

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Greenacre Centre, Valerian Way, Stotfold, SG5 4HG
01462 730064 enquiries@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk



17th July 2024

Members of the Governance & Resources Committee: Cllr S Buck (Chair), Cllr J Smith (Vice Chair), Cllr M Cooper, Cllr S Dhaliwal, Cllr S Hayes, Cllr J Headington, Cllr D Matthews, Cllr B Saunders, Cllr J Talbot.

You are hereby summoned to attend the **Governance & Resources Committee** meeting to be held in the Council Chamber, Greenacre Centre, Stotfold on **Wednesday 24th July 2024 at 19:00** for the purpose of transacting business detailed in the Agenda.

Emma Payne
Town Clerk

Members of the public:

You are now able to observe our meetings by joining via MS Teams. Join on your computer or mobile app [Click here to join the meeting](#). Please note, our meetings may be recorded for minute taking purposes, and will be deleted after minutes are approved.

Members of the public are invited to observe the meeting and may participate at the 'public section' agenda item. As per Standing Orders, if you wish to speak, you must notify the Town Clerk of your intention prior to the start of the meeting (contact in advance enquiries@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk or 01462 730064 or you will be asked at the appropriate point in the agenda if unable to give prior indication).

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

- a) Members to declare interests in respect of any item on the Agenda.
- b) Proper Officer to consider written requests from members for dispensations.

Members are reminded that if at any time during the meeting they feel they have an interest in an item being discussed, they should declare it at that point.

3. PUBLIC SECTION (MAX. 15 MINUTES)

Members of the public may speak on matters of concern, ask questions or make statements (maximum of 3 minutes per speaker), after giving notice of their wish to do so to the Town Clerk prior to the meeting. Order of speakers will be in order of notification. [Public Participation Policy](#) applies.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Members are asked to **resolve** that the Minutes of the **Governance & Resources Committee** meeting held on 29th May 2024 are a correct record.

5. CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES, FOR INFORMATION

Correspondence received and matters arising from previous Minutes, for information.

6. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

6.1 Outsourcing Payroll

To receive an update on outsourcing payroll.

6.2 Financial Regulations

To review the updated Financial Regulations and recommend their adoption by the Town Council.

6.3 Appointment of Internal Auditor

To consider the appointment of a new Internal Auditor and recommend their appointment to Full Council.

6.4 Asset Management Policy

To consider the adoption of an Asset Management Policy.

6.5 Mayoral Allowance Policy

To consider the adoption of a Mayoral Allowance Policy.

6.6 Budget Setting Timetable 2025 – 26

To consider a timetable for setting the budget 2025 – 26.

6.7 Performance Management Policy

To consider the adoption of a Performance Management Policy.

6.8 IT Services Contract

To receive a report on the renewal of the IT Services Contract.

6.9 Telephone Provision

To consider the telephone provision for the Town Council.

6.10 Internet Service Contract

To consider the provision of internet supplier to the Greenacre Centre.

6.11 Christmas Office Operation

To receive a report with the Christmas hours of operation.

6.12 Bank Reconciliations

To note the bank reconciliations.

6.13 Work Programme

To receive this Committee's Work Programme.

7. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

That in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted.

7.1 Town Clerk's Job Evaluation

To receive a report on this item.

8. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 2nd October 2024.

NB Change of Date for Budget Setting Committee Meeting – it will now be 23 October 2024.



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29th MAY 2024 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE, VALERIAN WAY, STOTFOLD, SG5 4HG AT 19:00

Committee Members present: Cllr S Buck (Chairperson), Cllr J Smith (Vice-Chairperson), Cllr S Hayes, Cllr M Cooper, Cllr J Headington, Cllr B Saunders, Cllr J Talbot, Cllr S Dhaliwal, Cllr D Matthews.

Also present:

E. Payne – Town Clerk
S. van der Merwe – Democratic Services Manager

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

No disclosures were made and there were no requests for dispensations.

3. PUBLIC SECTION

There were no members of the public present.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the previous Establishment Committee Meeting held on 13th March 2024 were received and it was **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** them as a correct record of the meeting.

5. ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Following nominations by Members, it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr J Smith be Vice-Chairperson for the forthcoming year.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members reviewed the Terms of Reference.

It was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL THAT** the amended Terms of Reference for the Governance & Resources Committee are adopted.

7. CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES, FOR INFORMATION

Cllr Headington requested that "Chairman" and "Vice-Chairman" be corrected to "Chairperson" and "Vice-Chairperson" going forward.

8. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

8.1 Outsourcing Payroll

Members were advised the Finance Officer's position is a part-time position, but she works overtime when the need arises and schedules holidays to be able to process payroll. Members were in support of the proposal to outsource the payroll and asked for:

a) a breakdown of the current hours spent on this function and the cost to the Council,

b) for the Town Clerk to ask the remaining contractors to quote for the pension calculations.

Members **RESOLVED** to defer this matter to the next Governance & Resources Committee meeting on 24th July 2024.

8.2 Civic Regalia

Members discussed whether the Council's Standing Orders should include a limit to the number of times Councillors can be a Mayor or Deputy Mayor for succession planning reasons. Member asked for a review of the Standing Orders in order to bring the discussion regarding limitation of mayoral elections.

Members preferred the option of a Consort's ribbon in the form of a brooch and asked Officers to bring artwork and costs to the next Governance & Resources Committee meeting on 24th July 2024.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) ***The Town Council would purchase a new double-strand Mayoral Chain with engravable discs; and***
- b) ***a new Deputy Mayoral disc would be added to the re-purposed current Mayoral Chain of Office.***
- c) ***A review of Standing Orders would be undertaken regarding the number of times a Councillor can be Mayor.***

8.3 Grant Application and Policy

Members reviewed the amended Grant Application Form and the Policy.

Members requested that Officers replace "*Please state how many members of the Stotfold Community will benefit from the funds you are requesting*" with "*How does Stotfold benefit from the work your organisation undertakes?*".

Members were advised this new application process will be added to the Town Council's website for online applications going forward.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) ***any grant funding monies unspent in a financial year should be rolled over to an earmarked fund.***
- b) ***All suggested corrections to the Grant Funding Guidance Note and the Grant Application Form be carried through***
- c) ***the Grant Application Policy is adopted***

8.4 Defibrillator Grant

The Rooms have requested funding to put towards the purchase of a defibrillator and Members were advised it will be placed outside the building for easy access. The next closest defibrillator is inside the Co-Op building and therefore inaccessible after trading hours. Cllr Buck stated the management of The Rooms has agreed to cover the cost of the installation fees.

The Town Clerk confirmed this defibrillator will be recorded on an online defibrillator management site which allows for technical monitoring of the defibrillator and its

pads/equipment. The Rooms have agreed to monitor the defibrillator and replace any of the parts where necessary.

It was agreed that the Town Clerk engages with BT Assets to apply to turn the telephone box opposite 22 Baldock Road into a defibrillator site.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- a) *To approve a grant award of £1,500 to The Rooms for a defibrillator, on the understanding that a completed Grant Application is received by the Town Clerk.*
- b) *For Officers to investigate whether the BT would consider a proposal to turn the old BT Telephone Kiosk on Baldock Road into a defibrillator point.*

8.5 SLCC National Conference

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Town Clerk attends the National Conference on 8th to 9th October 2024 on the gold package option.

8.6 IDB Co-Working with Stotfold Town Council

The Internal Drainage Board (“IDB”) approached the Town Council to request assistance from the Town Rangers with various tasks related to water courses running through Stotfold. The Town Clerk advised Members that IDB will provide training to the Town Rangers related to the work, and the work will not involve them entering the water at all.

It was agreed that the Town Clerk should make a request of the IDB that the same training be offered to the Stotfold Community Emergency Response Team.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Town Council approves the request for assistance from the IDB provided the Town Rangers are properly trained to deal with the work allocated and only between 08:00 and 16:00 Monday to Friday. The IDB will maintain responsibility for actionable items outside of those hours/days.

8.7 Insurance Renewal

Members received a report regarding the renewal of the Town Council’s insurance schedule. It was noted that due to the short notice before the renewal date, the Town Clerk had renewed the insurance at its current level. Members requested the Town Clerk to contact Surveyors to commence a review on the Town Council’s assets.

It was **RESOLVED**:

That the Town Clerk will renew the insurance policy for the 2024 – 2025 financial year.

8.8 Financial Regulations

Members noted a section of text missing at Item 1.7 on the “financial regulations” page and the Town Clerk will contact BAPTC to request the information.

Members noted the extra work for the Town Clerk every year to review the Financial Regulations in advance of approving the AGAR (Item 2.4).

Regarding Item 3.2, Members discussed a cyclical programme for maintenance and that it is essential to put aside enough funding into earmarked reserves to deal with assets maintenance. It was agreed that the Town Council's banking arrangements are brought to a future meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- a) *Defer the review of the Financial Regulations until such time as the missing section is resolved.*
- b) *Approve the issue of a credit card to the Public Realm Manager and to the Democratic Services Manager.*
- c) *The credit card limit should be increased to £5,000 across all three cards.*

8.9 Copier / Shredder Replacement

Members **NOTED** the replacement of the office equipment.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Town Council pay the rental fee on an annual basis and to offer the current reprographics machine and shredder to a local charity, after the memory has been wiped and the machine serviced.

8.10 Appointment of Internal Auditor

Members received a report on the appointment of a new internal auditor. It was **RESOLVED** to:

Seek quotations for an Internal Auditor with quotes to be considered by this Committee on 24th July 2024. This would on a one-year basis, with the option to extend to three years.

9. WORK PROGRAMME

The Work Programme was **NOTED**.

10. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY

There were no items for information for this Committee.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 24th July 2024.

12. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

It was **RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public for the consideration of the following item under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960:

12.1 Staff Update

Members received a staff update from the Town Clerk. Members noted the report.

The meeting closed at: 20.05.

SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN: _____

MINUTES APPROVED (date): _____

DRAFT

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

DATE: 24TH JULY 2024

SUBJECT: CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND
MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES, FOR
INFORMATION

1. Civic Regalia

This item will be reviewed at the September meeting.

2. Defibrillator Grant

The Town Clerk can confirm that the application has been received to enable this funding to be released.

The installation of a defibrillator in the phone box on Baldock Road is being investigated and has been delegated to the Building Management Committee as they are investigating installing another AED at the Mossman Centre.

3. Shredder and Printer

The shredder has been relocated to St Mary's School and the printer has found a home at The Need Project.

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES
DATE: 24TH JULY 2024
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK
SUBJECT: OUTSOURCING PAYROLL

1. SUMMARY

1.1 Members received a report at the last meeting of this committee with quotations to outsource the payroll function of the Town Council to a third party. The resolution of the meeting was to seek a breakdown of the current hours spent on this function and for the Clerk to ask the contractors to quote for the pension payments.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are asked to consider the additional information requested and advise the Clerk on their preferred contractor.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The previous report on this item can be found here:

[8.1 Outsourcing Payroll - EP.pdf](#)

4. FINANCIAL

4.1 The previous quotations received were two-fold offering a basis and enhanced service. Only two of those contractors offer the enhanced service including HMRC, BACs and Pension payments.:

a) **Contractor A**

£3,936

£330 per month or £23 per employee per month

b) **Contractor B**

£3,663

£305 per month or £21.99 per employee per month

4.2 Members asked that the Town Clerk ascertain how many hours it took the Finance Officer to process payroll. They have estimated that it takes them 10 hours per week.

Hourly rate of £14.21 plus on costs (pension and employers NI) £19.85 per hour.

