



Ref: Agenda/F&GP– 17/01//2023

12<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

All Members of the Town Council are hereby summoned to the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting of Biggleswade Town Council that will take place on **Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> January** 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

Peter Tarrant  
Town Clerk & Chief Executive

Distribution: All Town Councillors  
Notice Boards  
The Press

Committee Members:

Cllr. R. Pullinger (Chair)  
Cllr. M. Foster (Vice Chair)  
Cllr. M North  
Cllr. D. Albone  
Cllr. I. Bond  
Cllr. G. Fage  
Cllr. M. Knight  
Cllr. H. Ramsay  
Cllr. M. Russell  
Cllr. D. Strachan

## 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. **CHAIRMAN'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\\_TtGSaKXXR3K05jeEuHoCwA](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_TtGSaKXXR3K05jeEuHoCwA)**

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**

None.

#### 6. **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

#### 7. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on **Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2022** at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

#### 8. **MATTERS ARISING**

- a. The Minutes of Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on **Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023** at the Office of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

#### 9. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- a. **Original Estimate & Precept 2023/2024**

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

- b. **Grants Process 2022/2023**

For Members to receive and consider a written report from the Finance Manager.

- c. **Annual Fees Review**

For Members to receive and consider a written report from the Finance Manager.

- d. **Orchard Centre Policy & Terms and Conditions**

For Members to receive and consider a written report from the Place Shaping Manager.

#### 10. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

- a. **Risk Assessment**

For Members to receive an oral update from the Head of Governance & Strategic Partnerships and the Finance Manager.

b **Unity Trust Bank**

For Members to receive a written report from the Finance Manager.

11. **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\\_TtGSaKXXR3K05jeEuHoCwA](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_TtGSaKXXR3K05jeEuHoCwA)**

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**.

12. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

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

(12a. Financial Assurance).

(12b. Utility Contracts).

(12c. Capital Assets Review – Working Group update).

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.





**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE  
MEETING ON TUESDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2022 AT THE OFFICES  
OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, 4  
SAFFRON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE COMMENCING AT 7.00PM**



**PRESENT:**

Cllr R. Pullinger (Chairman)  
Cllr M. Foster (Vice Chair)  
Cllr I. Bond  
Cllr G. Fage  
Cllr M. Knight  
Cllr M. North  
Cllr M. Russell  
Cllr D. Strachan

Mr P. Tarrant – Town Clerk & Chief Executive  
Mr K. Hosseini – Head of Governance & Strategic Planning  
Mr R. Youngs – Finance Manager  
Ms H. Calvert – Administration & HR Manager  
Ms. F. Gumush – Meetings Administrator

Members of the Public – 0

**Meeting Formalities:**

Following a reminder to meeting attendees, both panel and public, that this is a formal meeting, the Chairman 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 Chairman advised that attendees should not disclose any personal information of individuals as this would infringe the Data Protection Rights of the individual. The Chairman asked everyone to mute their microphones when not speaking.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr D Albone.

**ABSENT WITHOUT APOLOGIES**

None.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

a. **Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item** – None.

b. **Disclosable Non-pecuniary interests in any agenda item** – None.

**3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

**4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

None.

**5. INVITED SPEAKER**

None.

6. **MEMBER'S QUESTIONS**

A Member asked when additional consideration might be given to the External Audit report.

It was **AGREED** that the External Audit report is added to the agenda of the next Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

7. **MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

No changes or recommendations were made to the minutes of the past meetings.

The Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Meeting from 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022 and 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

8. **MATTERS ARISING**

None.

9. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **Original Estimate & Precept 2023/2024**

Members discussed the report presented by the Town Clerk. It was noted that it was good to have the report ahead of the precept as it gave time to examine the details. Commenting on the report Members noted that economic issues being faced nationwide have an impact on the budget. A Member asked for a more detailed analysis of the drivers behind the indicative percentage increases.

It was **AGREED** that the item would be brought to the agenda of the next Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023 for consideration.

10. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Finance Review**

It was **RESOLVED** to note this report.

b. **Unity Trust Bank**

It was **RESOLVED** to note this report.

c. **Utilities Contracts**

It was **AGREED** that the item would be brought under **EXEMPT ITEMS** for the next Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

d. **Credit Control Policy**

Members noted that the Town Council Accounts Department have worked hard to reduce the Council debt.

It was **RESOLVED** to note this report.

e. **Virements Quarterly Report**

It was **RESOLVED** to note this report.

f. **Risk Management Update**

It was **RESOLVED** to note this report.

11. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No members of the public were present for the meeting.

12. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

None.

The meeting was closed at 7.34pm

DRAFT

**BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUCIL**  
**Report to Finance & General Purposes Committee**  
**17<sup>th</sup> January 2022**  
**Precept determination 2023/2024**

**Implications of Recommendations**

**Corporate Strategy:** Good Governance - ensure that the Town Council continues to operate within legislation, regulation, ethical guidelines and best practice.

**Finance:** Will determine 2023/2024 precept and original estimate.

**Equality:** Not applicable.

**Environment:** Not applicable.

**Community Safety:** Not applicable.

**Outcome of 29<sup>th</sup> November meeting**

Members discussed the report presented by the Town Clerk. It was noted that it was good to have the report ahead of the precept as it gave time to examine the details.

Commenting on the report Members noted that economic issues being faced nationwide have an impact on the budget. A Member asked for a more detailed analysis of the drivers behind the indicative percentage increases. It was AGREED that the item would be brought to the agenda of the next Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting on 17th January 2023 for consideration.

**Emerging pressures**

As previously highlighted a detailed analysis was completed of future budget pressures. This analysis was shared with Members who took a view on those elements that should provisionally be built into the 2023/2024 original estimate (fig1).

The overall totals being £219,650 for capital items and £41,500 revenue.

**Fig 1: Emerging pressures agreed in principle**

<b>Capital items</b>	
1 x Cherry Picker	£ 3,000
Essential tools & stores	£ 2,000
Engine Bowser	£ 0,250
Essential Improvements to Town Hall	£ 6,000
<b>Total capital items</b>	<b>£11,250</b>

These items will be sourced from the Capital Reserve and have no impact upon the level of precept. The Capital Reserve currently sits at £76,243 and reduces to £64,993 after deducting the above.

<b>Revenue items</b>	
Event: Coronation	£ 5,000 (excluded option 2)
Orchard Centre: Property maintenance (disabled access)	£ 1,000 (excluded option 2)
Burial Mapping Software	£ 1,000
2x replacement leased vehicles	£24,000
1 x replacement large Mower - lease option	£19,200
<b>Total revenue items</b>	<b>£50,200</b>

It is the considered opinion of the Public Realm Manager that it is essential that the Council upgrades its white fleet and replaces its commercial mower. Members expressed a preference to source this from revenue rather than purchasing the items outright from the Capital Reserve.



