets identifying detail of all land, buildings, vehicles, furniture, and equipment owned by the Council.

We are pleased to note that the Council holds a detailed asset register updated by DCK to include additions and disposals during the financial year.

Conclusion

We are pleased to report that no matters have arisen in this area of our review process to date warranting formal comment or recommendation. Further work will be undertaken in this area at our final visit to ensure the accurate balances are recorded in the AGAR.



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tritaxsymmetry.com

Mr Tarrant
Biggleswade Town Council
The Old Court House
4 Saffron Road
Biggleswade
Beds
SG18 8DL

4th April 2023

Dear Mr Tarrant,

RE: CB/22/04252/FULL – Land at Springfield Bungalow and Stratton Farm Cottages London Road, Land at Bridleway 58 to the south of Dunton Lane and Land to the south of Stratton Business Park, Gold road, Biggleswade (Symmetry Park Phase 3).

I am writing to provide an update on the above development proposals in response to the Town Council's consultation responses of 15th December and 30th March, I wanted to bring you up to date on our proposals for Phase 3 of Symmetry Park, Biggleswade which I hope will address the concerns that you have raised to date, and underline our long-term commitment to Biggleswade and the local community.

You will recently have received notification of re-consultation on the application following the submission of an updated version of the Environmental Statement (ES). This includes updated Chapters on Transportation and Air Quality (Sandy Air Quality Management Area), the latter required to reflect updated traffic distribution in the highways modelling that underpins the assessment in the former.

These updates to the ES followed detailed discussions with CBC Highways and the submission of additional detailed highways modelling, as summarised in Appendix 8.3 of the ES. We now understand that this additional information addresses all highways matters to the satisfaction of both National Highways and Central Bedfordshire Council Highways.

We have provided a response against each of the comments raised by the Town Council below:

15th December 2022

"The Town Council OBJECTS to this planning application on the grounds of traffic congestion on the A1 south but note that if officers are minded to pass this application then Biggleswade Town Council would like to see Section 106 money related to speeding, access to the A1, leisure facilities and in terms of sustainable transport to the Town Centre in terms of buses."

Response 1:

As identified above, we have now addressed matters of highways impacts and traffic to the satisfaction of both National Highways and Central Bedfordshire Council Highways. The application is supported by a package of conditions and Section 106 obligations (full draft HoTs included) that address the concerns raised below.

- 1.1 Speeding:
 - A speed survey has been undertaken along Pegasus Drive informing the analysis
 - As part of the wider package of improvements, a 3m-wide shared-use footway and cycleway will be provided along Pegasus Drive from the London Road roundabout to tie in with the existing route running in front of the Co-Op, just to the east of Market Garden Road
 - The proposed scheme will include Vehicle Management signs, provision of speed roundels, and provision of pedestrian/cycle crossing points which will all act as additional speed deterrents
 - These measures will be secured by Condition
- 1.2 Access to the A1:
 - Capacity improvements at the Pegasus Drive / A6001 London Road Roundabout that will incorporate an improved pedestrian/cycle crossing connecting into Lancaster Way have been proposed
 - The improvements allow for two lanes of entry from Pegasus Drive to London Road, and tracking has been provided to demonstrate that there is sufficient space for an HGV to enter in the left-hand lane (A1 bound), with car alongside in the right-hand lane (Biggleswade town centre bound)
 - The proposed improvements and pedestrian/cycle crossing have been subject to Road Safety Audit
 - These measures will be secured by Condition
- 1.3 Leisure Facilities:
 - A contribution of £170,400 will be provided to create a surface Rights of Way 'loop' around Phases 2 and 3 of Symmetry Park
 - This will involve both the upgrading of surfacing and status (from footpath to bridleway) of some existing routes, together with the creation of new sections of bridleway. The associated legal costs (£7,600) with the creation/upgrading of existing rights of way will also be secured, as set out in the accompanying Rights of Way Scheme
 - These enhanced rights of way will benefit not only occupiers and employees of Symmetry Park, but will be publicly accessible
 - A scheme of public art (secured by condition) will also be provided, and integrated with the rights of way enhancements as well as wider amenity area and trim trail associated with the development
 - The provision of cycle parking provision, shelters, lockers and shower facilities will also be incorporated within the units themselves
 - Pedestrian and cycle improvements along Pegasus Drive are identified at 1.1 above
- 1.4 Sustainable Transport to the Town Centre in terms of buses:
 - Funding of a shuttle bus service that will run between Biggleswade Train Station, the Town Centre, London Road, the A1 Retail Park, Stratton Business Park and Phases 1, 2 and 3 of Symmetry Park, Biggleswade will be provided for a period of up to 5

years, to support the establishment of a commercially viable service. The costs of c.£760,000 will be secured by way of Section 106 contributions