10 hours payroll processing x £19.85 PH x 12 months PA **£2,382.00**

£198 per month or £14.17 per employee per month

4.3 Other savings would be made as the Finance Officer using uses a fax machine to process the payments via Barclays. This could then be discontinued.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan:	N/A
Risk Management:	Internal Control to outsource means non-reliance on officer
Legals:	GDPR, pension and tax requirements
Resources/Stakeholders:	Officers
Contracts/Financials:	Contract with payroll services provider
Crime & Disorder:	N/A
Equalities:	N/A
Biodiversity;	N/A

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES

DATE: 24th JULY 2024

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK

SUBJECT: FINANCIAL REGULATIONS V2

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Model Financial Regulations were issued by NALC and reviewed by this committee in May 2024. This committee reviewed the areas which needed to be personalised to the Town Council's requirements, however, there was one anomaly, 1.7 which needed clarification on.
- 1.2 The Town Clerk has now received an update from BATPC on this matter and the response is outlined below.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to review the attached Financial Regulations V2 and recommend their adoption to Full Council.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Town Clerk reported the anomaly in the Model Financial Regulations, to BATPC as the County Association. There had been other queries from other parish/town councils and the County Officer had collated all the items as there was a meeting planned with Steve Parkinson (the primary author of the Model Financial Regulations) and Charlotte Eisenhart (NALC).
- 3.2 They acknowledged that many people (as we have) have raised the issue of the 'hanging and' at 1.7. Steve said that was a legacy from the old model regulations and added that while the 'and' can safely be safely removed itself, in fact the entirety of 1.7 can be removed, as it is only stating what is made clear elsewhere. i.e. the first bullet at 1.7 is covered at 6.1 – *"The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and authorised by the council; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee"*, while the second bullet is covered at 5.15. Indeed, while on the call Charlotte confirmed with Steve that when she re-publishes the model regulations with all of the typos and corrections etc. to which they have been alerted, she will also remove 1.7 completely.
- 3.3 The Town Clerk has updated the attached version of Financial Regulations (V2) with the personalised items previously agreed by this Committee and removed 1.7 entirely.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 There are no financial implications.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan: N/A
Risk Management: Regular review of the Financial Regulations part of the Town Council's Risk Assessment
Legals: N/A
Resources/Stakeholders: Officer resource
Contracts/Financials: N/A
Crime & Disorder: N/A
Equalities: N/A
Biodiversity: N/A



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS 2024

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These Financial Regulations were adopted by the council at its meeting held on [enter date].

1. General

- 1.1. These Financial Regulations govern the financial management of the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. They are one of the council's governing documents and shall be observed in conjunction with the council's Standing Orders.
- 1.2. Councillors are expected to follow these regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow these regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.3. Wilful breach of these regulations by an employee may result in disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.4. In these Financial Regulations:
 - 'Accounts and Audit Regulations' means the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified.
 - "Approve" refers to an online action, allowing an electronic transaction to take place.
 - "Authorise" refers to a decision by the council, or a committee or an officer, to allow something to happen.
 - 'Proper practices' means those set out in *The Practitioners' Guide*
 - *Practitioners' Guide* refers to the guide issued by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) and published by NALC in England or Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners Guide jointly published by One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks in Wales.
 - 'Must' and **bold text** refer to a statutory obligation the council cannot change.
 - 'Shall' refers to a non-statutory instruction by the council to its members and staff.
- 1.5. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office, appointed by the council. The Town Clerk has been appointed as RFO and these regulations apply accordingly. 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 control systems;
 - ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
 - ensures the accounting records are kept up to date;
 - seeks economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of council resources; and
 - produces financial management information as required by the council.
- 1.6. **The council must not delegate any decision regarding:**
 - **setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);**
 - **the outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls;**

- **approving accounting statements;**
 - **approving an annual governance statement;**
 - **borrowing;**
 - **declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and**
 - **addressing recommendations from the internal or external auditors.**
- 2. Risk management and internal control**
- 2.1. **The council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.**
- 2.2. The Clerk shall prepare, for approval by the council, a risk management policy covering all activities of the council. This policy and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 2.3. When considering any new activity, the Clerk with the RFO shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration by the council.
- 2.4. **At least once a year, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control, before approving the Annual Governance Statement.**
- 2.5. **The accounting control systems determined by the RFO must include measures to:**
- **ensure that risk is appropriately managed;**
 - **ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions;**
 - **prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud; and**
 - **allow the reconstitution of any lost records;**
 - **identify the duties of officers dealing with transactions and**
 - **ensure division of responsibilities.**
- 2.6. At least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chair or a bank signatory shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the council Governance & Resources Committee.
- 2.7. Regular back-up copies shall be made of the records on any council computer and stored either online or in a separate location from the computer. The council shall put measures in place to ensure that the ability to access any council computer is not lost if an employee leaves or is incapacitated for any reason.
- 3. Accounts and audit**
- 3.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

- 3.2. **The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonable accuracy at any time. In particular, they must contain:**
- **day-to-day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which they relate;**
 - **a record of the assets and liabilities of the council.**
- 3.3. The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
- 3.4. The RFO shall complete and certify the annual Accounting Statements of the council contained in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the Accounting Statements, the RFO shall submit them (with any related documents) to the council, within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.5. **The council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practices.**
- 3.6. **Any officer or member of the council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider 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.
- 3.7. The internal auditor shall be appointed by the council and shall carry out their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the council's risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners' Guide.
- 3.8. The council shall ensure that the internal auditor:
- is competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
 - reports to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one written report during each financial year;
 - can demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
 - has no involvement in the management or control of the council.
- 3.9. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
- perform any operational duties for the council;
 - initiate or approve accounting transactions;
 - provide financial, legal or other advice including in relation to any future 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.
- 3.10. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as described in The Practitioners Guide.
- 3.11. 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 documents required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.12. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

4. Budget and precept

- 4.1. **Before setting a precept, the council must calculate its council tax (England) requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.**
- 4.2. Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by the Governance & Resources Committee at least annually in October for the following financial year and the final version shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chair of Governance & Resources Committee. The RFO will inform committees of any salary implications before they consider their draft their budgets.
- 4.3. No later than November each year, the RFO shall prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all receipts and payments/income and expenditure for the following financial year along with a forecast for the following three financial years, taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair or replacement.
- 4.4. Unspent budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year. Unspent funds for partially completed projects may only be carried forward (by placing them in an earmarked reserve) with the formal approval of the full council.
- 4.5. Each committee shall review its draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the Governance & Resources Committee not later than the end of November each year.
- 4.6. The draft budget with any committee proposals and three-year forecast, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the Governance & Resources Committee and a recommendation made to the council.
- 4.7. Having considered the proposed budget and three-year forecast, the council shall determine its council tax requirement by setting a budget. The council shall set a precept for this amount no later than the end of January for the ensuing financial year.
- 4.8. **Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance**

Act 1992 and must and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.

- 4.9. The RFO shall **issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of February** and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget.
- 4.10. The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.
- 4.11. Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council or relevant committee.

5. Procurement

- 5.1. **Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.
- 5.2. The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.
- 5.3. Every contract shall comply with these the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations, and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.
- 5.4. **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.**
- 5.5. Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 6.12) obtain prices as follows:
- 5.6. For contracts estimated to exceed £100,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers agreed by the councillor or advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.
- 5.7. **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation¹ regarding the advertising of contract opportunities and the publication of notices about the award of contracts.**
- 5.8. For contracts greater than £5,000 excluding VAT the Clerk shall seek at least three estimates;
- 5.9. where the value is between £1,000 and £5,000 excluding VAT, the Clerk shall try to obtain 3 estimates which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.

¹ The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website if they advertise contract opportunities and also to publicise the award of contracts over £30,000 including VAT, regardless of whether they were advertised.

- 5.10. For smaller purchases, the clerk shall seek to achieve value for money.
- 5.11. **Contracts must not be split into smaller lots to avoid compliance with these rules.**
- 5.12. The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:
- i. specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;
 - ii. repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;
 - iii. works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;
 - iv. goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.
- 5.13. When applications are made to waive this financial regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the council {or relevant committee}. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.
- 5.14. The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- 5.15. Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:
- the Clerk, under delegated authority, for any items below £1,000 excluding VAT.
 - the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council or Chair of the appropriate committee, for any items below £10,000 excluding VAT.
 - a duly delegated committee of the council for all items of expenditure within their delegated budgets for items under £10,000 excluding VAT
 - in respect of grants, a duly authorised committee within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement agreed by the council.
 - the council for all items over £10,000;
- Such authorisation must be supported by a Minute (in the case of council or committee decisions) or other auditable evidence trail.
- 5.16. No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.
- 5.17. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the council {or a duly delegated committee acting within its Terms of Reference} except in an emergency.
- 5.18. In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £10,000 excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 5.19. No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available

and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.

- 5.20. 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, along with evidence of receipt of goods.
- 5.21. Any ordering system can be misused and access to them shall be controlled by the RFO.

6. Banking and payments

- 6.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and authorised by the council; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. The council has resolved to bank with Unity Trust and Barclays Bank with investments held with CCLA. The arrangements shall be reviewed annually for security and efficiency.
- 6.2. The council must have safe and efficient arrangements for making payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. Wherever possible, more than one person should be involved in any payment, for example by dual online authorisation or dual cheque signing. Even where a purchase has been authorised, the payment must also be authorised, and only authorised payments shall be approved or signed to allow the funds to leave the council's bank.
- 6.3. All invoices for payment should be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified to confirm that the work, goods, or services were received, checked and represent expenditure previously authorised by the council before being certified by the RFO-
- 6.4. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment) may be summarised to avoid disclosing any personal information.
- 6.5. All payments shall be made by online banking], in accordance with a resolution of the council, unless the council resolves to use a different payment method.
- 6.6. For each financial year the RFO may draw up a schedule of regular payments due in relation to a continuing contract or obligation (such as Salaries, PAYE, National Insurance, pension contributions, rent, rates, regular maintenance contracts and similar items), which the council or a duly delegated committee may authorise in advance for the year.
- 6.7. A list of such payments shall be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the council for information only.
- 6.8. The Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise payments in the following circumstances:
 - i. any payments of up to £1,000 excluding VAT, within an agreed budget.
 - ii. payments of up to £2,000 excluding VAT in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises.

- iii. any payment necessary to avoid a charge under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 or to comply with contractual terms, where the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of the 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.
 - iv. Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £10,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.
- 6.9. The RFO shall present a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the agenda for the meeting, together with the relevant invoices, to the council. The council shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself, shall authorise payment by resolution. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed with the agenda.

7. Electronic payments

- 7.1. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate agreed by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts and a minimum of two people will be involved in any online approval process.
- 7.2. All authorised signatories shall have access to view the council's bank accounts online.
- 7.3. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the council or its banking, to anyone not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.
- 7.4. The Service Administrator shall set up all items due for payment online. A list of payments for approval, together with copies of the relevant invoices, shall be signed at the Town Council offices by two authorised signatories.
- 7.5. In the prolonged absence of the Service Administrator, the Finance Officer shall set up any payments due before the return of the Service Administrator.
- 7.6. Two councillors who are authorised signatories shall check the payment details against the invoices before approving each payment using the online banking system.
- 7.7. Evidence shall be retained showing which members approved the payment online and a printout of the transaction confirming that the payment has been made shall be appended to the invoice for audit purposes.
- 7.8. A full list of all payments made in a month shall be provided to the next council meeting.
- 7.9. With the approval of the council in each case, regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made by variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are signed/approved online by two authorised members. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by the council every year.

- 7.10. Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS by resolution of the council provided that each payment is approved online by two authorised bank signatories, evidence is retained, and any payments are reported to the council at the next meeting. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 7.11. If thought appropriate by the council, regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are or approved online by two members, evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported to council when made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.
- 7.12. Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by the Town Clerk and the Finance Officer. This is a potential area for fraud and the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine. Data held should be checked with suppliers every two years.
- 7.13. Members and officers shall ensure that any computer used for the council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated.
- 7.14. Remembered password facilities, other than secure password stores requiring separate identity verification, should not be used on any computer used for council banking.

8. Cheque payments

- 8.1. Cheques or orders for payment in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be signed by two members.
- 8.2. A signatory having a family or business relationship with the beneficiary of a payment shall not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to that payment.
- 8.3. To indicate agreement of the details on the cheque with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall also initial the cheque counterfoil and invoice.
- 8.4. Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at, or immediately before or after a council or committee meeting. Any signatures obtained away from council meetings shall be reported to the council or Governance & Resources Committee at the next convenient meeting.