This still leaves significant elements of emerging pressures unfunded, with particular concerns around:

**Fig 2: Emerging elements excluded**

Heading	Amount (£)
Repairs & Maintenance of the Councils Capital Assets	tbd
Kings Reach legal fees	30,000
New Christmas Grotto	5,000
New benches and tables (Town Centre)	7,500
Rose Lane Car Park essential maintenance	5,000 to 20,000
Upgrades to non-consecrated chapel	6,000
Digitising records	6,000
Orchard Centre building maintenance	8,000 to 12,000
Community Toilet Scheme	4,000

### Increases to budget headings

**Fig 3: Most significant additions Option 1**

Cost Centre	Cost Code	22-23 Budget	23-24 Budget	Increase
Depot	Service Charge	0	4,150	4,150
Central Services	Employers Supernann	79,894	85,047	5,153
Public Realm	Insurance	300	6,000	5,700
Orchard Centre	Staff Salaries	59,817	66,255	6,438
Magistrates Court	Gas	4,000	11,500	7,500
Public Realm	Employers Supernann	47,307	54,931	7,624
Orchard Centre	Gas	2,300	11,700	9,400
Town Centre	Employers Superann	0	9,822	9,822
Depot	Rates	16,000	28,305	12,305
Central Services	Staff Salaries	384,830	399,685	14,855
Central Services	Computer	33,790	50,000	16,210
PWLB	Loan Interest	7,411	35,241	27,830
Town Centre	Staff Salaries	0	36,648	36,648
Public Realm	Staff Salaries	199,305	256,925	57,620

**Fig 4: Most significant additions Option 2**

Cost Centre	Cost Code	22-23 Budget	23-24 Budget	Increase
Town Centre	Employers N.I	0	3,323	3,323
Central Services	Employers Supernann	79,894	85,047	5,153
Public Realm	Insurance	300	6,000	5,700
Orchard Centre	Staff Salaries	59,817	66,255	6,438
Magistrates Court	Gas	4,000	11,500	7,500
Public Realm	Employers Supernann	47,307	54,931	7,624
Orchard Centre	Gas	2,300	11,700	9,400
Town Centre	Employers Superann	0	9,822	9,822
Depot	Rates	16,000	28,000	12,000
Central Services	Staff Salaries	38,4830	399,685	14,855
Central Services	Computer	33,790	50,000	16,210
PWLB	Loan Interest	7,411	35,241	27,830
Town Centre	Staff Salaries	0	36,648	36,648
Public Realm	Staff Salaries	199,305	256,925	57,620

## Cost savings

The Council delivered £25,300 of one-off savings in the 2022/2023 financial year and has offered £37,000 particular to option two in the 2023/2024 indicative budget.

## 2022/2023 Project outturn & the Councils General Reserve

The estimated indicative outturn for the 2022/2023 financial year equates to an underspend of £14,377. This may vary after the proper closedown of accounts. Even if this figure were to remain static it would not have a major impact upon the Councils general reserves position.

The general reserve currently sits at £361,703. If Members were to resolve to support Option 1 the minimum reserve would ideally equate to £375,982 creating a gap of £14,279 and if Members were to resolve to support Option 2 the minimum reserve would ideally equate to £365,117, creating a gap of £3,414.

Either option is broadly consistent with the Council's minimum reserve policy, and it is the opinion of the RFO (conscious of the Councils overall position) that no additional provision can be made.

## Options for Members

Top Level Analysis	Option 1	Option 2
Precept value	£1,612,010	£1,568,550
Band D CT charge (£)	£204.52	£199.00
<b>Band D CT charge percentage increase</b>	<b>13.00%</b>	<b>9.95%</b>
<b>£ increase per week per household</b>	<b>45p</b>	<b>35p</b>

**NB: Central Bedfordshire Council's Financial Planning Team are expecting precept demands to be in excess of 9%**

## Additional Context

Detailed Overview	Option 1	Option 2
Emerging budget pressures determined by Members	Included	Excludes £6,000
23/24 PWLB repayment	Included	Included
23/24 cost savings	Excluded	Included
Consistent with principal authority Expectations (9% plus)	Yes	Yes
Potential to impact upon 23/24 projected Outturn	Less likely	More Likely

## Inflation & its impact upon the Council

The Office for Budget Responsibility expect CPI inflation to peak in the fourth quarter of 2022 at its highest rate in around 40 years. The increase is driven primarily by higher gas prices feeding into sharp rises in domestic energy bills, alongside higher fuel prices and global goods inflation. The RPI measure of inflation differs from the CPI measure in a number of ways.

One of these differences – the formula used in its construction – means that RPI does not meet international statistical standards but is typically higher than CPI inflation, with the difference between the two measures described as the 'wedge'. RPI will continue to rise reaching 14.1% for quarter four. The Council will continue to carefully monitor pay and price inflation being particularly conscious of the 2023/2024 pay demands.

**Recommendation:**

Members to note the contents of the report from the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

Even if option 2 (9.95%) is preferred there are significant risks and these include:

1. This budget will not allow for any further in-year cost reductions or efficiency savings.
2. The option 2 budget is extremely tight and is net of further significant cost reduction and efficiency savings.
3. Either budget offers little or no flexibility to absorb any mid-year unforeseen budget pressures.
4. Other well-founded, identified budget pressures (see fig 2) are excluded from either option.
5. Conscious of the national/international fiscal position/volatility, there are likely to be higher than inflation pay demands from public sector unions/professional associations with an indicative demand of RPI plus 2%.
6. Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the market's response continues to impact on price inflation.

Peter Tarrant  
Clerk & Chief Executive

**Appendix A:** Report to Finance & General Purposes Committee of 29<sup>th</sup> November 2022

**BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Report to Finance & General Purposes Committee**  
**29<sup>th</sup> November 2022**  
**Original Estimate 2023/2024**

Appendix A

**Implications of Recommendations**

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

**Finance:** Will inform the original estimate for 2023/2024 and associated precept.

**Equality:** Not applicable.

**Environment:** Not applicable.

**Community Safety:** Not applicable.

**Background**

**Original estimate planning cycle**

A detailed plan connected to the original estimate cycle was shared some months ago with Members and this has been strictly adhered to.

**Member consultation**

Three meetings have taken place with Members on:

- Meeting 1: 27<sup>th</sup> Oct with Mayor, Deputy Mayor & Chair of Finance & General Purposes.
- Meeting 2: 1<sup>st</sup> Nov with all Members.
- Meeting 3: 18<sup>th</sup> Nov with Mayor, Deputy Mayor & Chair of Finance & General Purposes.

The objective of these meetings was to:

- Brief Members on Officers' adherence to the planning cycle.
- Share the emerging picture.
- Share and seek political direction connected to short, medium, and long-term emerging budget pressures.

**Proper accounting practice**

The budget has been built with due regard to professional accounting best practice namely:

- A zero-based assessment of financial commitments by account code.
- All revenue headings have been recalculated.
- Pay and price inflation is included where relevant.
- The payroll commitments have been recalculated cognisant of HAY, pay inflation, incremental progression, and changes to oncosts by central government.
- Emerging demand (budget pressures) is included where Members have considered it appropriate.
- An additional 2023/2024 cost reduction exercise has been completed and these savings are included in the new base budget for Option 2.
- There has been an external critique from our current partner Accounting Firm.