- Separate contributions secured by way of Section 106 agreement will fund a Travel Plan Co-Ordinator in post at Central Beds to assist with delivery of a viable commercial bus service, as well as highlighting the wider pedestrian/cycle/other options for sustainable modes of travel to the site
- The provision of onsite bus facilities including bus stop and layby will be secured by condition, as will the provision of additional flag bus stops outside phases 1 (Co-op) and 2 of Symmetry Park, Biggleswade
- Provision of a site-wide and unit-by-unit, Travel Plan to include measures to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport will also be secured by condition

30th March 2023

The Town Council objects to this planning application on the grounds of:

- *Traffic congestion at the A1S roundabout, cumulative from development so far but with another 1,850 houses the east of the town already consented.*

Response 2:

As identified under Response 1, we have now addressed matters of highways impacts and traffic to the satisfaction of both National Highways and Central Bedfordshire Council Highways. This included a cumulative assessment with all other approved developments, such that the necessary improvement works secured by condition take full account of these associated traffic impacts.

- *The need for sustainable transport to and from the town centre and nearby housing.*

Response 3:

Details of the proposed sustainable transport offer are set out under Response 1.4 above.

- *Over-long queues of traffic at the Pegasus Drive/London Road junction.*

Response 4:

As identified under Response 1, we have now addressed matters of highways impacts and traffic to the satisfaction of both National Highways and Central Bedfordshire Council Highways. Details of specific mitigation to be provided at the Pegasus Drive/London Road junction is identified under Response 1.2 above.

- *Pedestrian safety on Pegasus Drive.*

Response 5:

Matters relating to Pedestrian Safety along Pegasus Drive are addressed under Response 1.1 and 1.2 above.

- *The impact on Rights of Way.*

Response 6:

Matters relating to the impact on Rights of Way are addressed under Response 1.3 above.

- *Archaeological and ecological matters as referred to in officer reports.*

Response 7:

In terms of archaeology, updated Environmental Statement and trial trenching report has been reviewed by the Council's Archaeology Officer, who has confirmed that the presence of archaeology does not present an over-riding constraint on the development provided that further archaeological investigation is carried out before development commences, with a planning condition proposed to secure this. This is the same approach as has been taken in

respect of archaeology on both Phases 1 (Co-op) and 2 of Symmetry Park, Biggleswade and indeed on other recently developed phases of Stratton Business Park including that originally owned by CBC (Phase 5).

In terms of ecology, following discussions ecological matters have now been agreed to the satisfaction of CBC's Ecology Officer. Significant environmental and ecological benefits would also be achieved through the development, including:

- An overall Biodiversity Net Gain across the scheme
- 3.5ha of new wildflower grassland meadow to be created
- 1.31ha of new amenity grassland to be created
- Over 1.7km of new native hedgerows to be planted
- 1.6ha of new native woodland underplanted with wildflower grassland
- Planting of 441 additional trees and 0.055ha of amenity shrubs
- The provision of 10 bat boxes, 10 bird boxes, 2 hedgehog boxes, 12 invertebrate boxes and 4 hibernacula
- Provision and management of 4 skylark plots on adjoining land to offset the impacts of the development (secured by way of Section 106 obligation)
- The enhancements in landscaping and planting will aid in strengthening the existing natural boundaries that contain the site providing screening of the development from the wider landscape

Additional Updates

By way of a wider update on matters, an amended version of the Market Report has also been submitted in support of the application. This has been updated to reflect developments since the application was first submitted in November 2022. Notably, Phase 2 has now been fully let, further emphasising the strength of demand for logistics employment land outlined in the Market Report that accompanied the application.

Phase 2, consisting of three speculatively developed buildings, has been pre-let during construction to: Bidfood (Unit 02 - 160,000 sq ft); Bowman Ingredients, allowing expansion of an existing business within Stratton Business Park (Unit 03 - 75,408 sq ft); and Noatum Logistics (Unit 04 - 230,000 sq ft). The final unit had already been pre-committed to Bond International (Unit 05 - 112,000 sq ft). Of these, Noatum, Bidfood and Bowman are foreign owned businesses with extensive operations in the UK and as such are classed as Foreign Direct Investment into the UK and CBC with many tens of millions of pounds invested in the town.