9. Payment cards

- 9.1. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Town Clerk and RFO, Public Realm Manager and Democratic Services Manager and any balance shall be paid in full each month.
- 9.2. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used except for expenses of up to £250 including VAT, incurred in accordance with council policy.

10. Petty Cash

- 10.1 The council will not maintain any form of cash float. All cash received must be banked intact. Any payments made in cash (for example for postage or minor stationery items) shall be refunded on a regular basis, at least quarterly.

11. Payment of salaries and allowances

- 11.1. **As an employer, the council must make arrangements to comply with the statutory requirements of PAYE legislation.**
- 11.2. **Councillors allowances (where paid) are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.**
- 11.3. Salary rates shall be agreed by the council, or a duly delegated committee. No changes shall be made to any employee's gross pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the council or relevant committee.
- 11.4. Payment of salaries shall be made, after deduction of tax, national insurance, pension contributions and any similar statutory or discretionary deductions, on the dates stipulated in employment contracts.
- 11.5. Deductions from salary shall be paid to the relevant bodies within the required timescales, provided that each payment is reported, as set out in these regulations above.
- 11.6. Each payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a payroll control account or other separate confidential record, with the total of such payments each calendar month reported in the cashbook. Payroll reports will be reviewed by the Governance & Resources Committee to ensure that the correct payments have been made.
- 11.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the council, setting out a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the full council.
- 11.8. Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case.

12. Loans and investments

- 12.1. Any application for Government approval to borrow money and subsequent arrangements for a loan must be authorised by the full council and recorded in the minutes. All borrowing shall be in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary approval.
- 12.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase, Leasing of tangible assets or loans to be repaid within the financial year) must be authorised by the full council, following a written report on the value for money of the proposed transaction.
- 12.3. The council shall consider the requirement for an Investment Strategy and Policy in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which must be written in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices, and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 12.4. All investment of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.

- 12.5. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 12.6. Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, shall be made in accordance with these regulations.

13. Income

- 13.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 13.2. The council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided, or goods sold at least annually as part of the budget-setting process, following a report of the Town Clerk. The RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all amounts due to the council.
- 13.3. Any sums found to be irrecoverable, and any bad debts shall be reported to the council and shall be written off in the year. The council's approval shall be shown in the accounting records.
- 13.4. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be deposited intact with the council's bankers, with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.
- 13.5. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 13.6. The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted from the software by the due date.
- 13.7. Where significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall 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 record such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken for the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

14. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

- 14.1. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments, which shall be made within the time specified in the contract based on signed certificates from the architect or other consultant engaged to supervise the works.
- 14.2. Any variation of addition to or omission from a contract must be authorised by the Clerk to the contractor in writing, with the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the contract sum by 5% or more, or likely to exceed the budget available.

15. Stores and equipment

- 15.1. The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section.
- 15.2. 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.
- 15.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.

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

16. Assets, properties and estates

16.1. The Clerk shall make arrangements for the safe custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council.

16.2. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date, with a record of all properties held by the council, their 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.

16.3. 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.

16.4. No interest in land 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. In each case a written report 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 where required by law).

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, except where the estimated value of any one item does not exceed £500. In each case a written report shall be provided to council with a full business case.

17. Insurance

17.1. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered, reviewing these annually before the renewal date in conjunction with the council's review of risk management.

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

17.3. The RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability, damage, or event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to the council at the next available meeting. The RFO shall negotiate all claims on the council's insurers.

17.4. 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.

18. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

18.1. The council shall review these Financial Regulations annually and following any change of clerk or RFO. The Clerk shall monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and advise the council of any need to amend these Financial Regulations.

- 18.2. The council may, by resolution 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 presented to all members. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the council to act unlawfully.
- 18.3. The council may temporarily amend these Financial Regulations by a duly notified resolution, to cope with periods of absence, local government reorganisation, national restrictions or other exceptional circumstances.

Appendix 1 - Tender process

- 1) Any 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.
- 2) The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post unless an electronic tendering process has been agreed by the council.
- 3) Where a postal process is used, 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. 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.
- 4) Where an electronic tendering process is used, the council shall use a specific email address that will be monitored to ensure that nobody accesses any tender before the expiry of the deadline for submission.
- 5) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Order 21(e) and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 6) Where 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, 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.

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES
DATE: 24TH JULY 2024
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK
SUBJECT: APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 It was resolved at the meeting of this Committee held in May 2024, to appoint a new Internal Auditor. A specification was agreed, with an initial contract of 1 year, to be extended to 3 years in total.
- 1.2 This report outlines quotations received.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the quotations attached and advise the Clerk who they wish to recommend to Council as the Internal Auditor.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The report on this item considered at the previous meeting can be found here:
[8.10.1 Appointment of Internal Auditor.pdf](#)
- 3.2 The specification agreed at the previous meeting was forwarded to three internal auditors:

- Mulberry Local Authority Services
- Auditing Solutions
- Parish and Town Auditing Services

- 3.3 Quotations have been received as below:

Mulberry Local Authority Service	£70 per hour plus travelling costs
Parish and Town Auditing Services	£700

Both quotations are attached for ease of reference.

- 3.4 Auditing Solutions declined to quote.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 There is a budget for the provision of the internal auditor (61/612 £3000). This has been increased in 2024/25 from £2,400 with a view to a different audit regime.
- 4.2 Previously the Internal Auditor costs were £300 per annum.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan:	N/A
Risk Management:	Appointment of Internal Auditor is part of Risk Assessment.
Legals:	N/A
Resources/Stakeholders:	RFO and Finance Officer
Contracts/Financials:	Budget in situ
Crime & Disorder:	N/A
Equalities:	N/A
Biodiversity:	N/A



Dear Clerk/RFO

As part of a range of services we offer to town and parish councils, Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd provide an internal audit service which is conducted in accordance with current guidelines and accounting practices as set out in the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) Practitioner's Guide.

Generally, we conduct two audits a year as a minimum. The first (interim audit) concentrates on the governance and accountability functions of the council and deals with procedural aspects of the audit (Financial Regulations, Standing Orders, risk assessments, internal control systems, processes, policies, etc.).

The second (final audit) focuses on the financial aspects and the checking of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) and supporting information being submitted to the external auditors.

Our councils have found this approach beneficial, as it provides an opportunity to address any weaknesses identified at the interim audit before completion of the Annual Internal Audit Report at the final audit, although we are always happy to consider different arrangements to suit your council's needs. We are also happy to answer any questions that may arise during the year.

Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd (previously as part of Mulberry & Co) have been conducting internal audits for local councils for over 15 years. Our team of auditors have extensive sector specific knowledge and experience and can rotate between councils to ensure complete independence is maintained throughout your engagement period with us.

Last year, we completed over 230 internal audits ranging from small councils exempt from a limited assurance review to larger Town and Parish Councils with multi-million pound turnovers and complex financial arrangements.

We base our charges on an hourly rate and for the financial year commencing on 1 April 2024 this is £70 per hour + VAT. Travel costs for on-site visits are charged at the standard HMRC rate of 45p per mile. We do not charge for travel time. The audit can also be carried out remotely if preferred.

The length of time for the audit(s) will depend on the scale and complexity of your council's financial operations, and once appointed, your assigned internal auditor will be happy to discuss this with you in more detail.

We offer engagement periods of either one or three years. If you choose to appoint us for three years, we guarantee the hourly rate will not increase for the duration of that engagement period.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Andy

Andy Beams
Director, Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd



Emma Payne
Town Clerk
Stotfold Town Council
The Greenacre Centre
Valerian Way
Stotfold
Hitchin
Herts SG5 4HG

9th July 2024

Dear Emma,

INTERNAL AUDIT QUOTATION – STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Thank you for your invitation to provide a quotation to the Town Council for our internal auditing services.

We have recently established a new auditing service called Parish & Town Audit Services (www.patas.co.uk). We carry full Professional Indemnity Insurance provided by Hiscox.

The cost of the providing internal audit services to Stotfold Town Council for 2024/2025 will be as follows:

End of Year Internal Audit Service for 2024/25	£350.00
Interim Internal Audit (October/November 2024)	£350.00
Total	£700.00

The quotation includes all aspects of the internal audit including two on-site visits per annum and is valid for four years. There is no mileage charge. There will be no increases. Additional on-site visits will be charged at the same rate as above.

We provide internal audit and examination services for Town, Parish and Community Councils. Our clients include Bude-Stratton Town Council, Barnstaple Town Council and Lewes Town Council as well as a number of small and medium sized parish and town councils.

Parish and Town Auditing Services (PATAS) provides an independent, professional and thorough internal auditing services to Parish and Town Councils throughout England and Wales that meets all the requirements set out in the JPAG Governance & Accountability Practitioners’ Guide. We have a comprehensive, detailed understanding of Parish and Town Councils and we use this to develop and deliver a tailored support service that meets your needs. We are also members of the Internal Audit Forum.



We acknowledge our responsibility to report to members whether, in our view, the financial statements, as summarised in the statutory Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), are in accordance with the Council's accounting records, whether they are supported by appropriate systems of internal financial control in the areas specified in the Internal Audit Report embodied in the AGAR and whether they comply with the relevant legislation. In arriving at our view, we are required to consider the following matters, and to report on any in respect of which we are not satisfied:

- a. Maintenance of appropriate accounting records;
- b. whether the AGAR detail is consistent with the accounting records;
- c. Effectiveness of controls and procedures over the payment of staff salaries and associated HMRC and Pension contributions, plus trader payments;
- d. Controls over the identification and recovery of income;
- e. Appropriateness of governance controls and risk management; and
- f. Adherence to Government legislation.

We conduct our audit through an interim review, together with a final visit to sign off the IA Report in the year's AGAR once the Accounts for the year have been finalised. It is obviously neither practicable nor cost effective from the Council's viewpoint for us to review each income stream annually. If appointed we will prepare a strategic plan for the next 3 years setting out an approximate time allocation for review of each facet of the Council's financial activities.

In addition to this covering letter I have attached our Letter of Engagement and a Master Internal Audit sheet which outlines the service we provide and the areas we audit.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me or visit our website.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Russell, Internal Auditor.

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES
DATE: 24th JULY 2024
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK
SUBJECT: ASSET MANAGEMENT POLICY 2024

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report aims to present the reasons for adopting an Asset Management Policy for the Town Council. Effective asset management is crucial for maintaining the quality and reliability of our town's infrastructure and services. The Policy will provide a structured approach to managing the town's assets, ensuring sustainable, cost-effective, and efficient operations. This document outlines the benefits, justifications, and strategic importance of implementing an Asset Management Policy.
- 1.2 Asset management involves the systematic process of developing, operating, maintaining, and upgrading physical assets in a cost-effective manner. For our town, this includes public buildings, parks, streetlights and other infrastructure. Implementing an Asset Management Policy will help the Town Council make informed decisions about asset investment, maintenance, and disposal, enhancing the community's quality of life and financial sustainability.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the attached Asset Management Policy and if, in agreement, recommend its adoption to Council.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 An Asset Management Policy will provide a framework for:
 - **Prioritizing Investments:** Helping to allocate limited financial resources to the most critical and high-priority projects.
 - **Cost-Benefit Analysis:** Facilitating the assessment of the costs, benefits, and risks associated with various asset-related decisions.
 - **Transparent Processes:** Ensuring transparency in decision-making processes, which increases trust and accountability within the community.
- 3.2 Effective asset management can:
 - **Optimize Maintenance:** Develop proactive maintenance strategies to prevent unexpected failures and reduce repair costs.
 - **Extend Asset Lifespan:** Implementing maintenance and renewal strategies that maximize the useful life of assets, thereby reducing the need for premature replacements.
 - **Improve Service Delivery:** Ensuring that assets operate at optimal performance levels, thus improving the quality of services provided to residents.

3.3 An Asset Management Policy will support:

- **Budgeting and Financial Planning:** Facilitating better forecasting of maintenance, operation, and replacement costs, leading to more accurate budgeting.
- **Cost Control:** Identifying opportunities for cost savings through efficient asset utilization and management.
- **Long-Term Sustainability:** Ensuring that current and future financial resources are managed sustainably to maintain the town’s infrastructure over the long term.