**Emerging pressures**

A detailed analysis was completed of future budget pressures. This analysis was shared with Members who took a view on those elements that should provisionally be built into the 2023/2024 original estimate (fig1). This will continue to be monitored conscious of national and international events.

**Fig 1: Elements included**

<b>Capital items</b>	
1 x Cherry Picker	£ 3,000
Essential tools & stores	£ 2,000
Engine Bowser	£ 0,250
Essential Improvements to Town Hall	£ 6,000
<b>Total capital items</b>	<b>£11,250</b>
<b>Revenue items</b>	
Event: Coronation	£ 5,000 <i>(excluded option 2)</i>
Orchard Centre: Property maintenance	£ 1,000 <i>(excluded option 2)</i>
Burial Mapping Software	£ 1,000
2x replacement leased vehicles	£24,000
1 x replacement large Mower - lease option	£19,200
<b>Total revenue items</b>	<b>£50,200</b>

### **Reserves & Financial Risk Management**

The Capital Reserve currently sits at £76,243 and reduces to £64,993 after deducting emerging commitments recommended by Members. The emerging commitments relate to Public Realm and The Town Hall.

The general reserve currently sits at £361,703. If Members were to resolve to support Option 1 the minimum reserve would ideally equate to £375,982 creating a gap of £14,279 and if Members were to resolve to support Option 2 the minimum reserve would ideally equate to £365,117, creating a gap of £3,414.

Either option is broadly consistent with the Council's minimum reserve policy, and it is the opinion of the RFO that these differences can be accommodated.

In order to assess the adequacy of the General Reserve when setting the annual budget, the RFO will take account of the strategic, operational and financial risks facing the Town Council.

The requirement of the level of the General Reserve balance for the forthcoming year will therefore be based upon a risk assessment of the Town Council's main areas of income and expenditure and take into account any provisions and contingencies that might be required. Good practice identified in the Joint Panel on Accountability & Governance (March 2022) recommends General Reserves to equate to three twelfths of net revenue expenditure. The current level of reserves was agreed by Council on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and is broadly consistent with this advice.

### **PWLB (Public Works Loan Board)**

The Council has been successful in its application for a PWLB loan with the total draw down in Year One being £425,910. The money was transferred to the Council on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022. An additional PWLB PSDF account at CCLA is being set up so that the funds can be kept separate from the Councils other deposits.

A detailed paper was presented to Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 giving an overview of potential PWLB commitments over a 3-year cycle.

This picture is still emerging and is very much reliant upon the outcome of the Capital Asset Working Group. An allowance has been made in the original estimates to allow for the future indicative borrowing net borrowing requirement.

## National/International drivers

The Town Council always seeks to determine a budget and associated precept that is in keeping with its approach to prudent financial management and identified proper accounting practice, however, the national economic picture impacts upon the Council for example in higher pay and price inflation.

Over the past six months, the global energy and food supply shocks emanating from Russia's invasion of Ukraine have intensified. In the UK, CPI inflation is set to peak at a 40-year high of 11 per cent in the current quarter and the peak would have been a further 2½ percentage points higher without the energy price guarantee (EPG).

This is a highly unusual and unprecedented situation which necessitates an appropriate level of precept increase to properly mitigate. The recommended base budget makes allowance for known pay and price inflation at the time of writing.

It makes no allowance for any greater variations that might come about as a consequence of international drivers, significant pay awards or national tax determinations by central government that might impact upon the Town Council's pay related on-costs.

## Options for Members

Top Level Analysis	Option 1	Option 2
Precept value	£1,612,010	£1,568,550
Band D CT charge (£)	£204.52	£199.00
Band D CT charge percentage increase	13.00%	9.95%
£ increase per week per household	45p	35p

**NB:** Central Bedfordshire Council's Financial Planning Team are expecting precept demands to be in excess of 9%

## Additional Context

Detailed Overview	Option 1	Option 2
Emerging budget pressures determined by Members.	Included	Excludes £6,000
23/24 PWLB repayment	Included	Included
23/24 cost savings	Excluded	Included
Consistent with principal authority Expectations (9% plus)	Yes	Yes
Potential to impact upon 23/24 projected Outturn	Less likely	More Likely

**NB:** In the 2022/2023 financial year the precept value is £1,424,171.  
The tax base for 2023/2024 has risen by 0.2%.  
The Band D Council Tax charge in 2022/2023 equates to £180.99.

**Recommendation:**

Members to note the contents of the report and the observations/risks identified by the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

Even if option 2 is preferred there are risks and consequences and these include:

- This budget would not allow for any further in-year cost reductions or efficiency savings.
- The budget is extremely tight and is net of further significant cost reduction and efficiency savings.
- It offers little or no flexibility to absorb any mid-year unforeseen budget pressures.
- £6,000 of unfunded budget pressures are likely to impact upon the 2023/2024 projected outturn.
- Other well-founded, identified budget pressures are excluded.
- Conscious of the national/international fiscal position/volatility, there are likely to be higher than inflation pay demands from public sector unions/professional associations.
- Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the market's response continues to impact on price inflation.

Members will want to make reasonable and proper provision for all known eventualities as identified in this report and to ensure there is no anticipated overspend in the 2023/2024 financial year.

This includes any unreasonable or unplanned demands upon the General Reserve.

**Peter Tarrant**  
**Town Clerk & Chief Executive**  
**(Responsible Financial Officer)**





**BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Report to Finance and General Purposes Committee**  
**17<sup>th</sup> January 2023**  
**Grant Applications 2022/3**

**Implications of Recommendations**

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

**Finance:** An award of £11,241 as per the remaining budget.

**Equality:** Not applicable.

**Environment:** Not applicable.

**Community Safety:** Not applicable.

**Background:**

The 2022/3 budget for grant applications is £32,767.

Grant applications are now considered in two batches each year. The first tranche paid this financial year totalled £9,526. The overall value of the second tranche applications equals £13,789. Please see Appendix A.

<b>Budget</b>	<b>£32,767</b>
Community Agent	£12,000
Tranche 1 Grants	£9,526
<b>Remaining budget available for Tranche 2</b>	<b>£11,241</b>

There are no applications above £2,000, which would need to be recommended by the Finance and General Purposes Committee to Council.

Individual applications are being made available on Sharepoint and hard copies will be made available for those Members that express a preference.

**Recommendation:**

Officers recommend that Members consider all grant applications with due consideration to the available remaining budget of £16,539 for 2022/23.