The updated Marketing Report identifies that Phase 3 Symmetry Park Biggleswade is a strategic site that needs to be able to secure planning consent in order to be able to deliver much needed employment space within an area where there is none. Biggleswade currently has no consented employment land or larger scale existing buildings whereas demand within the wider South East Midlands LEP for warehouse space for larger buildings which includes Biggleswade currently stands at 90.2 million sq ft (source: Savills Warehousing and Logistics in the South East Midlands Report February 2023).

Recent take up within Biggleswade has been strong and the Phase 2 development has helped support the growth of existing Stratton Park occupiers such as Bowman Ingredients, regional occupiers looking to relocate to new more ESG (Environmental, Social & Governance) friendly units such as Bond International, as well as occupiers looking in a wider area but with the need

to occupy a unit immediately for business reasons such as Bidfood. All of this strong take up in Biggleswade is generating new jobs for local residents and providing them with a sustainable town with a range of quality jobs on the doorstep, thereby reducing out commuting and associated congestion. This demand / supply imbalance is expected to continue without new industrial / warehouse space being delivered with economic growth otherwise being constrained locally and regionally.

It is worth noting, of the 927,225 sq ft (86,142 sq m) of new development proposed at Phase 3, this will include 54,125 sq ft (5,028 sq m) of Grade A office accommodation for the HQ functions associated with the businesses occupying the proposed units. This adds to the already delivered c. 164,000 sq ft (15,236 sq m) of Grade A offices across the warehouse employment development delivered on Stratton Business Park over the past c. 5 years.

The only deliverable option to provide additional logistics employment land and secure significant inward investment opportunities and protect the ability of existing occupiers to expand in this market area in the short term is to grant permission for Symmetry Park Phase 3 and secure the wider benefits associated with the scheme. The success of Phase 2 has proven the business demand for quality, energy efficient and net zero carbon in construction buildings.

The application site is “oven-ready” forming a continuation of the highly successful Symmetry Park Biggleswade/Stratton Business Park, with access and utilities readily able to be extended to serve it. It therefore presents an ideal opportunity to provide deliverable employment land in an appropriate location in the short-term to meet this need and respond to clear market signals.

The scheme would deliver considerable economic benefits, a further requirement of Policy EMP3, as set out in detail in the submitted Socio-Economic ES Chapter and in the Planning Statement. These include:

- The creation of around 1,120 new jobs at the operational stage, plus additional jobs generated within the wider logistics supply chain
- Creation of a further 300 jobs during construction, with additional benefits to companies in the supply chain
- A construction spend estimated at £100 million (not including tenant fit out which could easily double this number)
- Increased local patronage to services and facilities from workers during both the construction and operational phases
- Increased business rates to CBC with estimated rates income from Phase 3 being in the region of £3m per annum

As exemplified by Symmetry Park 2, which was the first ‘net zero carbon in construction’ development of its type in Central Bedfordshire, Tritax Symmetry are committed to ensuring sustainable development principles are integral to their developments. The sustainability benefits of the Phase 3 scheme include:

- Delivery of all units to net zero carbon in construction
- Provision of PV panels on the building roofs with a commitment to a minimum energy provision from this source from first occupation, future-proofed to provide additional energy generation in response to occupier requirements

- Unique private network linked to a central energy centre (including battery and generator back up) connecting the various Symmetry Park phases and respective occupiers enabling them to 'share' green energy generated through the PV panels on the unit roofs
- Provision of EV charging facilities to 20% of car parking spaces, plus passive provision for 100% of car parking spaces
- Minimum target of a BREEAM rating of Very Good and EPC A

We would also welcome the opportunity to discuss our Community Benefit Fund with the Town Council. This has generated over £50,000 for local community projects for Phase 2 and will generate an additional c. £92,000 through development of Phase 3, subject to planning consent. We are currently discussing distribution of the Phase 2 funds with CBC.

I hope the above update is helpful and addresses any concerns the Town Council has with the application, but we would of course be more than happy to meet to discuss further.