3.4 Adopting an Asset Management Policy helps in:

- **Risk Mitigation:** Identifying, assessing, and mitigating risks associated with asset failure or underperformance, thereby safeguarding public safety and council resources.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Ensuring compliance with regulations and standards related to asset management and public infrastructure.

3.5 Implementing an Asset Management Policy encourages:

- **Public Engagement:** Involving the community in decision-making processes, ensuring that the town’s asset management aligns with residents’ needs and expectations.
- **Stakeholder Collaboration:** Promoting collaboration with other governmental agencies, non-profits, and private sector partners in asset management activities.

4. FINANCIAL

4.1 Adopting an asset management policy will help with long term budgeting.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan:	N/A
Risk Management:	Internal Control
Legals:	Asset register is reported as part of AGAR
Resources/Stakeholders:	Officers
Contracts/Financials:	Assist with medium-long term budgeting
Crime & Disorder:	Regular monitoring asset register prevents fraud
Equalities:	N/A
Biodiversity:	N/A



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

ASSET MANAGEMENT POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Stotfold Town Council has a duty to ensure that the investment in assets is properly managed, controlled and recorded. This Asset Management Policy (AMP) will guide future decisions on the use, retention, protection, disposal, and acquisition of property assets to meet the strategic plans of the Town Council. It also seeks to ensure that assets including property, fleet, plant, operational equipment, and other resources are sustainably and efficiently managed, remain fit for purpose, provide value for money and support Community use.

The AMP is not an asset register of all the property or other interests held by the Town Council, it is a document that sets out a transparent co-ordinated approach to managing its assets to meet requirements and supports future decision. The Town Council will maintain a fixed asset register of items of value more than £250. The register will be held electronically by the Clerk, updated annually and reported as part of the Annual Statement of Accounts.

Objectives

The Objectives of the Asset Management Plan are to:

- Ensure that assets are managed to meet statutory requirements, are fit for purpose and are in a good standard of condition in accordance with condition surveys – to be reviewed every 5 years.
- Manage assets in a sustainable and cost-effective way.
- Protect and optimise the value of the Council's assets whether operational or non-operational.
- Provide a co-ordinated approach to asset management across the Council reflecting service needs.
- Manage the assets to give due consideration to increasing revenue income and/or reducing revenue costs.
- Identify and develop opportunities for joint working with partners.
- Meet the needs of the local community through the provision of facilities whether it is for recreation and social interaction.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Town Clerk has the responsibility for the Council's property resources and assets. The Clerk is supported in this role by the Public Realm Manager. The responsibilities of the role are as follows:

- To address the function and contribution of the Council's property portfolio as a corporate resource supporting the delivery of corporate objectives.
- To plan for corporate use and provision of the Council's property assets.
- To be responsible for putting the necessary asset management plan in place.
- To be responsible for ensuring that the Council's Asset Management Plan is maintained and updated.

- Ensure that the Asset Management Plan is properly implemented.

The Building Management Committee will take all decisions or make recommendations on resources and priorities, acquisitions, disposals and capital investment where it has delegated power to undertake this. Certain items will need to be referred to Full Council for consideration.

ASSET DATA

The Town Council maintains information on the various types of assets that it holds:

- Land in its various uses (freehold & leasehold)
- Property holdings (freehold & leasehold)
- Plant
- Vehicles
- Machinery
- Play areas (equipment)
- Civic regalia
- Operational equipment including IT, hand tools, PA system etc.

A central asset register is held and maintained. This, where applicable, will include a record of equipment supplier's information and any warranties. Additionally, the Town Council has a digital mapping software to store and manage land and building assets from a graphical perspective.

It is a requirement of the Transparency Code that the Town Council list all its land and building assets which are published on the Town Council's website.

PLANNED MAINTAINANCE PROGRAMME

As part of the Asset Management Plan, the Town Council will devise and maintain a five-year planned maintenance programme for all properties, any acquisitions/disposals and carry out a review of operational needs and uses of its entire property portfolio. This is informed by an asset review programme every five years of the Council's land and buildings holdings.

VALUATION

The method by which asset valuation will be decided for first registration on the Fixed Asset Register is at acquisition cost. The recorded value of the asset will not change from year to year until disposal of the asset. At which time, the asset will remain on the Fixed Asset Register as a 'disposed asset' and will display a nil value against the item.

The commercial concepts of depreciation, impairment adjustment and re-evaluation are not required for this method of asset valuation. This method of valuation is outlined in the JPAG [Practitioners Guide 2024](#).

THE FIXED ASSET REGISTER

The Town Council's Fixed Asset Register will contain the following information:

- A description of the asset, including the date on which it was acquired.
- The location of the asset
- The market value, where appropriate
- The replacement value for insurance purposes

- The disposal amount realised from the sale (if applicable)
- The date of disposal

FINANCING OF NEW ASSETS

The Town Council will consider the acquisition of new assets and the maintenance requirements of its current assets on a regular basis, and at a minimum of once a year. When the requirement for any new asset has been identified, the Town Council will consider a range of funding sources including:

- From the Precept
- From earmarked reserves
- From a grant
- From sponsorship
- From a donation
- From a loan*

The Town Council will consider and investigate all requests from the electorate for the purchase of new assets or improved equipment, through consultation. *It is a requirement of a Public Works Loan that the community has been engaged with to fully understand the implications of developing the asset by means of taking out a loan.

ASSET INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE

All assets listed on the Fixed Asset Register will be inspected and reported on annually.

Assets are required to be maintained to a satisfactory standard to ensure serviceability, prolong usable life, and reduce the possibility of increased repair costs.

Asset maintenance action will require the prior approval of the Council (within reason) and no asset will be maintained beyond its reasonable useful life term.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Steps are taken continually to ensure that properties comply with legislative and regulatory requirements. On-going programmes of compliance testing to measure and control risk are in place to address key issues relating to:

- Gas installation testing – tested annually;
- Electrical installation testing – tested on a 5-year rolling programme;
- Legionella testing – tested annually;
- Asbestos management – ongoing management; and
- Fire risk assessments and general health and safety audits – ongoing management.

Additionally, the Council has a schedule of safety inspections for public access land, equipment, and fleet. This includes but not limited to:

- Opens spaces and recreational facilities – full monthly inspection.
- Play equipment – visual weekly with full monthly inspection.
- Fleet – Daily checks, annual service and MOT /inspection.

REPLACEMENT OF VEHICLE/S, MACHINERY AND OTHER ASSETS

The Town Council will introduce and maintain a replacement plan and programme for vehicles, plant, machinery, play equipment and other assets used during service delivery. In this way, the potential cost of replacements can be fed into the Council's Financial Planning and be considered by the Governance & Resources Committee.

Regular inspections and records will be maintained by the Town Council in accordance with statutory legislation.

IDENTIFICATION OF SURPLUS ASSETS

As part of the annual asset review, the Town Council will determine whether any current asset is surplus to needs and if found to be so, will take appropriate action to dispose of the asset.

SUSTAINABILITY

The Town Council will consider ways to reduce the service costs of an asset, increase income from an asset and share assets or services for the benefit of the community wherever it is lawful, possible, and appropriate to do so.

DISPOSAL

The authority to dispose of assets either by destroying or selling the item, will lie with the Governance & Resources Committee. Any asset that is disposed of will remain on the Fixed Asset Register and will be listed at nil value.

Any revenue generated from the disposal of an asset will, in normal circumstances, be credited to the cost centre from which the original asset was funded.

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES

DATE: 24TH JULY 2024

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK

SUBJECT: MAYORAL ALLOWANCE POLICY

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Stotfold Town Council has resolved to appoint the Chair of the Council and Vice Chair to the roles of Mayor and Deputy Mayor. Along with this appointment comes an allowance to undertake their civic duties.
- 1.2 The purpose of having an adopted Mayoral Allowance Policy is to remove any doubt about what is and is not included in the allowance.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the attached policy and if in agreement, recommend its adoption to Council.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Mayors' allowances are covered by the Local Government Act 1972, sections 15(5) and 35(5). They are to provide recompense for appropriate clothing (which would not otherwise have been necessary), transport, contribution towards telephone, small tokens such as flowers, donations to charities, tickets to functions etc
- 3.2 By providing this allowance, it enables councillors who may not be able to self-fund the position of Mayor to take part and represent their residents at events in the county and in neighbouring town/parishes. It also adds to the transparency of the Town Council as residents are able to view the accounts as part of the Electors Rights to inspect the accounts.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 There is an amount of £1500 in the Civic Allowance (61/620). Any monies unspent is moved into the General Reserve at the end of the year, not transferred to the Mayor. To do the latter would incur HMRC implications.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	Transparency of transactions.
Legals	LGA 1972, S15(5)
Resources/Stakeholders	Mayor/Deputy Mayor/Officers
Contracts/Financials	Budget in situ
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Equalities	Allowance allows all councillors to stand for the position.
Biodiversity	N/A



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

MAYORAL ALLOWANCE POLICY

1. Purpose

Stotfold Town Council is committed to accountability and transparency regarding all expenditure, including the Mayor's Allowance. It is the Town Council's policy that no Councillor should be financially disadvantaged in the performance of the role of Mayor.

2. Background

Each May, the Town Council elects the Mayor for the coming year. This position entails increased responsibility with the Mayor representing Stotfold at various events throughout the County, hosting their own civic events and raising money for the Town Mayor's Chosen Charities.

Each year, a budget is allocated to cover legitimate expenses incurred, which is known as the Mayor's Allowance.

3. Permitted Expenditure

Section 15(5) of the Local Government Act (LGA) provides for Town and Parish Councils to pay its Mayor 'for the purposes of enabling him to meet the expenses of his office such allowance as the council think reasonable'.

Provisions made for the Mayor's Allowance in the LGA do not extend to the Deputy Mayor, who would be treated the same as any other councillor. However, it is acknowledged that the Deputy Mayor is likely to incur costs associated with officially representing the Mayor in their absence. In this case, they will be entitled to claim expenses.

It is recognised that the Mayor may be accompanied to many formal engagements by their spouse or partner. The Mayor's Allowance is expected to fund expenses incurred in carrying out Mayoral duties and is used for the following:

- Travel Costs to and from events.
- Tickets for events, Town Mayor, and consort.
- Any gifts presented.
- Raffle/draw tickets (any prizes will become the property of the Town Council). Donations to charity, with or without attending events.
- Costs incurred in the process of raising money for the Mayor's Chosen Charities, including event costs and purchasing raffle prizes.
- Civic entertainment and refreshments, strictly limited to occasions where either external guests or residents are present.
- Reasonable clothing allowance for civic events, including clothing for the Mayor's Consort.
- Reasonable telephone, stationery, IT and printing costs.

Reasonable expenditure under the above headings represents legitimate expenditure, and the Mayor will be reimbursed on providing receipts where possible.

The Allowance paid under section 15(5) of the LGA 1972 will be subject to the usual tax and national insurance deductions if it is paid as a round lump sum allowance to ensure HMRC regulations are adhered to.

Stotfold Town Council has **RESOLVED** not to pay the Mayoral Allowance as a round lump sum. Any residual allowance unspent at the end of the Mayoral term will be returned to the general reserves. If exceptionally, the Mayor's Allowance is entirely spent during the year of office, the Mayor may seek reimbursement of any excess expenditure from the Town Council.

Document History:

Date Adopted	July 2024	
Date reviewed	July 2026	

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES
DATE: 24th JULY 2024
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK
SUBJECT: BUDGET SETTING TIMETABLE 2025-26

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Clerk felt that Members (especially new ones) would appreciate some transparency about how the Town Council's budget is prepared. Therefore, the following draft timetable has been prepared for review, comment and amending by Members to ensure the process is carried out in the most efficient and transparent manner way for all involved.
- 1.2 The setting of the Town Council's budget has to be agreed by Full Council.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the timetable outlined below for the formation and setting of the Town Council's budget for 2025-26 and provide the Clerk with any comments that may be relevant.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 August 2024

The RFO will meet with each service manager to review the 2024/25 budgets, spend to date, EMR balances, planned projects and ensure that all maintenance, repair and renewal schedules, contracts and projects for inclusion in the draft budget.