Rob Youngs  
Finance Manager

**APPENDIX: A**

**Biggleswade Town Council - Grants**  
**Grant Applications 2022-2023**

	Organisation	Grants Awarded 2020/2021 - closing date 31.12.20 and paid by cheque 01.04.21	Grants Awarded 2021/2022 - closing date 31.12.21 and paid by cheque 01.04.22	First tranche of Grants Awarded 2022/2023 - closing date 31.08.22 and paid by cheque 01.10.22	Second tranche of Grants Requested 2022/2023 - closing date 31.12.22 and to be paid by BACS or cheque 01.04.23
1	Biggleswade Community Carnival	£0.00	£500.00		£1,189.00
2	Biggleswade Crab Lane (Railway Embankment)	£0.00	£60.00	£60.00	
3	Biggleswade First Aid Club	£0.00	£380.00	£380.00	
4	Biggleswade Good Neighbours	£500.00	£500.00		£500.00
5	Biggleswade Sea Cadets	£1,500.00	£1,000.00		£1,500.00
6	Biggleswade Sports	£0.00	£400.00	£400.00	
7	Carers in Bedfordshire	£2,000.00	£1,000.00	£600.00	£2,000.00
8	Biggles FM	£1,850.00	£1,850.00		£1,850.00
9	Biggleswade ATC Squadron (Royal Air Force Air Cadets)	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£876.00	
10	For Men To Talk Community Interest Company	£0.00	£0.00		£500.00
11	East Beds Community Bus Ltd (Ivel Sprinter)	£750.00	£500.00	£500.00	£750.00
12	Keech Hospice Care	£1,000.00	£1,000.00		£1,000.00
13	The Royal British Legion - Biggleswade Branch	£0.00	£0.00		£750.00
14	Autism Bedfordshire	£500.00	£0.00	£500.00	
	Other organisations	£2,586.00	£8,454.32		
	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£11,686.00</b>	<b>£16,644.32</b>	<b>£3,316.00</b>	<b>£10,039.00</b>

<b>New Applications 2023/2024</b>					
1	NHS First Responders			£2,560.00	
3	Music 24			£500.00	
4	Pcc Biggleswade			£200.00	
5	Biggleswade Living Streets			£500.00	
6	Wellbeing in Biggleswade			£450.00	
7	Biggleswade Arts Collective CIC			£2,000.00	
8	Biggleswade Community Group				£2,000.00
9	Hear2Listen CIC				£1,000.00
10	Bigg Welcome				£2,000.00
11	Biggleswade Community Garden				£1,500.00
	<b>Sub Total</b>			<b>£6,210.00</b>	<b>£6,500.00</b>
	<b>Total per application group:</b>	<b>£11,686.00</b>	<b>£16,644.32</b>	<b>£9,526.00</b>	<b>£16,539.00</b>

**Overall total 2022/23: £26,065.00**



**BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Report to Finance and General Purposes Committee**  
**17<sup>th</sup> January 2023**  
**Annual Fees and Charges Review 2023/4**

**Implications of Recommendations**

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

**Finance:** Impact on revenue streams.

**Equality:** Not applicable.

**Environment:** Not applicable.

**Community Safety:** Not applicable.

**Background:**

Fees and Charges are subject to annual review by the Council. The attached schedules show the proposed levels for 2023/24 with a comparison against those in the current financial year. In future, Fees and Charges will be presented at the Finance and General Purposes Committee in November. The determination for the Fees and Charges in the previous year was delayed due to the revenue optimization project.

**Introduction:**

The proposals cover the activities and services provided by the Council that generate income, namely:

1. Markets
2. A-Boards
3. Cemeteries
4. Allotments
5. The Orchard Community Centre
6. Sports Facilities
7. Parking Permits

**Summary:**

The proposal is to use the latest available annual increase in CPI, measured at 10.7% in November 2022 and in general, to round up or down to the nearest five pounds, with exceptions being for low charges such as Market Stall fees. Where VAT is applicable, this is included in the calculations.

1. Market Fees – an increase measured at 10.7% at the CPI rate in November 2022.
2. A-Boards – keeping the £100 charge, without any increase.
3. Cemeteries – an increase measured at 10.7% at the CPI rate in November 2022.
4. Allotment Rents – already agreed for 1 September, 2023. Suggested rates from 1 September, 2024 will be put to Finance and General Purposes Committee in November 2023, thereby allowing plenty of time for the six month notice to be given to tenants.
5. The Orchard Community Centre – an increase measured at 10.7% at the CPI rate in November 2022.

6. Sports Facilities – an increase measured at 10.7% at the CPI rate in November 2022.

7. Parking fees – an increase measured at 10.7% at the CPI rate in November 2022.

**Impact on Revenue:**

The impact on revenue is difficult to completely accurately forecast, as the number of transactions is a variable just as the unit prices are. However, each budget line for 23/24 has already taken into account a small increase in expected revenue.

**Recommendation:**

Officers recommend that Members adopt the proposals for Fees and Charges in this report.

Rob Youngs  
Finance Manager

## **SCALE OF CHARGES FOR MARKET STALL RENTS ETC**

### **FEES EFFECTIVE FROM 1 APRIL 2023**

<b>MARKET STALLS</b>	<b>2021/2022</b>	<b>2022/2023</b>	<b>2023/2024</b>
Payment due at time of booking			
Rent of single pitch 10' x 10'	£15	£15	£17
Rent of double pitch 10' x 20'	£25	£25	£28
Rent of pitch larger than a double	£30	£30	£33
Lighting of stall	Free	Free	Free
Farmers Market stall	£20+VAT=£24	£20+VAT=£24	£22+VAT=£26
Tuesday market flat fee for all stalls regardless of size	£15	£15	£17
Clearance of unauthorised market trade waste. Minimum charge	£50+VAT=£60	£50+VAT=£60	£55+VAT=£66

<b>CHARITY STALLS</b>	<b>2021/2022</b>	<b>2022/2023</b>	<b>2023/2024</b>
Payment due at time of booking			
Charitable/voluntary organisations that support Biggleswade	£16	£16	£18
Other Charitable/voluntary organisations. Rent payable on or before day of trade (non-refundable)	Please refer to charges in table above	Please refer to charges in table above	Please refer to charges in table above

One Charity Stall for use by Voluntary Organisations will be available each Market.  
 Only two bookings allowed per year for each Charitable Organisation.  
 Booking of the Charity Stall must be made via the Town Council Office

## **SCALE OF CHARGES FOR ALLOTMENT HOLDERS**

### **FEES FOR 2022/2023, 2023/24**

**This is for information purposes only, as already agreed.**

<b>ALLOTMENT RENT</b>	<b>2022/23 Approved fees 1 Sept 22</b>	<b>2023/24 Approved fees 1 Sept 23</b>
Small Plot (approx.. 10m by 5m)	£35	£35
Large Plot (approx.. 20m by 5m)	£50	£50
Discount for pensioners, students, benefits claimants	N/A	25%

Deposit for new tenants is £50 for both full and half plots. Deposit refundable subject to the Terms & Conditions of the Tenancy Agreement.

Fees are pro-rata'd for new holders with less than one year to renewal.

## **DROVE ROAD AND STRATTON WAY BURIAL GROUNDS**

### **FEES EFFECTIVE FROM 1 APRIL 2023**

Non-residents includes anyone who has lived outside of Biggleswade for 3 years or more.