Yours sincerely



Tom Leeming
Development Director

For and on behalf of Tritax Symmetry

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OUTCOME OF CBC DETERMINED PLANNING					
Address	Application No.	Committee date	BTC Decision	Description	Central Beds Outcome/DATE
2019					
Biggleswade, Land North of	19/04301/OUT	14/01/2020	Strongly Object - does not comply with NPPF and various other comments made against the Applicant	Outline Application: planning permission with all matters reserved except for access for the development of the land situated north of Biggleswade, east of the ECML railway to provide for up to 406 dwellings including affordable housing; green infrastructure accommodating landscaping, allotments, community orchard, public open space, children's playspace; new roads, car parking, cycleways and footways; associated infrastructure; including a sustainable drainage system; vehicular access to be secured from Furzenhall Road.	Awaiting Decision
Biggleswade, Land North of	19/02827/PAPC	08/09/2020	Strongly Object - For reasons set out in previous corresp Council also agreed that Cllr G Fage would be appointed to represent BTC and to speak at the Development Management Committee Meeting. It was resolved that the draft letter be approved, and that letter and the previous letter of objection be sent to the named planning officer and to the general planning address. Further, that a shorter version be circulated to Members of the CBC Development Management Committee for information.	Development Brief relating to residential scheme of around 400 dwellings at land north of Biggleswade, with access taken from Furzenhall Road.	No details as at 05/10/2022. PAPC applications are Private enquiries submitted before Planning Applications and only available to the Applicant/Agent that submitted them
Biggleswade, Land North of	19/04301/OUT	24/08/2021	Separate correspondence for this application has been sent to the Planning Officer, Nikolas Smith, as agreed with Council. Strongly Object - Due to: 1) Inadequate access to the site. 2) Severe Highways impact at Sun Street/Shortmead Street junction. 3) Severe Highways impact at Drove Road/London Road junction. 4) Exaggeration of site sustainability. 5) Reduction in Public Rights of Way. 6) Disruption to irreplaceable Archaeology.	Outline Application: planning permission with all matters reserved except for the development of the land situated north of Biggleswade, east of the ECML railway to provide for up to 416 dwellings including affordable housing; green infrastructure accommodating landscaping, allotments, community orchard, public open space, children's play space; new roads, car parking, cycleways and footways; associated infrastructure, including a sustainable drainage system; vehicular access to be secured from Furzenhall Road.	Awaiting Decision
Dunton Lane, Stratton Park Drive	19/02839/VOC	08/10/2019	No Objection	Variation of Condition no.1 on Planning Permission MB/83/456 "Renewal of Planning Permission for caravan park on a permanent basis" to state that the total number of caravans shall not exceed twenty-two at any time.	Awaiting Decision

2020					
Biggleswade Road, Land East of	20/00959/OUT	28/04/2020 and 11/08/2020, 13/10/2020	No Objection - provided the following points are considered: 1) Dunton Lane is upgraded. 2) The speed limit from Saxon Drive be reduced from the current 60 mile per hour to 40 miles per hour. 3) The necessary facilities be provided for pedestrian footpath and cyclist pathway. 4) Adequate access for Motorists to the A1.	Outline application: seeking Planning Permission for up to 1,500 dwellings (use Class C3) and up to a 2ha of commercial development dwellings (use Class C3) and up to a 2ha of commercial development (use Class A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1a,bc,B2, B8) up to 5ha of primary school development (class D1) and up to 4ha of other leisure and community development (Use Classes D1 and D2) up to 61 ha of open space including play space, allotments and a country park, infrastructure including site access, internal roads, car parking, footpaths, cycle ways, drainage and utilities. Subject to Environmental statement.	See Below
2021					
Shortmead Street, 130	21/02886/FULL	21/09/2021	No Objection - provided the neighbours are consulted and that any comments they may make are considered by CBC in their deliberations. Also, 1) Clarification of the extent of F1(a) use is required; 2) To limit education use of the premises to current use; 3) There are concerns about the limited parking.	Change of Use of a building from the existing mixed E(a) and Sui generis (hot food takeaway; A5), to primarily E(a) Use Class with an ancillary E use class and F1(a) educational use.	Awaiting Decision