Service Managers to report on estimated costs for future projects, capital and revenue for each committee's consideration. Each committee can add to the 2025/26 budget should they wish.

When there is a Strategic Plan adopted, this will align to this Plan.

3.2 September 2024

Each committee receives and consider the following:

- 2024/25 YTD budget reports.
- 2025/26 first draft budget.
- Service Manager's report detailing essential costs which have been included in the first draft budget.
- Service Manager's report providing estimated costs of potential future projects, improvements, capital and revenue items.

Each Committee will provide a budget for the Governance & Resources Committee meeting on 23 October 2024.

3.3 Governance & Resources - 23 October 2024

The G&R Committee will review the total overall budget against each budget provided by each committee. The EMR balances and the General Reserves. The G&R Committee will make a proposal for the precept increase/decrease.

If there are no recommendations for each committee to adjust their initial budget proposal, then the budget can be considered at the Town Council meeting scheduled for 4 December 2024 and can be ratified subject to any member raising matters which they would wish to be investigated or reconsidered. If there are no amendments the budget can then be ratified.

3.4 November 2024

If there are recommendations from G&R regarding committee budgets, each committee reviews its' own budget in light of the feedback provided by the G&R Committee. The Committees then provide a revised budget for G&R consideration at its meeting on 18th December 2024.

3.5 Governance & Resources Committee – 18 December 2024

If the Budget has not been ratified at the Town Council meeting on 4 December, the G&R committee will review the revised budget and make any final amendments to make a recommendation to Full Council on 29 January 2024 subject to the Council tax base figures being provided by CBC in November. However, if the base rate significantly changes the Budget will have to be reviewed at an extra meeting of the G&R Committee at its meeting on 22 January 2025.

3.6 Full Council 29 January 2025

Full Council holds a budget setting meeting and ratifies the recommendations contained within the G&R budget report subject to any member raising matters which they would wish to be investigated or reconsidered.

3.8 Precept to CBC

CBC require the Precept to be finalised and advised to them by the end of January 2025.

4. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan:	N/A
Risk Management:	Internal control.
Legals:	Local Government Act 1972, S101.
Resources/Stakeholders:	RFO, Finance Officer, Senior Leadership Team
Contracts/Financials:	Financial implication
Crime & Disorder:	N/A
Equalities:	N/A
Biodiversity:	N/A

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE AND RESOURCES
DATE: 27TH JULY 2024
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK
SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Effective performance management is key to organisational success. This report outlines a policy to be considered for adoption for Performance Management along with the associated documents to support that process.
- 1.2 The proposed plan will enhance employee performance, align efforts with strategic objectives, and foster a culture of continuous improvement. Importantly, the performance management plan will also inform the training budget, ensuring that resources are directed towards the most impactful development opportunities.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
 - a) Recommend to Council that the Performance Management Policy is adopted;
 - b) Note the documentation to support the Performance Management Plan.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Good performance management is essential to get the best outcome for organisations and the workforce. If performance is not managed well, staff are unlikely to perform at their best.
- 3.2 Good performance management arrangements can help an organisation:
 - motivate staff
 - check that all staff are making valuable contributions towards organisational goals
 - develop staff
 - recognise and acknowledge the good work of employees
 - deliver tasks and projects quickly and to required standards
 - spot and improve poor performance.
- 3.3 How performance is measured is important and staff should be set challenging performance measurements, ideally linked to the Town Council's strategic plan. As this is the first year that formal performance management has been undertaken by this Town Clerk, it is proposed that this format is monitored and reviewed to make sure they meet the needs of the organisation.
- 3.4 The development of staff should be an on-going consideration for employers and their managers. Managers should regularly talk with their team members about what opportunities may be available and listen to what sort of development they might be interested in.

- 3.5 The timescale for this would be undertaken during August/September with a training needs report to this committee in October 2024 so that any training requirements can be included in the budget for 2025/26.
- 3.6 There are some training courses which are non-negotiable; i.e. manual handling, health and safety, fire safety, first aid.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 The training budget for 2024/25 is £5,000.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan:	N/A
Risk Management:	Review of effectiveness of staff resource
Legals:	N/A
Resources/Stakeholders:	Officers.
Contracts/Financials:	N/A
Crime & Disorder:	N/A
Equalities:	N/A
Biodiversity:	N/A



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

STAFF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

Introduction

The successful operation of any Council depends primarily on using the full potential of its workforce. This necessitates certain criteria being met which are to the benefit of both the Council and its employees and requires a strategy to be put into operation to achieve this aim.

The interests of the Council and its residents/customers are best served by a workforce, which as individuals and a team, are carrying out their tasks to the most effective performance level. This is what performance management, and appraisals are seeking to achieve and why they can have an impact on employees and Council performance.

The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework for managing, developing, and evaluating staff performance. It aims to ensure that all staff members are provided with the necessary support, feedback, and development opportunities to perform their roles effectively and to align their contributions with the strategic goals of the organisation.

Both managers and staff have to be aware of the individual requirements of the post. This is best served by having an up-to-date job description for each role, ideally linked to the strategic plan for the Council.

Objectives

- 1. *Align individual performance with organisational goals:***
Ensure that each employee's work contributes to the overall objectives of the organisation.
- 2. *Promote continuous improvement and development:***
Foster a culture where staff are encouraged and supported to enhance their skills and performance.
- 3. *Provide clear expectations and regular feedback:***
Establish and communicate clear performance expectations and provide timely feedback.
- 4. *Address performance issues promptly and fairly:***
Provide a structured approach to address and improve underperformance.

Key Principles

1. *Fairness and Transparency:*
Performance management processes should be conducted fairly, consistently, and transparently across the organisation.
2. *Employee Involvement:*
Employees should be actively involved in setting their performance objectives and in the evaluation of their performance.
3. *Continuous Feedback:*
Managers should provide regular, constructive feedback and support to help employees achieve their goals.
4. *Development Focused:*
Performance management should focus on both achieving results and developing employee capabilities.

Why are one to one meetings important?

Regular one to one meetings between a manager and individual employees in their line of management are important to ensure the employee is supported and is effective in their work the meeting will:

- provide a safe environment for the employee and manager to discuss performance
- be an opportunity to review current workloads and targets
- ensure priority is given to the most important areas of work
- enable both parties to clarify what is required
- set priorities until the next one to one meeting
- provide as early as possible an opportunity to address poor performance
- review recent achievements
- where necessary highlight and arrange for training to address weaknesses

The purpose of one-to-one meetings is to:

- provide a safe environment for open and frank discussion
- ensure there is a regular channel open for the employee and manager to discuss the employee's performance
- ensure performance is of an acceptable standard
- find solutions to any issues
- ensure objectives are being met

Process

1. Performance Planning

Objective Setting:

At the beginning of each performance cycle, managers and employees will collaboratively set clear, measurable, and achievable performance objectives aligned with the organisation's strategic goals.

Development Plans:

Identify any training or development needs required to achieve the objectives. Create a personal development plan to address these needs.

2. Ongoing Feedback and Coaching

Regular Check-ins:

Managers should schedule regular meetings (at least quarterly) to discuss progress against objectives, provide feedback, and adjust goals if necessary.

Feedback Mechanism:

Employees should be encouraged to seek and provide feedback. Managers should give feedback in a constructive manner that supports improvement and development.

3. Performance Appraisal

a) *Annual Review:*

An annual performance review will be conducted to evaluate the employee's performance against the set objectives and competencies. This review will include:

- Self-assessment by the employee.
- Manager's assessment.
- Peer feedback (if applicable).

b) *Rating and Documentation:* Performance will be rated based on predefined criteria, and the outcomes will be documented and discussed with the employee.

4. Managing Underperformance

This is covered in the Performance Improvement Procedure in the Staff Handbook

[Employee Handbook 2024.pdf](#)

5. Review and Continuous Improvement

a) *Policy Review*

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains effective and aligned with organizational goals.

b) *Feedback on Process*

Gather feedback from employees and managers on the performance management process to identify areas for improvement.

6. Scope

This policy applies to all permanent, temporary, and part-time employees of Stotfold Town Council. It encompasses all aspects of performance management, including setting objectives, performance appraisals, feedback mechanisms, and personal development planning

7. Roles and Responsibilities

a) *Managers:* Responsible for setting objectives, providing ongoing feedback, conducting performance appraisals, and supporting employee development.

- b) Employees: Responsible for actively participating in performance management activities, setting personal goals, and seeking feedback.
- c) Human Resources (HR): Provide guidance and support to managers and employees, ensure consistent application of the policy, and facilitate training on performance management processes.

8. Related Documents

[Employee Performance Management Form](#)

[How to make the most of your performance management.docx](#)

[Checklist for Conducting a Performance Management Appraisal.docx](#)

[How to conduct the Town Clerk's Appraisal.docx](#)

[Town Clerk's Performance Management Plan.docx](#)



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Preparation for appraisal form

Have you read the notes on how to make the most of this appraisal?

[How to make the most of your performance management.docx](#)

The comments you make on this form are to assist in your appraisal.

On the appraisal form itself a space is provided for you to make any comment you may wish regarding your appraisal.

Employee's name:	Date of appraisal:
Job title:	Department:
Which parts of the job have you performed best? How did you achieve this?	
Which parts of the job have you performed less well? Were there any circumstances which prevented a better performance?	
What could or should be done by you, the Council or anyone else to help improve your performance?	
How have you performed against the targets set at your last appraisal?	
Notes to bring to the appraisal interview	

How have you performed against the targets set at your last appraisal?		
Area	Target details	Target achieved? Comments?

Performance appraisal form

Consider the Employee's performance in general over the period of review, relating in particular to agreed targets/objectives/standards of performance, and to the existing job description.

Employee name:	Date of appraisal:
Job title:	Department:
Appraisal period:	
Which parts of the job has the employee performed most effectively?	
How has this been achieved?	
What action will be taken to build on the above strengths?	
What parts of the job could have been done better?	
Why was this?	
What action will be taken to overcome the above difficulties?	

Details of the targets set at the last appraisal for the employee		
Area	Target details	Target achieved? Comments?

Overall grading of performance (tick as appropriate)	
Constantly gives an outstanding performance in most areas of their job.	
Constantly gives more than an effective performance in most areas of their job.	
Gives an effective performance	
Sometimes gives an effective performance but some improvement required in many areas of their job (review in six months).	
Constantly underachieving and less than effective in most areas of their job (review in three and six months).	
Too early to assess (review in six months).	
Learning needs identified	
Employee comments	

Action plan 20XX – 20XX

These targets should be aligned to the Councils strategic plan / targets / objectives and include specific training to undertake

Name:		
Position:		
Area	Target details	Target completion date

Date set for next annual appraisal

XX/XX/20XX

Signed Appraiser

.....

Date

Signed Appraisee

.....

Date

Checklist for conducting a performance management appraisal

A constructive and positive performance appraisal is an important part of internal management of employees' performance. When conducting the appraisal meeting, the following points can be considered:

- Ensure the appraisal can take place without any disruption or distractions.
- Ensure the line manager is comfortable with assessing job-related performance and understands the process to be followed.
- Have a copy of the performance appraisal form to guide the structure of the meeting. The form can effectively be worked through, asking the employee for their comments.
- Ensure that notes of discussions are accurately recorded, whether on the performance appraisal form or in a separate document.
- Approach the performance appraisal in a positive, constructive, and sensitive manner.
- Be an engaged listener and ensure your body language is welcoming and positive.
- Focus on asking open-ended questions to encourage the employee to be open and honest in their answers.
- Avoid making promises that cannot be kept. For any matters which cannot be confirmed during the appraisal, ensure you take further action and feedback to the employee at a later date.
- Begin the appraisal by putting the employee at ease and state the purpose of the process. Remind the employee that this is a two-way conversation about their past, and future, performance within the Council.
- Discuss the job situation and aspirations of the employee within the business.
- Give praise for effective work and positive feedback on achievements and results, linking this to specific projects or tasks completed.
- Where no major performance issues are noted, limit criticism to constructive feedback on two or three points, linking this to specific projects or tasks completed.
- Invite and encourage the employee to engage in the appraisal, including by providing self-criticism, comments, and questions.
- Invite the employee to feedback any deemed obstacles to improvement or make suggestions on deemed obstacles.