<b>INTERMENT</b> (excluding digging the grave)	<b>INFORMATION</b>	<b>2022/23 Residents</b>	<b>2022/23 Non Residents</b>	<b>2023/24 Residents</b>	<b>2023/24 Non Residents</b>
BABY Still born or less than one month	Single depth	Only pay for plot	Only pay for plot	Only pay for plot	Only pay for plot
CHILD One month to 18 years	Single depth	£140	£430	£155	£475
ADULT Over 18 years	Single depth	£460	£1,280	£510	£1,415
ADULT Over 18 years	Double depth	£610	£1,650	£675	£1,825
CREMATED REMAINS	-	£170	£460	£190	£510
CREMATED REMAINS of still born baby into established plot	-	Free	Free	Free	Free
WALLED GRAVES AND VAULTS. To be constructed at the expense of the family in in consultation with the Funeral Director & BTC	-	£1,420	£3,140	£1,570	£3,475
* SCATTERING OF ASHES Into any existing Plot	-	-	-	£80	£240
*FUNERAL DIRECTION <i>Ashes Interment Only (digging grave, witness of interment, backfilling, disposal of soil). For public use only. Charged in addition to Cremated Remains Int. fee above</i>	-	-	-	£150	£400
*ASHES INTERMENT WITNESS FEE <i>(For Funeral Directors Only)</i>	-	-	-	£150	£400

\* New



<b>PURCHASE OF PLOT</b>	<b>INFORMATION</b>	<b>2022/23 Residents</b>	<b>2022/23 Non Residents</b>	<b>2023/24 Residents</b>	<b>2023/24 Non Residents</b>
ADULT Grave 7'6" x 3'6"	100 years	£620	£1,590	£685	£1,760
CHILD Grave 4' x 2'	100 years	£140	£370	£155	£410
CREMATED REMAINS 2' x 2'	100 years	£260	£690	£290	£765
Transfer Purchase of Plot to relative or Trustee (owner living)	100 years from the date of the original grant	£70	£110	£75	£120
Transfer Exclusive Right Of Burial to relative or Trustee (owner deceased)	100 years from the date of the original grant	£70	£110	£75	£120

## **DROVE ROAD AND STRATTON WAY BURIAL GROUNDS**

### **MEMORIAL FEES EFFECTIVE FROM 1 APRIL 2023**

<b>GRANT FOR THE RIGHT TO ERECT OR PLACE MEMORIAL</b>	<b>INFORMATION</b>	<b>2022/23 Residents</b>	<b>2022/23 Non Residents</b>	<b>2023/24 Residents</b>	<b>2023/24 Non Residents</b>
ADULT GRAVE Monument or headstone and/or kerb stones and/or flat stones and/or kerbs	Not to exceed 4' in height and 7' in length or 3' in width (7' in width for double plot)	£170	£450	£190	£500
ADULT GRAVE Flat plaque	Not to exceed 2' 6" x 2' 6"	£100	£230	£110	£255
ADULT GRAVE Headstone	Not to exceed 4' in height and 3' in width	£160	£420	£175	£465
CHILD GRAVE Monument or headstone and/or kerb stones and/or flat stones and/or kerbs	Not to exceed 2' in height and 4' in length and 2' in width	£150	£380	£165	£420
CREMATED REMAINS Old Sections CREMATED REMAINS New Sections	Not to exceed 24" x 18" flat plaque only not to exceed 18" x 18"	£120	£320	£135	£355
VASE ONLY	Not to exceed 18" in height	£90	£260	£100	£290
ADDED INSCRIPTION	-	£70	£180	£75	£200
Adult Grave Kerb Stones Only	-	£200	£340	£240	£408

<b>BURIAL RECORD SEARCH FEES</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Each individual search covering period less than 5 years	£70+VAT=£84	£75+VAT=£90
Each individual search covering period over 5 years (charge per hour)	£60+VAT=£72	£65+VAT=£78
Every certified copy of an entry in burial Register	£60+VAT=£72	£65+VAT=£78
<b>MEMORIAL BENCH INSTALLATION</b>		
Supply and installation of memorial bench. Contact for more information	£1,590+VAT= £1,908	£1,760+VAT= £2,112
Supply and installation of memorial bench with plaque. Contact for more information	£1,1780+VAT= £2,136	£1,970+VAT= £2,364

## **SCALE OF CHARGES FOR ORCHARD COMMUNITY CENTRE**

### **FEES EFFECTIVE FROM 1 APRIL 2023**

<b>MAIN HALL – CORPORATE</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Hire of Main Hall per hour	£32	£35
Cost of setting up and / or clearing up hall	£25	N/A
Caretaker Assistance	N/A	£10
Refreshments Charge	Not charged	£22+VAT=£26.40
Refundable Deposit (for other functions)	£100	£100

<b>MAIN HALL – COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CHARGES</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Hire of Main Hall per hour	£25	£28
Cost of setting up and / or clearing up hall	£25	N/A
Caretaker Assistance	N/A	£10
Refreshments Charge	Not charged	£22+VAT=£26.40
Refundable Deposit (for other functions)	£100	£100
Discount for Local Charities or Local Not for Profit Organisations registered with HMRC for Gift Aid. (Local means within the Parish of Biggleswade)	20% Reduction	20% Reduction
Discount for Block Bookings	10% Reduction for 7 or more bookings	10% Reduction for 7 or more bookings

Only 1 discount may be applied

<b>TRAINING ROOM – CORPORATE</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Hire Charge – per hour	£28	£31
Caretaker Assistance	N/A	£10
Refreshments Charge	£20+VAT=£24	£22+VAT=£26.40
Refundable Deposit (for other functions)	£100	£100

<b>TRAINING ROOM – COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CHARGES</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Hire Charge – per hour	£20	£22
Caretaker Assistance	N/A	£10
Refreshments Charge	£15+VAT=£18	£16.67+VAT=£20
Refundable Deposit (for other functions)	£100	£100
Discount for Local Charities or Local Not for Profit Organisations registered with HMRC for Gift Aid. (Local means within the Parish of Biggleswade)	20% Reduction	20% Reduction
Discount for Block Bookings	10% Reduction for 7 or more bookings	10% Reduction for 7 or more bookings

Only 1 discount may be applied

## **SCALE OF CHARGES FOR HIRING OF SPORTS FACILITIES**

### **FEES EFFECTIVE FROM 1 APRIL 2023**

<b>FOOTBALL PITCHES Eagle Farm Road, The Lakes and Stratton Way Recreation Grounds</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Juniors – pitch and changing rooms	£11.38+VAT=£13.66	£12.60+VAT=£15.12
Juniors – training area (Stratton Way only). Effective 1 September 2023	Not charged	£6.30+VAT=£7.56
Adults – pitch only (Stratton Way only)	£28.90+VAT=£34.68	£32.00+VAT=£38.40
Adults – pitch and changing rooms (Stratton Way only)	£48.17+VAT=£57.80	£53.32+VAT=£63.98

<b>DROVE ROAD TENNIS COURTS</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Monday to Sunday and Bank Holidays-per court per hour-over 18 up to OAP age	No charge	No charge
Monday to Sunday and Bank Holidays-per court per hour-OAPs, children and unemployed	No charge	No charge

<b>DROVE ROAD BOWLING GREEN</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Rink-per person per hour (one rink to remain available to public at all times)	£2.63+VAT=£3.15	£2.91+VAT=£3.49
Rink season ticket - Adults	£43.78+VAT=£52.54	£48.46+VAT=£58.15
Rink season ticket – OAPs, children and unemployed	£21.89+VAT=£26.27	£24.23+VAT=£29.08