2022					
A1 Retail Park, Unit E, London Road	22/03121/VOC	13/12/2022	It was RESOLVED that the Town Council STRONGLY OBJECTS to the variation of condition for Unit E. The original condition was put in place to protect the town centre and should stand.	Variation of Condition 20 of planning permission CB/14/01181/VOC (Variation of Condition 20 of planning application No. CB/14/01109/VOC dated 11/06/2014 to allow up to 5% of the ground floor area of any one single unit only to be used for the sale of food and to allow a pharmacy to operate from part of the unit. Wording of the condition to be amended to:" The development hereby approved for the units referred to as A, B, D, E, F,G, H, J, K, L, M, N, P, Homebase, 1 & 2 as shown on plan no. 8659 P02 Revision W shall be used for A1 (retail) but shall not be used for the sale of food, as a post office, for the sale of tickets, as a travel agency, for hairdressing, for the direction of funerals, for the reception of goods to be washed, cleaned or repaired, as an internet café where the primary purpose of the premises is to provide facilities for enabling members of the public to access the internet or as a pharmacy, except for Unit B, which can be in part used as a pharmacy and can sell food in up to 5% of its total ground floor area") - The variation is to increase the range of permitted goods that can be sold from the premises to facilitate reoccupation of the floorspace by incoming tenant, Poundland. Previously on Council Agenda 22/03121/VOC on Council Agenda 23/08/2022. Outcome as Town Council STRONGLY OBJECTS to the variation of condition for Unit B. The original condition was put in place to protect the town centre and should stand.	Awaiting Decision
Biggleswade, Land North of	19/04301/OUT	22/11/2022	Town Council Strongly Objects and called to move the item to EXEMPT agenda.		Report from Transport Consultants to be submitted to Council for discussion before sending to CBC.
Land at Bonds Lane and Foundry Lane	22/04159/VOC	22/11/2022	It was RESOLVED that the Town Council has NO OBJECTION to the variations to this planning application. However, the Town Council does OBJECT to the variation regarding changes to cycle storage due to new proposals being less accessible.	CB/18/02353/FULL on Council Agenda - Variation of condition numbers 11, 13, 16, 17 and 19 in respect of planning permission CB/18/02353/FULL (Demolition of existing vacant and derelict buildings and erection of 50 residential apartments with associated vehicular access, car and cycle parking, refuse storage and landscape). Variation sought to new plan numbers and substitute previously approved drawings for condition 19.	Awaiting Decision

London Road, Unit E, A1 Retail Park	22/03121/VOC	23/08/2022	Town Council STRONGLY OBJECTS to the variation of condition for Unit B. The original condition was put in place to protect the town centre and should stand.	Variation of Condition 20 of planning permission CB/14/01181/VOC (Variation of Condition 20 of planning application No. CB/14/01109/VOC dated 11/06/2014 to allow up to 5% of the ground floor area of any one single unit only to be used for the sale of food and to allow a pharmacy to operate from part of the unit. Wording of the condition to be amended to:" The development hereby approved for the units referred to as A, B, D, E, F,G, H, J, K, L, M, N, P, Homebase, 1 & 2 as shown on plan no. 8659 P02 Revision W shall be used for A1 (retail) but shall not be used for the sale of food, as a post office, for the sale of tickets, as a travel agency, for hairdressing, for the direction of funerals, for the reception of goods to be washed, cleaned or repaired, as an internet café where the primary purpose of the premises is to provide facilities for enabling members of the public to access the internet or as a pharmacy, except for Unit B, which can be in part used as a pharmacy and can sell food in up to 5% of its total ground floor area") - The variation is to increase the range of permitted goods that can be sold from the premises to facilitate reoccupation of the floorspace by incoming tenant, Poundland.	Awaiting Decision
Normandy lane, Unit B	22/03438/FULL	27/09/2022	No Objection - There is a concern regarding the parking.	Extension to factory building to accommodate 4 additional units for flexible use comprising Class B8 (storage and distribution), B2 and Class E(g)iii (light industrial)	Awaiting Decision
Salcombe Close, Land West	22/01990/FULL	28/06/2022	It was <u>RESOLVED</u> that the Town Council would like to <u>PROVISIONALLY OBJECT</u> to this planning application pending provision of the following information: 1) further information is required on the sizing of mounds and elevations in the play area; 2) the potential effect of the proposed lighting on the existing neighbours on Sale Mews; and 3) information on why the CCTV is not under variations to conditions.	Flatten the existing mounds in the play area, install lighting columns, and improve the perimeter fence.	Awaiting Decision
Shortmead Cottage, Shortmead Lane	22/01860/FULL	28/06/2022	It was RESOLVED that the Town Council has NO OBJECTION to this planning application.	Erection of new dwelling with a detached annexe.	Awaiting Decision
Springfield Bungalow & Stratton Farm Cottages Land, land at bridleway 58 to the south of Dunton Lane and land south of Stratton Business Park	22/04252/FULL	13/12/2022	It was RESOLVED that the Town Council OBJECTS to this planning application on the grounds of traffic congestion on the A1 south but note that if Officers are minded to pass this application then Biggleswade Town Council would like to see Section 106 money related to speeding, access to the A1, leisure facilities and in terms of sustainable transport to the Town Centre in terms of buses.	Demolition of 3 existing dwellings and the construction of 3 B8 units, together with associated access, vehicle parking, landscaping, and all other ancillary works.	Awaiting Decision
Stratton Upper School, Eagle Farm Road,	22/03441/FULL	27/09/2022	No Objection to this planning application provided the neighbours are consulted and that any comments they may make are considered by CBC in their deliberations.	Erection of 255 no roof mounted photovoltaic solar panels and 9 no floor level air source heat pump units.	Awaiting Decision