Discuss how these obstacles can be positively tackled, including whether additional organisational support can achieve this.
- Discuss objectives for the previous performance period. Discuss and confirm whether objectives have been met. If not, discuss any next steps such as the commencement of a formal management process or the extension of deadlines.

- Discuss and agree future performance objectives and the performance period. Agree periodic review dates to ensure these objectives are on-track.
- Complete the performance appraisal form and the action plan, outlining the confirmed future objectives. Ensure this is signed and dated by the manager carrying out the appraisal.
- Provide the completed appraisal documents to the employee, allowing them to note any comments and sign the documents to confirm their agreement.

Ensure periodic performance reviews are scheduled in advance. This supports the performance management process and underlines the importance of good performance to the employee.



How to make the most of your performance management

The successful operation of any Council depends primarily on using the full potential of its workforce.

This necessitates certain criteria being met which are to the benefit of both the Council and its employees and requires a strategy to be put into operation to achieve this aim.

Both supervisors and staff have to be aware of the requirements of the individual post. This is best served by having an up-to-date job description for each role ideally linked to a strategic plan for the Council.

Managers/supervisors have to be able to identify the development needs of the Council and their employees. To meet this aim there is a requirement for line managers to undertake regular one to one meetings as well as at least an annual formal appraisal.

The interests of the Council and its residents/customers are best served by a workforce, which as individuals and a team, are carrying out their tasks to the most effective performance level. This is what performance management, and appraisals are seeking to achieve and why they can have an impact on employees and Council performance.

At the end of the appraisal and one to one meeting, the employee should not be left feeling deflated. The aim is motivation with the knowledge that through targeting objectives, the line manager and the employee are working together to achieve the aims of that employee to be equipped better for his/her present or future roles within the Council.

This booklet has been produced to assist line managers in the completion of appraisals for their employees.

Why are one to one meetings important?

Regular one to one meetings between a manager and individual employees in their line of management are important to ensure the employee is supported and is effective in their work the meeting will:

- provide a safe environment for the employee and manager to discuss performance
- be an opportunity to review current workloads and targets
- ensure priority is given to the most important areas of work
- enable both parties to clarify what is required
- set priorities until the next one to one meeting
- provide as early as possible an opportunity to address poor performance
- review recent achievements
- where necessary highlight and arrange for training to address weaknesses

The purpose of one-to-one meetings is to:

- provide a safe environment for open and frank discussion
- ensure there is a regular channel open for the employee and manager to discuss the employee's performance
- ensure performance is of an acceptable standard
- find solutions to any issues
- ensure objectives are being met

Conduct of the meeting

The meeting should be informal, private, and held on time at an agreed location. The meeting should be collaborative and both parties should feel able to discuss all matters relating to performance, workload priorities and training. A brief action note should be agreed at the end of each meeting which both parties retain a copy of to use at the next meeting, the action plan on page 10 of this guide is suitable for this purpose as well as for the appraisal.

What if the employee is underperforming?

If there is a persistent failure to improve performance and achieve objectives that are agreed the meeting should be more formal and the manager takes the lead. Previous discussions and agreed objectives to improve performance should be reviewed. The manager should then seek to understand why the employee's performance is not as required. If solutions can be found, then these should be offered. If it is clear that there is a capability issue the manager needs to be cognisant that disciplinary proceedings may be necessary in the absence of any other solution. HR advice should be sought.

Performance issues should never be left until the appraisal they should be raised at one-to-one performance management meetings.

Why appraisals are important

The system of appraisals will provide the means for you and your employee to jointly review his/her performance and in doing so it will:

- help improve your employee's future job performance by identifying strengths and weaknesses and determining how strengths can best be utilised and how weaknesses can be overcome
- help reveal problems which may be restricting your employee's progress and causing inefficient work practices
- encourage regular dialogue between yourself and your employees about their work performance which will result in improved communications and clearer direction
- develop a greater degree of consistency by ensuring that you and your employees meet formally and regularly to discuss performance and potential
- assist succession planning and determine suitability of employees for promotion
- move away from reacting to an event into preparing for the event.

The purpose of the appraisal scheme is to:

- ensure an understanding and awareness of the individual/business objectives and the barriers preventing their achievement

- develop a knowledge and agreement of what is expected of individuals and how their contribution fits into the Council
- review the individual's performance, giving a formal opportunity to discuss progress and identify improvements and build on strengths
- review potential development needs and to predict the employee's future capabilities and how these can be developed
- review progression and to assess the employee's eligibility to achieve promotion
- develop individuals so that job satisfaction and job performance is maximised, thus increasing effectiveness and efficiency resulting in the provision of an improved service for our clients/customers
- ensure we use our workforce in the most effective way.

The line manager will start the process by:

- ensuring that the employee has a copy of all relevant documentation and suggest that they read it thoroughly
- give the employee a preparation for appraisal form, allowing for self-appraisal, asking them to complete it and return it within a specified period
- give any further guidance or clarification on any aspect of the appraisal scheme which the employee may want
- arrange a mutually convenient date, time, and place for the appraisal interview.

Self-appraisal

Self-appraisal forms are the basis for the appraisal interview in terms of what the job is about, how they perform it, and what needs to be done by them, you, or the Council. It helps you and the employee to get to know each other better, and to help each other with common problems. You should encourage employees to complete a self-appraisal as honestly as possible. It is their opportunity to express how they think they have performed. You and the employee may not agree on the answers, but it lets you know how the employee thinks they are performing.

Completion of performance appraisal form (line manager)

The appraisal interview revolves around the completion of the performance appraisal form. You may ask the employee to sign the form at the conclusion of the interview, or the performance appraisal form may be completed in pencil and notes made during the interview, with the form being formally completed afterwards. You should then briefly meet again for the employee to sign the form.

The form allows for the overall grading of the employee's performance. Having carefully considered their job performance, you will decide which of the ratings most accurately reflects and summarises their work over that year.

It is important to understand exactly what the ratings mean, their definitions, and how they relate to an individual's performance, and the Council. The overall performance is evaluated on a five-point scale related to degrees of effectiveness (the sixth option applies to new employees or those who have been in the current job for less than three months).

Appraisal interview

The appraisal interview should be a frank and open discussion. It should not be a stressful, highly pressurised situation where the parties involved are unaware of the objectives of the interview. You and your employee should bear in mind that the interview should be a discussion with several purposes. These are:

- to discuss the employee's job performance
- to discuss their strengths, and ways of building on them both for their benefit and the Councils
- to identify any shortcomings, and ways of overcoming them, as they affect them and the department
- to discuss the overall grading of their performance. Remind them to bring with them their preparation for appraisal form

To achieve this during the interview you should:

- put the employee at ease and state the purpose of the interview (two-way communication)
- Make sure you are in a private room with no interruptions and phones are turned off and put away
- discuss the job situation and aspirations
- have accurate knowledge of the required and actual job performance
- give praise for effective work. If possible, relate to specifics
- limit criticism to two or three points of minor importance - specifics (unless there are severe shortfalls)
- invite self-criticism and reflection, encourage comment and questions
- discuss any obstacles to improvement - think positively
- summarise all major points discussed (at each stage)
- ensure action plan is agreed and understood (consult)
- agree targets and review dates
- listen and be seen to be listening
- ask open-ended questions, beginning with "how", "why", "when"
- not make promises you may not be able to keep
- appraise job performance, not the person (don't be biased - either way)
- spend as much time as possible looking to the future.

There is space on the performance appraisal form for the employee to make any comments about his/her appraisal if he/she so wishes. The employee may record anything he/she feels regarding the discussion, the rating, or any aspect of the appraisal process.

You should sign the performance appraisal form to confirm that you have discussed this appraisal with your employee. The employee can raise any issue if he/she is unhappy about his/her appraisal or rating, this should be dealt with appropriately. You are trying to evaluate exactly how the employee has performed in each of these areas, together with his/her overall performance of the job as a whole. Your assessment of his/her performance should have been included on the performance appraisal form.

After the interview

Complete the agreed action plan. You should then explain the philosophy and mechanics of the form to the employee, and possibly discuss in general terms his/her targets/objectives. A further meeting should then be arranged to discuss, amend, if necessary, and jointly formulate the agreed action plan.

Reviewing and updating these targets provides other occasions for you to meet and discuss his/her performance with you during the year.



Appraisal and performance management scheme pack (Guidance for Councillors relating to the Town Clerk)

The successful operation of any Council depends primarily on using the full potential of its workforce.

This necessitates certain criteria being met which are to the benefit of both the Council and its employees and requires a strategy to be put in operation to achieve this aim.

The Council should have a performance management scheme in place to support the Clerk, and where the Council employs additional staff, the Clerk has in place a scheme to support those employees.

Both Councillors and the Clerk have to be aware of the requirements of the Clerk's post. This is best served by having an up-to-date job description for each role ideally linked to the strategic plan for the Council.

Councillors delegated to conduct the appraisal should ideally be trained to do so or have professional HR support available at the appraisal meeting and available to consult during the regular "one to one" meetings.

Councillors should be able to identify the development needs of the Council and the Clerk in line with the Strategic Objectives, policies, and decisions of the Council. To meet this aim there is a requirement for the appointed Councillors to undertake regular one to one meetings as well as at least an annual formal appraisal.

The interests of the Council and its residents/customers are best served by a workforce, which as individuals and a team, are carrying out their tasks to the most effective performance level. This is what performance management and appraisals are seeking to achieve and why they can have an impact on employees and consequently the overall Council performance.

At the end of the appraisal, the Clerk should not be left feeling deflated. The aim is motivation with the knowledge that through targeting objectives, the line manager and the employee are working together to achieve the aims of the Clerk to be equipped better for his/her present or future roles within the Council.

Who should conduct the one-to-one meetings and the annual appraisal of the Clerk?

Ideally two Councillors should be tasked with performance managing the Clerk including one to one meetings and annual appraisal. The regular "one to one" meetings ideally should be conducted monthly. All parties should enter into such meetings with mutually trust and respect and noting that the Clerk remains answerable to the full Council only and not individual Councillors.

The Councillors should be given some expert training in leadership, performance management and motivation before commencing the performance management of the Clerk.

Why are one to one meetings important?

Regular one to one meetings between the designated Councillors and the Clerk are important to ensure the Clerk is supported and is effective in their work, the meeting will:

- provide a safe environment for the Clerk and Councillors to discuss performance

- be an opportunity to review current workloads and targets
- ensure priority is given to the most important areas of work
- enable both parties to clarify what is required
- set priorities until the next one to one meeting
- provide as early as possible an opportunity to address poor performance
- review recent achievements
- where necessary highlight, agree and arrange for training to address weaknesses

The purpose of one-to-one meetings is to:

- provide a safe environment for open and frank discussion
- ensure there is a regular channel open for the Clerk and Councillors to discuss the employee's performance
- ensure performance is of an acceptable standard
- find solutions to any issues
- ensure objectives are being met
- provides an opportunity for all Councillors to feed into the process via the designated Councillors
- Provide a regular avenue for feedback to Councillors on progress against objectives

Conduct of the meeting

The meeting should be informal, private, and held on time at an agreed location and time. The meeting should be collaborative and both parties should feel able to discuss all matters relating to performance, workload priorities and training. A brief action note should be agreed at the end of each meeting which both parties retain a copy of to use at the next meeting, the action plan on page 11 of this guide is suitable for this purpose as well as for the appraisal. It is reasonable to share non personal agreed objectives from the one-to-one meetings with all Councillors to ensure communication within the Council is working well.

What if the Clerk is underperforming?

If there is a persistent failure to improve performance the meeting should be more formal, and the Councillors take the lead. Prior to this appropriate HR advice should be sought. Previous discussions and agreed objectives to improve performance should be reviewed. The Councillors should then seek to understand why the Clerk's performance is not as required. If solutions can be found, then these should be offered. If it is clear that there is a capability issue the Councillors need to be cognisant that disciplinary proceedings will be necessary in the absence of any other solution. HR advice should again be sought.

Performance issues should never be left until the appraisal they should be raised at one-to-one performance management meetings.