<b>DROVE ROAD BOWLS CLUB Biggleswade Town Bowls Club Charges</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Drove Road Recreation Ground and Bowls Pavilion	£2,417.30+VAT= £2,900.76	£2,675.00+VAT= £3,210.00

<b>FAIRFIELD ROAD (1ST MEADOW) Biggleswade Town Cricket Club Charges</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Lindsell Ground & Pavilion Contribution towards re-decoration, insurance and water charges	£2,417.30+VAT= £2,900.76	£2,675.00+VAT= £3,210.00

## **SCALE OF CHARGES FOR PARKING PERMITS**

### **FEES EFFECTIVE FROM 1 APRIL 2023**

<b>RESIDENT PARKING</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Monthly Permit	£20	£22
Quarterly Permit	£45	£50
Half-yearly	£84	£93
Annual Permit	£140	£155

<b>BUSINESS PARKING</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Monthly Permit	£60	£65
Quarterly Permit	£90	£100
Half-yearly	£138	£153
Annual Permit	£250	£275



**BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Finance & General Purposes**  
**17<sup>th</sup> January 2023**  
**The Orchard Community Centre Update**

**Implications of Recommendations:**

**Corporate Strategy: ASPIRATIONS: FINANCIALS:** Ensures value for money for the community by delivering a more efficient operating model.

**Finance:** Immediate impact on budget in short-term but associated savings.

**Equality:** Not applicable.

**Environment:** Not applicable.

**Community Safety:** The Council pays due regard to all community safety legislation.

**Background**

Officers previously presented a report on 13<sup>th</sup> December at Council, for Members to review the Orchard Community Centre draft hire agreement and draft policy. It was agreed that the item should be moved to F&GP, which would allow Members sufficient time to provide their feedback and have it implemented in both documents.

**Summary**

The draft hire agreement is attached in Annex A.

The draft policy is attached in Annex B. Fees included in the policy would then adopt those proposed in the annual fees report in April 2023, providing they're agreed.

**Recommendations**

For Members to approve the draft hire agreement and draft policy.

Isaac Lord  
Place Shaping Manager

## STANDARD CONDITIONS OF HIRE ORCHARD COMMUNITY CENTRE

**For the purpose of these conditions, the term HIRER shall mean an individual hirer or, where the hirer is an organisation, the authorised representative. The term COUNCIL refers to Biggleswade Town Council.**

1. The **HIRER** must confirm they are 18 years of age or older via Squarespace Scheduling booking form.
2. The **HIRER** will receive a free 10-minute period free of charge as part of their session. Access to the building will not be granted sooner than 5 minutes before the session is due to commence. 5 minutes will be permitted after a session for cleaning and packing away. If further time is needed, this should be paid for either in the form of additional time or with Caretaker Assistance. Consistent misuse of these periods may result in cancellations and/or refusal of further bookings.
3. The **HIRER** will, during the period of hiring (including the free periods before and after the session), be responsible for the supervision of the premises, fabric and the contents, their care, safety from damage, and the behaviour of all persons using the premises, , including proper supervision of car parking arrangement so as to avoid obstruction or inconvenience to other persons. This includes unsupervised sessions that do not have Caretaker assistance.
4. The **HIRER** shall be aware that the parking spaces located immediately outside the Orchard Community Centre are not Council-owned and so parking is at the Hirer's risk.
5. The **HIRER** should be aware that any debit/credit card details securely stored on their Squarespace Scheduling account will only be charged for sessions and any damages incurred.
6. The **COUNCIL** reserves the right to charge payment to the debit/credit card on the **HIRER'S** Squarespace Scheduling account up to one month prior to the period of hire. Event/party hire will be charged immediately upon booking. Other payment options are permissible by emailing [orchardcc@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:orchardcc@biggleswadetowncouncil.gov.uk) and asking for support.
7. The **HIRER**, if running an event/party, will have to make a mandatory payment for Caretaker assistance. If this is not selected within the Squarespace Scheduling booking form, this will be added by Staff.
8. The **HIRER** will be liable to pay for any additional time used further to that booked on Squarespace Scheduling. This will be charged to the debit/credit card held on their Squarespace Scheduling account.
9. the Hirer is fully responsible for the supervision of the premises during the period of hire.
10. The **HIRER** shall indemnify the Council for the cost of repair of any damage done to any part of the property that may occur during the period of the hiring as a result of the hiring. For all commercial hires (i.e. not by private individuals for private events), the hirer must hold appropriate insurance. The hirer will be responsible for indemnifying the Council for any loss or damage to the buildings or contents and for any public liability arising out of their event. Any cost of damage for private bookings shall be incurred by the Hirer up to a maximum of £125 to indemnify the Council for the cost of repair, which is the excess on the Council's insurance. Where damage is caused by a deliberate or negligent act by the **HIRER** or



someone attending their session, the Council reserve the right to charge the **HIRER** for the full cost, rather than making a claim on the Council's insurance. This will be charged against the Hirer's debit/credit card held securely on their Squarespace Scheduling account, with an email sent to the Hirer prior to the charge being made.

11. If the **HIRER** wishes to cancel the period of hire before the date of the event, they may do so via Squarespace Scheduling with a minimum of 72 hours' notice and will be entitled to a refund of any monies taken. In the event of an emergency situation, BTC has the discretion to provide refunds if within 72 hours' notice.
12. The **COUNCIL** reserves the right to refuse a booking or to cancel a session booking or to cancel this hiring agreement at any time either before or during the term of the agreement upon giving 7 days-notice in writing to the **HIRER**. In exceptional cases, where the Council is unable to honour the booking due to unforeseen circumstances, the **COUNCIL** reserves the right to cancel a session booking without notice. The **HIRER** shall be entitled upon such notice to reimbursement of such monies including any down payments paid by the **HIRER** to the **COUNCIL**, but the **COUNCIL** shall not be liable to make any further payments to the **HIRER**.
13. The **HIRER** shall not sub-hire or use the premises for any other purpose other than that described in the booking form and shall not hire or use the premises for any unlawful purpose or in any unlawful way nor do anything or bring onto the premises anything which may endanger the same or any insurance policies in respect thereof nor allow the consumption of alcoholic liquor thereon without written permission.
14. The **HIRER** shall be responsible for obtaining any licences that may be needed for the sale and consumption of alcoholic liquor, for music (PPL and/or PRS) and for the observance of the same and all other regulations appertaining to the premises stipulated by the Fire Authority and the Central Bedfordshire Council, or otherwise.
15. The **HIRER** shall be responsible for making arrangements to insure against any third-party claims if hiring a session on a commercial basis. This should be used for covering any claims made against them (or the organisation if acting as a representative) whilst using the premises, or for damage caused to the premises or contents by the hire. Proof of insurance documents should be submitted via the form link in Squarespace Scheduling.
16. The **HIRER** will, during the period of hiring, be responsible for ensuring no furniture, equipment or other items provided at the premises are taken from the interior of the premises for whatever purpose. This includes glassware, cans, or other receptacles.
17. The **HIRER** is responsible for ensuring that any electrical appliances or equipment brought into the premises is fully compliant with current Safety Regulations. A call-out charge may be levied by the Council in the event that the electrical supply has to be reset. Where a residual circuit breaker is provided the **HIRER** must make use of in the interest of public safety.
18. The **HIRER** must not use any cooking equipment outside the premises as this constitutes breach of health and safety regulations and environmental issues.
19. It is the responsibility of the **HIRER** to familiarise themselves with the location of fire exits and the fire extinguishers and how to use them. If the fire cannot be extinguished safely and immediately, the fire alarm must be activated and the building evacuated by the nearest, safest, exit. If time allows, all electrical supplies should be switched off and doors and windows shut. Telephone the emergency services.