Potton Road, Land at former Scaffolding Depot	22/02691/FULL	08/09/2022	It was RESOLVED that the Town Council OBJECTS to this planning application as•The traffic impact on Furzenhall Road and Potton Road. •There are too many dwellings hence overdevelopment. •Loss of residential parking on Winston Crescent. •Properties would be very close to the railways line which will lead to noise pollution for residents. The Town Council notes that the Highways Officer has objected.	Erection of ten dwellings and the conversion of an existing building into two one bed flats.	Awaiting Decision
2023					
Arnold Rise, 11, Biggleswade, SG18 8UF	23/00010/FULL	28/03/2023	The Town Council has no objection to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments	Converting part of an existing garage into a small office with new window to the rear.	Awaiting Decision
Biggleswade, Land North of	19/04301/OUT	10/01/2023	It was RESOLVED that the Town Council STRONGLY OBJECTS to this planning application on the grounds of the letter circulated in the Town Council agenda pack, which must be sent to Senior Central Bedfordshire Council Officers, and attaching with it the Transport Consultants' Review.		Awaiting Decision
Dhillion Farm, Dunton Lane,	22/04966/FULL	14/02/2023	It was RESOLVED that the Town Council has NO OBJECTION to this planning application provided that the neighbours are consulted and that any comments they may make are considered by CBC in their deliberations.	Erection of palisade fencing and CCTV/lighting columns	Awaiting Decision
Drove Road, 36	23/00238/FULL	14/02/2023	The Town Council OBJECTS to this planning application on the grounds that the application is different from its first application in 2019 and there is not an up to date transport and traffic survey.	Erection of 3 no. dwellings. Demolition of a single storey side and rear extension to existing dwelling	Awaiting Decision
High Street,8, Biggleswade, SG18 0JL	22/04939/ADV	14/03/2023	The Town council objects to the planning application on the grounds that - a. The building is in a conservation area. No consideration has been given to this in the application. b. It is visually disruptive to the street scene. And c. It is inconsistent with the Central Bedfordshire design principles.	Advertisement: sign 1 - 1 x Internally illuminated fascia, sign 2 - 1 x internally illuminated fascia, sign - 3 1 x internally illuminated fascia, sign 4 1 x IIPS wall mounted projection sign DS internally luminated, sign 5 - 2 x Double sided illuminated poster display unit, sign 6 - 2 x window vinyls, sign 7 - 1 x window vinyl, 8 - 2 x window vinyls	Awaiting Decision
Holme Crescent, 2, Biggleswade, SG18 8DA	CB/23/00744/FULL	28/03/2023	The Town Council object to this planning application on the grounds of overdevelopment.	Demolition of existing garage & erection of a two-storey dwelling.	Awaiting Decision
Land off Drove Road, adj to 1A Drove Road	23/00003/DOC	24/01/2023	The Town Council STRONGLY OBJECT to the discharge conditions on this application as Council would like to see the conditions in place ahead of any planning approval.	Discharge of Conditions 6,8,9,11,12,13 and 21 against planning permission CB/22/00575/FULL (Erection of 5 dwellings with associated car park, access road and amenity space and proposed stopping up of the highway)	Discharge of Condition Decision Released