What not to do

The Council should not allow the Clerk to be performance managed via public Council or Committee meetings. This does not mean that the Clerk / Council cannot be challenged at meetings, such challenges must be reasonable and proportionate.

Why appraisals are important

The system of appraisal will provide the means for Councillors and the Clerk to jointly review his/her performance and in doing so it will:

- help improve the Clerks future job performance by identifying strengths and weaknesses and determining how strengths can best be utilised and how weaknesses can be overcome

- help reveal problems which may be restricting the Clerks progress and causing inefficient work practices
- encourage regular dialogue between the Council and the Clerk about their work performance which will result in improved communications and clearer direction
- develop a greater degree of consistency by ensuring that the Council and the Clerk meet formally and regularly to discuss performance and potential
- move away from us reacting to an event into preparing for the event.

The purpose of the appraisal scheme is to:

- ensure an understanding and awareness of the individual/business objectives and the barriers preventing their achievement
- develop a knowledge and agreement of what is expected of the Clerk and how their contribution fits into the organisation
- review the Clerk's performance, giving a formal opportunity to discuss progress and identify improvements and build on strengths
- review potential development needs and to predict the Clerk's future capabilities and how these can be developed
- review progression and to assess the Clerk's eligibility to move up an increment in accordance with their contract
- develop the Clerk so that job satisfaction and job performance is maximised, thus increasing effectiveness and efficiency resulting in the provision of an improved service for residents and customers
- ensure the Council uses its workforce in the most effective way.

The Councillors will start the process by:

- ensuring that the Clerk has a copy of all relevant documentation and suggest that they read it thoroughly
- give the Clerk a preparation for appraisal form, allowing for self-appraisal, asking them to complete it and return it within a specified period
- give any further guidance or clarification on any aspect of the appraisal scheme which the Clerk may want
- arrange a mutually convenient and private date, time, and place for the appraisal interview.

Self-appraisal

Self-appraisal forms the basis for the appraisal interview in terms of what the job is about, how they perform it, and what needs to be done by the Clerk, the Councillors and or the Council. It helps the Councillors and the Clerk to get to know each other better, and to help each other with common problems. The Councillors should encourage the Clerk to complete a self-appraisal as honestly as possible. It is their opportunity to express how they think they have performed. The Councillors and the Clerk may not agree on the answers, but it lets you know how the Clerk thinks they are performing.

Completion of performance appraisal form (line manager)

The appraisal interview revolves around the completion of the performance appraisal form, see below. The Councillors may ask the Clerk to sign the form at the conclusion of the interview, or the performance appraisal form may be completed in pencil and notes made during the interview, with the form being formally completed afterwards. You should then briefly meet again for the Clerk to sign the form.

The form allows for the overall grading of the Clerks performance. Having carefully considered their job performance, the Councillors will decide which of the ratings most accurately reflects and summarises their work over that year.

It is important to understand exactly what the ratings mean, their definitions, and how they relate to an individual's performance, the department, and the Council. The overall performance is evaluated on a five-point scale related to degrees of effectiveness (the sixth option applies to new employees or those who have been in the current job for less than three months).

The form should only be seen on a need-to-know basis in accordance with GDPR. However, a separate document detailing the objectives set should reasonably be available for all Councillors to view.

Appraisal interview

The appraisal interview should be a frank and open discussion. It should not be a stressful, highly pressurised situation where the parties involved are unaware of the objectives of the interview. The Councillors and the Clerk should bear in mind that the interview should be a discussion with several purposes. These are:

- to discuss the Clerk's job performance
- to discuss the Clerk's strengths, and ways of building on them both for their benefit and the Council's
- to identify any shortcomings, and ways of overcoming them, as they affect them and the Council
- to discuss the overall grading of their performance. Remind them to bring with them their preparation for appraisal form.

To achieve this during the interview the Councillors should:

- ensure there are no interruptions during the meeting in a private room with phones turned to silent and put away
- put the Clerk at ease and state the purpose of the interview (two-way communication)
- discuss the job situation and aspirations
- have accurate knowledge of the required and actual job performance
- give praise for effective work. If possible, relate to specifics
- limit criticism to two or three points of minor importance - specifics (unless there are severe shortfalls)
- invite self-criticism, encourage comment and questions
- discuss any obstacles to improvement - think positively
- summarise all major points discussed (at each stage)
- review previous targets
- ensure action plan is agreed and understood (consult)
- agree targets and review dates
- listen and be seen to be listening
- ask open-ended questions, beginning with "how", "why", "when"
- not make promises you may not be able to keep
- appraise job performance, not the person (don't be biased - either way)
- spend as much time as possible looking to the future
- If any changes are needed to the job description agree these for recommendation to the appropriate committee

There is space on the performance appraisal form for the Clerk to make any comments about his/her appraisal if he/she so wishes. The Clerk may record anything he/she feels regarding the discussion, the rating, or any aspect of the appraisal process.

The Councillors should sign the performance appraisal form to confirm that they have discussed this appraisal with the Clerk. The Clerk can raise any issue if he/she is unhappy about his/her appraisal or rating, this should be dealt with appropriately. Councillors are trying to evaluate exactly how the Clerk has performed in each of these areas, together with his/her overall performance of the job as a whole. The Councillors assessment of his/her performance should have been included on the performance appraisal form.

After the interview

Complete the agreed action plan. The Councillors should then explain the philosophy and mechanics of the form to the Clerk, and possibly discuss in general terms his/her targets/objectives. A further meeting should then be arranged to discuss, amend, if necessary, and jointly formulate the agreed action plan which will be shared with all Councillors.

Reviewing and updating these targets provides other occasions for all to meet and discuss the Clerks performance during the year.

Town Clerk's Performance Management Plan

Preparation for appraisal form

The comments you make on this form are to assist in your appraisal.

On the appraisal form itself a space is provided for you to make any comment you may wish regarding your appraisal.

Clerk's name:	Date of appraisal:
Job title:	Department:
Which parts of the job have you performed best? How did you achieve this?	
Which parts of the job have you performed less well? Were there any circumstances which prevented a better performance?	
What could or should be done by you, the Council or anyone else to help improve your performance?	
How have you performed against the targets set at your last appraisal?	
Notes to bring to the appraisal interview	

How have you performed against the targets set at your last appraisal?		
Area	Target details	Target achieved? Comments?

Performance appraisal form

Consider the Clerk's performance in general over the period of review, relating in particular to agreed targets/objectives/standards of performance, and to the existing job description.

Clerk's name:	Date of appraisal:
Job title:	Department:
Appraisal period:	
Which parts of the job has the Clerk performed most effectively?	
How has this been achieved?	
What action will be taken to build on the above strengths?	
What parts of the job could have been done better?	
Why was this?	
What action will be taken to overcome the above difficulties?	

Details of the targets set at the last appraisal for the Clerk		
Area	Target details	Target achieved? Comments?

Overall grading of performance (tick as appropriate)	
Constantly gives an outstanding performance in most areas of their job.	
Constantly gives more than an effective performance in most areas of their job.	
Gives an effective performance	
Sometimes gives an effective performance but some improvement required in many areas of their job (review in six months).	
Constantly underachieving and less than effective in most areas of their job (review in three and six months).	
Too early to assess (review in six months).	
Learning needs identified	
Employee comments	

Action plan 20XX – 20XX

These targets should be aligned to the Councils strategic plan / targets / objectives and include specific training to undertake

Name:		
Position:		
Area	Target details	Target completion date

Date set for next annual appraisal

XX/XX/20XX

Signed Appraiser

.....

Date

Signed Appraisee

.....

Date

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES
DATE: 24TH JULY 2024
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: SIAN VAN DER MERWE
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER
SUBJECT: IT SERVICES CONTRACT

1. SUMMARY

1.1 The Town Council's IT service contract was signed in September 2023 and comes to an end in October 2024.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are asked to review quotes provided by two IT services providers and to decide which quote the Town Council should accept on a three-year basis.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Town Council needs an IT service contract to manage its hardware and software maintenance, network management, data protection and cyber security, support and troubleshooting, compliance and regulatory requirements, business continuity and disaster recovery, cost efficiency when budgeting and allocating resources, accessing expertise in various areas of technology.

3.2 Quotes were sourced from the current supplier and one other, attached below.

4. FINANCIAL

4.1 The Town Council operates under a general Duty of Best Value to “make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”. The duty of Best Value continues to be important because it makes clear that Councils should consider overall value – including social value – when considering service provision.

4.2 The Town Council's 2024 – 2025 budget for IT is £15,000 and the up-to-date spend for the monthly IT service as at 18/07/2024 is £2,066.74.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	Risk to IT infrastructure and data protection if no service in place
Legals	Data Protection Act 2018, GDPR
Resources/Stakeholders	Officers, Staff, Members of the Town Council & service users for STC amenities
Contracts/Financials	Financial implication
Crime & Disorder	Data protection
Equalities	N/A
Biodiversity	N/A

SUPPLIER 1			
Support Costs	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total Cost ex. VAT
IT Support Service per Personal Computer or Laptop	£25.00	25	£625.00
Bitdefender Anti-Virus/Anti/Malware Licence - Per device	£3.00	25	£75.00
iStor MS Office 365 Backup Solution with Unlimited Data Storage	£3.50	25	£87.50
Power Apps per App (1 app or website)	£4.10	1	£4.10
Microsoft Audio Conferencing	£2.10	1	£2.10
Microsoft 365 Business Standard	£10.30	27	£278.10
Monthly			£1,071.80
Annual			£12,861.60
Description / Activity Charge			
Professional services Hourly - Quoted on a per installation basis £90 + VAT	£90.00		
Professional services Daily - Quoted on a per installation basis £650 + VAT	£650.00		
Services delivered outside Monday-Friday 09:00 to 17:30 Hourly £120 + VAT	£120.00		
Services delivered outside Monday-Friday 09:00 to 17:30 Daily £900 + VAT	£900.00		
Hardware/Software/Licenses/Subscriptions As Quoted	As quoted		
Platforms	Vendors (Hardware)	O/S & Servers	Applications
Microsoft Windows	Lenovo	Windows 11	MS Office 365
Apple Mac	Dell	Windows 10	MS Office 2019
Microsoft Azure	HP	Unifi Solutions	3CX
Amazon AWS	Ubiquiti	iStor Protect	MS Office Mac
Linux	CISCO **	Mac OS X & Above	Google Chrome
Google Cloud Compute **	Xerox	Debian/Ubuntu/RH Linux	Firefox
Microsoft Exchange Online	Apple	Windows Srv 2019 & Above	Putty
Microsoft SharePoint Online	Epson	Exchange 2016 & Above	Sage **
Microsoft Office 365	Microsoft	SQL Server 2016 & Above	Xero
			Acrobat Reader
			Bitdefender

SUPPLIER 2			
Support onboarding professional services			£1,425.00
Microsoft 365 Security implementation and device config - Discounted to coincide with the onboarding project			£1,200.00
Set up fee			£2,625.00
Support Costs	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total Cost ex. VAT
Device Support - Officers	£55.00	12	£660.00
Device Security - Officer and Members	£20.00	27	£540.00
User Security - Officers and Members	£15.00	27	£405.00
Microsoft 365 Licensing Costs - Premium	£18.10	27	£488.70
Monthly			£2,093.70
Annual			£25,124.40
Total cost - 1st year:			£27,749.40
Professional services day rate:	£800.00		
Hour Rate - Out of band	£115.00		
Out of support hours rate - Monday to Sat	£172.50		
Out of support hours rate - Sunday	£230.00		
Includes training for staff where training is requested.			
Has recommended we upgrade to Microsoft Premium as we are currently on Microsoft Basic package. This will provide additional cyber safety for the Town Council.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PC builds and rebuild - £220 • Extended security response. Applies for security issues that require a response greater than 1 working day – Standard rates apply • Out of hours support – Standard rates apply • Cyber Essentials Certification and annual renewal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Certification: £400+VAT* ○ Initial Assessment: £1100+VAT* ○ Renewal Assessment: £550+VAT* • Review of cyber insurance documentation – Standard rates apply • Project work – Standard rates apply 			