20. Ball Games including the throwing of soft balls, frisbees, and other projectiles are strictly forbidden inside the premises. It is at BTC discretion whether to allow this under exceptional circumstances.
21. The use of Bouncy Castles and other inflatables is not permitted without prior, written, permission.
22. At the end of the hiring (all functions to have ceased by 11.55 pm with premises fully vacated by Midnight) the premises must be left in a clean and tidy condition, otherwise the Council will make an additional charge. Music must cease by 11:30 pm.
23. In the event that any part of the premises is rendered unfit by reasons beyond the control of the Council for the use for which it has been hired, the **COUNCIL** shall not be liable to the **HIRER** for any resulting loss or damage.
24. The **COUNCIL** shall not be liable to the **HIRER** for any loss or damage sustained by the **HIRER** as a result of any failure or delay on the part of the Council in the performance of any of its obligations under this agreement to the extent that such failure or delay is beyond the reasonable control of the Council, including but not limited to force majeure, labour disputes, transportation failure, riots or civil disturbance.
25. The **COUNCIL** reserves the right to vary the Conditions of Hire applicable to this contract, including but not limited to variations in the premises, the period of hire, the rate of charge and the calculation of charges, on giving written notice to the **HIRER**.
26. If the **HIRER** opts not to pay for Caretaker Assistance within the Squarespace Scheduling booking system, they are required to have an induction with Staff. This will consist of fire safety, security and other instructions and will be coordinated via email.
27. The **HIRER**, if given a pin code to the building for their period of hire, is responsible for ensuring the code is not circulated outside of their customer base/session attendees. If this is suspected, it is the **HIRER's** responsibility to make staff aware so the code can be changed.
28. The **HIRER** shall ensure that nothing is done during the period of hire in contravention of the law relating to gaming, betting and lotteries.
29. The **HIRER** shall, if preparing, serving or selling food, observe all relevant food HEALTH AND HYGIENE legislation and regulations.
30. The **HIRER** must report all accidents involving injury to the public to the Council as soon as possible. Any failure of equipment belonging to the Council must also be reported as soon as possible. Certain types of accident or injury must be reported on a special form to the Central Bedfordshire Council. The **COUNCIL** will give assistance in completing this form. This is in accordance with the Executive Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995.
31. The **HIRER** shall ensure that any activities for children under eight years of age comply with the provisions of the Children Act 1989 and only fit and proper persons have access to and supervision of the children.
32. No responsibility is accepted for any loss, damage or injury to any property or persons using the premises (except for any deaths or personal injury caused but the negligence of the **COUNCIL**).

33. The **HIRER** agrees with the **COUNCIL** to observe and perform the provision and stipulations contained or referred to in the Council's Standard Conditions of Hire for the time being in force as described above (an understanding of which the hirer acknowledges, together with any special conditions set out in the schedule below):
- No bookings to be taken more than two years in advance.
  - Hiring fee will be based on the published scale of charges which are subject to an annual review.
  - Fees for commercial bookings may vary and be dealt with on an individual basis.
  - All fees and charges will be charged up to 1 month in advance of the period of hire, or immediately upon booking for party bookings.
  - Noise must be kept to a minimum on arrival and departure.
  - **HIRERS** cannot access the hall before the agreed time unless previously agreed with Staff.
  - **HIRERS** are responsible for removing and recycling cans, glass, cardboard and plastic bottles.
  - No more than 140 persons are allowed to attend any one letting in the Hall.
  - No more than 34 persons are allowed to attend any one letting in the Training Room.
  - A commercial **HIRER** must have its own public liability insurance as this is not covered under the **COUNCIL's** insurance policy.
23. This agreement is made between the **COUNCIL** and the **HIRER** whereby in consideration of the charges the **COUNCIL** agrees to permit the **HIRER** to use the premises for the purpose and period shown on the booking form.

# The Orchard Community Centre Hire Policy DRAFT

January 2023



## Introduction

Biggleswade Town Council (BTC) owns The Orchard Community Centre situated in the Kings Reach estate, providing a high standard service and space for the community, local organisations and businesses.

## Purpose of Policy

This policy aims to:

- Support Aspirations for Biggleswade 2021-2025
- Ensure proper management of the Community Centre
- Explain the booking management system and income management
- Outline health and safety aspects

## Booking Terms & Conditions

All bookings are subject to the 'Standard Conditions of Hire', which are available on the BTC website or through request by email to the Orchard Community Centre. These conditions must be accepted prior to finalisation of any booking request and Hirers will confirm they accept conditions digitally, through Squarespace Scheduling. The booking cannot be requested without acceptance of conditions.

These conditions may be varied by prior written agreement for any booking but must be authorised by BTC management.

Caretaker assistance can be requested at an additional charge. If this is requested, information should be submitted via the booking form to make Staff aware of what they will need to do to support. If the Hirer does not select Caretaker assistance, their session will be unsupervised. For events/parties, Caretaker assistance is mandatory and will be added onto the booking by Staff if not completed by the Hirer. Please see the Hirer Induction section below for more details.

As per conditions, the Hirer is fully responsible for the supervision of the premises during the period of hire. For all commercial hires (i.e. not by private individuals for private events), the hirer must hold appropriate insurance. The hirer will be responsible for indemnifying the Council for any loss or damage to the buildings or contents and for any public liability arising out of their event. Any cost of damage for private bookings shall be incurred by the Hirer up to a maximum of £125 to indemnify the Council for the cost of repair, which is the excess on the Council's insurance.

Bookings include a 5-minute set-up and 5-minute close-down time either side of the session. If an additional payment is not made for Caretaker assistance, the Hirer is responsible for organising tables and chairs unless agreed with staff under exceptional circumstances. Outside of the hiring period (including the 10 minutes), the Hirer is no longer responsible for the building.

A session includes free use of the equipment (chairs, tables, projector etc) and kitchen facilities. This use is not exclusive to a single Hirer however, as if sessions are ongoing in both the Hall and Training Room facilities will need to be shared. Hirers are therefore asked to show consideration to other and minimise and disturbances or inconveniences to others.

The Council reserves the right to refuse a booking without notice, even if accepted. 7-days' notice would be given in writing to the Hirer and they would be entitled to reimbursement of any deposit monies made to the Council but the Council is not liable for any further

payments to the Hirer. In exceptional circumstances, 7 days' notice may be waived at discretion of the Council.