Land north of Lindsell's Level Crossing, Biggleswade	22/04935/ VOC	24/01/2023	The Town Council NOTED the shorter ramps and changes to right of way; however Council STRONGLY OBJECT, as they have done previously in August 2022, as this will present even less landscaping.	Variation of condition 8 of planning permission CB/21/02168/FULL: Construction of new ramped and stepped bridleway bridge to facilitate the closure of Lindsell's level crossing; formation of new bridleway to western side of railway and associated works. Revised Plans	Variation of Condition - Granted
Land adj to Furzenhall Road, Biggleswade, SG18 0ES	23/00691/TDM	14/03/23	The Town Council has NO OBJECTION to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments. However, the Town Council noted that they OBJECT to the telecommunications mast being moved closer to homes in the area. The Council believes the planning application, which currently shows the location of the mast, is the best possible situation for its location.	Telecommunications Determination Masts: Installation of a 22.5m high monopole supporting 6no. antennas and 2no. 300mm dishes along with 4no. ground based equipment cabinets within a 6m x 6m compound and development ancillary thereto.	Awaiting Decision
London Road, 107, Biggleswade, SG18 8EE	23/00868/FULL	28/03/23	The Town Council has no objection to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.	Rear side extension with timber posts to support flat roof and car port.	Awaiting Decision
London Road, 220, SG18 8PJ	23/00480/FULL	14/03/23	The Town Council has NO OBJECTION to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.	Proposed conversion of an existing bungalow with loft conversion to a two storey house with loft conversion	Awaiting Decision
Market Square,17, Biggleswade, SG18 8AS	22/03466/ADV	14/03/23	The Town council objects to the planning application on the grounds that - a. The building is in a conservation area. No consideration has been given to this in the application.b. It is visually disruptive to the street scene. And c. It is inconsistent with the Central Bedfordshire design principles.	Advertisement: Retrospective illuminated fascia sign and illuminated projecting sign	Awaiting Decision
1 Rowletts View,	23/00464/FULL	14/03/2023	The Town Council has NO OBJECTION to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.	First floor rear extension	Awaiting Decision
Shortmead Street, 43, SG18 0AT	TCA/23/00098	14/03/23	The Town Council has NO OBJECTION to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.	Works to a tree within a Conservation Area: Prune back overhanging branches of Willow tree.	Awaiting Decision

Shortmead Street, 46	23/00170/LB	14/02/2023	It was RESOLVED that the Town Council has NO OBJECTION to this planning application, however the Council raised concerns to CBC with regards to parking on such a busy street.	Listed Building: change of use and conversion from shop to 1 residential dwelling and internal alterations.	Awaiting Decision
Simpson Lane, 14, Biggleswade, SG18 8YF	22/04808/FULL	28/03/23	The Town Council has no objection to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.	Installation of two first floor level air conditioning units to the side elevation.	Awaiting Decision
Land at Springfield Bungalow and Stratton Farm Cottages London Road, and Land to the south of Stratton Business Park Gold Road Biggleswade SG18 8UZ	CB/22/04252/FULL	28/03/23	<p>The Town Council objects to this planning application on the grounds of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Traffic congestion at the A1 Roundabout. •Sustainable transport to and from the Town Centre. •Queues of traffic. •Rights of way. •Archaeological and ecological matters presented in Officers reports. •Pedestrian safety particularly at the A1 roundabout. <p>The Council would like it to be noted that these issues relate to potential other expansions in the area and although supportive of growth, increased traffic congestion for both cars and pedestrians are a concern.</p>	Application seeking full planning permission for the demolition of 3 existing dwellings and the construction of 3 B8 units, together with associated access, vehicle parking, landscaping and all other ancillary works. Environmental Impact Assessment. Previously on agenda 13th December 2022.	Awaiting Decision
Sun Street, 27, SG18 0BP	23/00441/FULL	14/03/23	The Town Council has NO OBJECTION to this application, subject to consultation with neighbours and consideration of their comments.	Erection of 6'6" fence along the boundary of the property, where it meets the public footpath on both Sun Street and Fairfield Road.	Awaiting Decision
Woodlands, 11&12, Dunton Lane	22/04516/REG3	10/01/23	The Town Council OBJECTS to this planning application on the grounds that there is no flood risk or noise analysis reports present for this area. The item came back to the agenda on the 14th of Feb after which the Council OBJECTED to the use of transit pitches and noise levels coming from them when used as permanent pitches.	Change of use of land, from the stationing of two transit pitches to two permanent pitches for gypsy and traveller use, with associated parking and amenity units	Awaiting Decision