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES
DATE: 24th JULY 2024
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: SIAN VAN DER MERWE
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER
SUBJECT: TELEPHONE SERVICES CONTRACT

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Town Council's Telephone Service Contract is now out of date and the Town Council has been looking at implementing online telephone calling provision in order to provide a greater degree of resilience.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to review quotes provided by three telephone services providers and to decide on their preferred supplier.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Quotes were sourced from the current supplier and two other providers, and these are set out in the Annex attached.
- 3.2 The Town Council has six telephone lines via desk phones. With recent recruitment, the Town Council needs telephone provision for 10 staff.
- 3.3 The proposal is for staff to have access to either Teams calls (via Supplier 2) or an online app to accept and manage calls, this can be done via a computer or on staff mobile devices. There will still be two handsets in the front of house/reception area which can then be used to transfer incoming calls onto officers.
- 3.4 Having phone calls available from mobile handsets means that Officers can be out and about and still be in contact with residents. It also allows security of data rather than using personal devices. It also allows home working.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 The Town Council operates under a general Duty of Best Value to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness". The duty of Best Value continues to be important because it makes clear that Councils should consider overall value – including social value – when considering service provision.
- 4.2 The Town Council requires greater flexibility with its telephone systems in order to build into the Business Continuity Plan and to facilitate ease of contact if staff are out of the office.
- 4.3 The Town Council's 2024 – 2025 budget for telephones/fax/ISDN is £4,000 and the up to date spend for the phone service as at 18/07/2024 is £426.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	Loss of service to residents due to not being able to contact officers.
Legals	GDPR
Resources/Stakeholders	Officers, Members and residents
Contracts/Financials	Financial implication
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Biodiversity	N/A

Stotfold Town Council
VOIP Telephone Calling
Jul-24

VOIP Service	Current Supplier - per month 24 months	Current Supplier - Balance of Financial Year 2024/2025* Assume August 24 to April 25	Current Supplier - Contract per annum	Current Supplier - Contract over 24 months	Supplier 2 - per month 24 month	Supplier 2 - Balance of Financial Year 2024/2025* Assume August 24 to April 25	Supplier 2 - Contract Per Annum	Supplier 3 per month	Supplier 3 - Balance of Financial Year 2024/2025* Assume August 24 to April 2025	Supplier 3 - Contract per annum
Installation Costs										
Line Installation	£0.00	-	-	-	£0.00	-	-	£91.00	-	-
New Telephone number setup - £7 per number	£0.00	-	-	-	£0.00	-	-	£28.00	-	-
Number porting - 6 numbers	£0.00	-	-	-	£50.00	-	-	£150.00	-	-
Telephony User Set Up	£0.00	-	-	-	£0.00	-	-	£35.00	-	-
Installation Service	£0.00	-	-	-	£0.00	-	-	£800.00	-	-
Users										
Licence Fee	£0.00	-	-	-	£123.00	£984.00	£1,476.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Telephony User - each	£148.50	£1,188.00	£1,782.00	£3,564.00	£0.00	-	-	£127.50	£1,020.00	£1,530.00
Telephony User - app	£50.00	£400.00	£600.00	£1,200.00	£0.00	-	-	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
User Support (10 users)	£0.00	-	-	-	£0.00	-	-	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Telephone number rental	£0.00	-	-	-	£0.00	-	-	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Hardware										
Desk phones - for front support desks only	£297.00	-	-	-	£470.00	-	-	£188.54	-	-
Headset - 10 of	£1,350.00	-	-	-	£1,427.70	-	-	£400.00	-	-
Delivery Charge	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	£15.00	-	-
Training	-	-	-	-	£137.50	-	-	-	-	-
MS Teams Phone Setup	-	-	-	-	£412.50	-	-	-	-	-
Setup fees for desk phones	-	-	-	-	£235.00	-	-	-	-	-

Installation cost free for a 2-year contract

Installation cost free for a 2-year contract

£127.50 includes use of service for all users, apps for all users, support for all users and rental of all telephone numbers needed. Per month rental.

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES
DATE: 24th JULY 2024
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: SIAN VAN DER MERWE
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER
SUBJECT: INTERNET SERVICE CONTRACT

1. SUMMARY

1.1 The Town Council's internet service is currently via a Fibre to Cabinet service and needs modernising to FTTP to provide a better service to users in the building.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are asked to review quotes provided by three FTTP service providers and to decide on their preferred supplier.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Quotes were sourced from the current supplier and two other providers, and these are set out in the Annex attached.

3.2 The Town Council's internet service has not been of a consistently high standard in the past six months. Modernising the internet to premises will ensure that the Town Council has an internet service that is more reliable and capable of meeting the ever-demanding technological needs of the Council.

3.3 Fibre to the premises (FTTP), also known as ultrafast full fibre broadband, involves laying fibre optic cables directly from the broadband exchange into the building. It can offer speeds of up to 1,000Mb (megabits per second) – around 30 times faster than standard fibre.

4. FINANCIAL

4.1 The Town Council's 2024 – 2025 budget for telephones/fax/ISDN is £4,000 and the up to date spend on the budget as at 08/07/2024 is £826.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	Efficient office systems leading to increased efficiency of staff
Legals:	N/A
Resources/Stakeholders	Officers, Members and residents.
Contracts/Financials	Financial implication.
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Biodiversity	N/A

Stotfold Town Council
FTTP Installation
Jul-24

Currently Fibre to Cabinet

Failsafe is Optional

Connection Type	Current Provision	Current Supplier - per month 24 months	Current Supplier - Balance of Financial Year 2024/2025* Assume August 24 to April 25	Current Supplier - Contract per annum	Current Supplier - Contract over 24 months	Supplier 2 - per month 24 month	Supplier 2 - Balance of Financial Year 2024/2025* Assume August 24 to April 25	Supplier 2 - Contract Per Annum	Supplier 2 - Contract over 24 months	Supplier 3 per month 36 month contract	Supplier 3 - Assume August 24 to April 2025	Supplier 3 - Contract per annum	Supplier 3 - Contract over 36 months
	Uses BT	Uses BT				Uses BT				Uses EE			
Internet package													
160:30	-	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£84.94	£679.52	£1,019.28	£2,038.56	£60.00	£480.00	£720.00	£2,160.00
220:30	-	£50.00	£400.00	£600.00	£1,200.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
330:50	-	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£101.19	£809.52	£1,214.28	£2,428.56	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
550:75	-	£60.00	£480.00	£720.00	£480.00	£119.44	£955.52	£1,433.28	£2,866.56	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
1000:115	-	£365.00	£2,920.00	£4,380.00	£8,760.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
One-off expenses													
Equipment for installation	-	£0.00	-	-	-	£454.00	-	-	-	£42.00	-	-	-
Installation Cost - FTTP (one off)	-	£0.00	-	-	-	£550.00	-	-	-	£300.00	-	-	-
FTTP Connection	£0.00	£0.00	-	-	-	£0.00	-	-	-	£60.00	-	-	-
Monthly Fibre Connection	£59.40	£59.40	£475.20	£712.80	£1,425.60	£55.00	£440.00	£660.00	£1,320.00	£35.00	£280.00	£420.00	£1,260.00
Monthly Analogue Line Rental (Premium)	£17.40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Failsafe:													
Installation /Connection costs	-	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£320.00	-	-	-
Failsafe connection fee	-	£0.00				£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£35.00	-	-	-
Failsafe Data Plan for Simcard (£p/m)	-	£0.00								£35.00	£280.00	£420.00	£840.00

Installation cost free for a 2-year contract

Installation cost free for a 2-year contract

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES

DATE: 24th JULY 2024

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK

SUBJECT: GREENACRE CENTRE CHRISTMAS OPENING

1. SUMMARY

1.1 The Town Council normally closes during the festive period to visitors. With the relocation of the library, there will be more visitors to the Greenacre Centre and Members are asked to consider if they wish to continue with that practice.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are asked to note the proposed Christmas operational days and advise the Clerk if they wish the office to be open at any other times than those listed below in item 3.5.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Christmas holidays fall as follows:

Tuesday 24 December	Christmas Eve
Wednesday 25 December	Christmas Day
Thursday 26 December	Boxing Day
Wednesday 1 January	New Years Day

3.2 The Town Council staff have previously been given 3 additional days holiday on top of their normal annual holiday entitlement, plus the 2 concessionary days which are at the control of the Town Council to use.

3.3 The Establishment Committee resolved at a previous meeting to stop the practice of additional Christmas leave to all new employees which means that some staff receive the additional holiday whilst others do not.

3.4 The HR advice was that it is now custom and practice to award these 'additional days' and it would be hard to remove them. The Town Clerk has therefore negotiated with existing staff to 'buy' these days off them with additional annual leave to be used at their discretion any time of the year, leaving only the two concessionary days to be used at Christmas.

3.5 The proposed days of operation are as follows:

Tuesday 24 December	Christmas Eve	Concessionary day
Wednesday 25 December	Christmas Day	Closed
Thursday 26 December	Boxing Day	Closed
Friday 27 December		Concessionary Day
Monday 30 December		Open
Tuesday 31 December		Open
Wednesday 1 January	New Years Day	Closed
Thursday 2 January		Open

3.6 Staff will be able to use their own leave entitlement if they wish to take leave at this time, and it will be authorised, provided there is adequate cover in the office.

4. FINANCIAL

4.1 There are no financial implications.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	N/A
Legals	HR advice sought
Resources/Stakeholders	N/A
Contracts/Financials	N/A
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Biodiversity	N/A

GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2024-25

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Description	Responsible Officer	Necessity
24/07/24	Payroll Outsourcing	To receive an updated report with quotations to outsource payroll	Town Clerk & RFO	Internal Control
	Financial Regulations	To review the updated Financial Regulations	Town Clerk	Internal Control
	Appointment of Internal Auditor	To consider quotations received for the appointment of an internal auditor	Town Clerk & RFO	Risk Management
	Asset Management Policy	register and removing items	Town Clerk & RFO	Internal Control
	Mayoral Allowance Policy	To receive a proposed policy for the management of the Mayor's allowance	Town Clerk	Risk Management
	Budget Setting Timetable 2025-26	To consider a timetable for setting the budget 2025-26	Town Clerk & RFO	Risk Management
	Performance Management Policy	To ratify the Performance Management Policy	Town Clerk	Risk Management
	IT Services Contract	To consider a report regarding the IT Services provision for the Town Council.	Democratic Services Manager	Internal Control
	Telephone contract	To consider a report regarding the Council's telephone report.	Democratic Services Manager	Internal Control
	Internet Service Contract	To consider the provision of internet supplier to the Greenacre Centre.	Democratic Services Manager	Internal Control
	Christmas Office Operation	To consider the Christmas operation of the Town Council offices	Town Clerk	N/A
Town Clerk's Job Evaluation	To consider an external evaluation of the Town Clerk's role	Town Clerk/Mayor	Internal Control	
Bank Reconciliations	To note the bank reconciliations	Town Clerk & RFO	Internal Control	
02/10/24	Fees & Charges Review	2025 - 2026 Fees & Charges Review from Committees	Town Clerk	Internal Control
	Grant Applications	To consider any grant applications received for Phase 1.	Town Clerk	Risk Management
	Training Plan - 2024 - 2025	commitments	Town Clerk	Risk Management
	Bank Reconciliations	To note the bank reconciliations	Town Clerk	Internal Control
	Town Council Regalia	To consider the report and artwork for consort's regalia	Democratic Services Manager	N/A
	Policies Review	To consider the Policies Review and make recommendations on urgent policies for review	Town Clerk	Internal Control
	Scheme of Delegation	To consider a scheme of delegation for the efficient operation of the town council	Town Clerk	Internal Control
HR Budget	To receive the HR budget for consideration by this Committee	Town Clerk	Internal Control	
23/10/24	Budget Review (only)	To consider proposals for 2025-2026 budget	Town Clerk	Internal Control
18/12/24	Bank Reconciliations	To note the bank reconciliations	Town Clerk	
22/01/25	Bank Reconciliations	To note the bank reconciliations	Town Clerk	
02/04/25	Bank Reconciliations	To note the bank reconciliations	Town Clerk	