### Charges

The Orchard Community Centre fees are reviewed on an annual basis and determined by:

- Running costs
- Demand for hire
- Rates at similar, local facilities
- Current standard of facilities

The Council reserves the right to charge the Hirer's securely stored credit/debit card held on their Squarespace Scheduling account, up to one month in advance of the session. Party and event hirers will be charged immediately upon booking.

Hirers are entitled to a full refund if their session is cancelled with at least 72 hours' notice.

### Charging Categories

The Orchard Community Centre makes the following distinctions between Hirers as per Annex A:

- Standard, defined as all public limited companies, private sector businesses with over 10 employees and any bookings that do not fall within the bracket of other categories
- Community, defined as small businesses with 10 employees or less, not-for-profit organisations, public sector and charities, and private individuals for private events.

Within the community category, a concession is applicable to local charities and not-for-profit organisations which provide benefit for Biggleswade residents.

Hirers are to book through the embedded Squarespace Scheduling system on the BTC website. Queries can still be directed to the Orchard staff via email or phone call and bookings can be made on their behalf if the Hirer requires further support.

As per Standard Conditions of Hire, all fees and charges must be paid in advance of the booking, which is mandated by Squarespace Scheduling when booking.

The Hirer will be liable to pay for any additional time used further to that booked on Squarespace Scheduling. This will be charged to the debit/credit card held on their Squarespace Scheduling account.

### Hirer Induction

To ensure health and safety compliance, Hirers will be required to complete an induction of the building prior to starting a session. This will entail safe use of the premises, understanding of location of fire exits and security, and will be organised via email.

As part of the induction, session holders that do not require a staff presence will be given a more detailed induction explaining fire procedures, security, access control etc.

## **Restrictions on Use and Hire**

As The Orchard is located on a residential estate, certain activities may be prohibited or restricted. BTC retains absolute discretion on the use and hire of facilities and reserve the right to refuse requests to hire for any reason.

As per standard conditions of hire, misuse of the facility can result in further bookings being rejected, with misuse including but not limited to the following:

- Breach of licensing relating to the consumption of alcoholic liquor and music
- Excessive noise causing disturbance to neighbours
- Causing nuisance or offence to BTC staff
- Use of facilities for anything other than the agreed purpose of hire

## **Contact Details**

Details of BTC Staff can be found on the website, which is kept up to date on a regular basis. Otherwise, BTC Staff at the Orchard Community Centre can provide contact information on request.

## **Insurance**

Buildings, contents, and public liability insurance is all in place. As per the conditions, the Hirer is otherwise responsible for taking out insurance to protect themselves against any third-party claims against them. Commercial hirers must submit evidence of their insurance via the form upload link in the Squarespace Scheduling booking page.

## Annex A – Charges

<b>MAIN HALL – CORPORATE</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
Hire of Main Hall per hour	£32	£32
Cost of setting up and / or clearing up hall	£25	N/A
Caretaker Assistance	N/A	£10
Refreshments Charge	N/A	£22+VAT=£26.40
Refundable Deposit (for other functions)	N/A	£100

<b>MAIN HALL – COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CHARGES</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
Hire of Main Hall per hour	£25	£25
Cost of setting up and / or clearing up hall	£25	N/A
Caretaker Assistance	N/A	£10
Refreshments Charge	N/A	£22+VAT=£26.40
Refundable Deposit (for other functions)	£100	£100
Discount for Local Charities or Local Not for Profit Organisations registered with HMRC for Gift Aid. (Local means within the Parish of Biggleswade)	20% Reduction	20% Reduction
Discount for Block Bookings	10% Reduction for 7 or more bookings	10% Reduction for 7 or more bookings

Only 1 discount may be applied

<b>TRAINING ROOM – CORPORATE</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
Hire Charge – per hour	£28	£28
Caretaker Assistance	N/A	£10
Refreshments Charge	£20+VAT=£24	£22+VAT=£26.40
Refundable Deposit (for other functions)	£100	£100

<b>TRAINING ROOM – COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CHARGES</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
Hire Charge – per hour	£20	£22
Caretaker Assistance	N/A	£10
Refreshments Charge	£15+VAT=£18	£16.67+VAT=£20
Refundable Deposit (for other functions)	£100	£100
Discount for Local Charities or Local Not for Profit Organisations registered with HMRC for Gift Aid. (Local means within the Parish of Biggleswade)	20% Reduction	20% Reduction
Discount for Block Bookings	10% Reduction for 7 or more bookings	10% Reduction for 7 or more bookings

Only 1 discount may be applied





**BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Report to Finance and General Purposes Committee**  
**17<sup>th</sup> January 2023**  
**Move to Unity Trust Bank update**

**Implications of Recommendations**

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

**Finance:** Improved banking efficiency.

**Equality:** Not applicable.

**Environment:** Not applicable.

**Community Safety:** Not applicable.

**Background:**

We switched our banking provision across from Lloyd's bank to Unity Trust bank in November 2022. This report provides an update on how the first few months have progressed.

**Tasks in progress:**

**Training:**

Training has been provided to Members and Officers who are using Unity Trust online. Training is also offered for the final few signatories when they sign up online. It will be useful to have all signatories using the bank in order that payment authorisations can be shared, rather than over-reliance on other signatories already online.

Users are finding that the system is very easy to use, especially as the structure online uses boxes to tick on the second screen, rather than four or five further screens which some other banks have.

**Desktop provision at the Council:**

A desktop computer is in place in the Member's room and has already been used successfully by several Members.

**Internal processes:**

Internal processes are being adhered to, ensuring compliance with the Financial Regulations. The payment process was agreed at Council on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2022.

Authorising Members are politely reminded to reply to the requesting payment authorisations email when they have made any authorisations. This is required for audit purposes in order that it is clear who has authorised the payments online and a physical signature can be obtained. It also informs other signatories know if they are still required to log on and prevents unnecessarily using their valuable time.

**Informing customers of the bank change:**

We have informed all of our regular customers of the bank details change. Our sales invoices and bank statements have been updated. Online portals have also been updated with the new bank details. We are successfully receiving customer payments. As part of our "switch guarantee", should any customers erroneously pay into our old Lloyds account, these will be paid across to our Unity Trust account the following day.

**Informing suppliers of the bank change:**

We have confirmed the banking details of nearly all of our suppliers, including account number, sort code and account name. We are being very strict not to pay any supplier until they have completed our form. The few suppliers who had not completed the form previously, are being very cooperative with this.

**Delays:**

The general working of the bank accounts is progressing very well. However, there have been some delays in Unity Trust providing some of the services to us which they themselves outsource.

It is only recently that we have finally received our cash paying in card for the Post Office. Further, we still await the new credit card. Although I have it confirmed in writing that the application is in progress with Lloyds, we are still without the card, which is frustrating. The postal strikes and train strikes may be adding to the delay too.

I discussed this situation with our Internal auditor and was advised that many other Councils experienced delays in setting up these outsourced services. However, they worked well when finally in place.

**Recommendation:**

This report is for Members to note.

Rob Youngs  
Finance Manager

