

Crewe Town Council

1 Chantry Court
Forge Street
Crewe Cheshire
CW12DL

T: 01270756975

www.crewetowncouncil.gov.uk



CREWE
TOWN COUNCIL

22nd April 2024

To: Members of the Finance and Governance Committee

Dear Councillor,

You are summoned to attend the meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee to be held at 6:00pm on Monday 29th April 2024. The meeting will be held at the **Crewe Town Council offices, 1 Chantry Court, Crewe, CW1 2DL**.

In the interests of maintaining safety, adherence to guidance and to facilitate appropriate public access, the meeting will be recorded and shared on the Crewe Town Council youtube.com channel.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Turner
Town Clerk
Crewe Town Council

Agenda

- 1** To receive apologies for absence
- 2** To note declarations of Members' interests
- 3** To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee meeting held on 11th March 2024
- 4** Public Participation

A period not exceeding 15 minutes for members of the public to ask questions or submit comments in relation to the published agenda items. Any member of the public wishing to participate should email support@crewetowncouncil.gov.uk by 2.00 p.m. on the day of the meeting, providing their name, email address and an indication of the subject of their question or comment. Alternatively, your comments or questions can be submitted in advance and read to the committee at the meeting by the clerk.

Attendance at the meeting in person is permitted, but space is limited. Please feel free to contact the office to discuss this in more detail if you would like to.

- 5** To review the year to date financial position and material variances for Crewe Town Council
[standing item – information unavailable at the start of the financial year]
- 6** To Consider and approve payments to date for recommendation to council between 01/02/2024 and 31/03/2024 To the value of £234,899.69
- 7** To review the following Governance Documents as part of the Annual Governance Review Process:-
 - 7.1 New Policy - Reserves Policy
 - 7.2 Employee Handbook
 - 7.3 Standing Orders
- 8** To receive and approve the internal audit report for 2023/24 and recommend to council
- 9** To receive and approve the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Report (AGAR) 2023/24 and supporting information for recommendation to council
- 10** To consider the provision of a town/parish newsletter
- 11** To consider the disposal of the redundant Christmas lights currently held in storage
- 12** To note the proposed date of the next meeting 3rd June at 6pm.

Agenda Item 3

Crewe Town Council: Finance and Governance Committee

Crewe Town Council

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Forge Street
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CREWE
TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting held 11th March 2024

In attendance Cllr Dawn Clark
Cllr Jill Rhodes

Cllr Steve Hogben
Cllr John Rhodes

Cllr Kevin Murray
Cllr Dennis Straine-Francis

- 1 To receive apologies for absence
Cllrs Messent & Mortimer
- 2 To note declarations of Members' interests
None
- 3 To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee meeting held on 16th January 2024
RESOLVED: That the minutes are approved as a true record of the meeting
- 4 Public Participation

A period not exceeding 15 minutes for members of the public to ask questions or submit comments in relation to the published agenda items.

None
- 5 To review the year to date financial position and material variances for Crewe Town Council
Noted
- 6 To Consider and approve payments to date for recommendation to council between 01/01/2024 and 31/01/2024 To the value of £110,085.13
RESOLVED: That the payments are approved and recommended to council for ratification
- 7 To review the following Governance Documents as part of the Annual Governance Review Process:-
 - 7.1 Financial Regulations
RESOLVED: That the amendments are approved and recommended to council for ratification
 - 7.2 Corporate Risk Assessment
RESOLVED: That the amendments are approved and recommended to council for ratification
- 8 Asset Register review, retention and disposal
Noted

Agenda Item 3

- 9** To Review the Ear Marked Reserves for 2024/25

RESOLVED: That the amendments are approved and recommended to council for ratification

- 10** To review the current committee structure and progress of the structural review, including Terms of Reference for council, committees and sub-committees in line with the Corporate Strategy.

RESOLVED:

- i. That a draft committee and governance structure, having been shared for greater engagement and consultation is recommended to Council for adoption (implementation May 2024)
- ii. That the amended Council and Committee Terms of Reference are approved for recommendation to council for adoption (implementation May 2024)
- iii. That the Personnel Sub-Committee is tasked with a review of affected role descriptions, proposed amendments and associated actions and to direct the clerk on engagement prior to final implementation (May 2024)

- 11** To confirm the civic meeting calendar for 2024/25

RESOLVED: That the civic meeting calendar for 2024/25 is approved

- 12** To note the proposed date of the next meeting Monday 29th April at 6pm.

Meeting ended 6.55pm

Chair Cllr Jill Rhodes
Clerk P Turner

Agenda Item 6

Crewe Town Council

Payments 1st February to 31st March 2024

Invoice Date	Invoice No	A/c Code	A/c Name	Net Value	VAT	Invoice Total
01/02/2024	1047092	BRIG01	BRIGHTER BILLS	£271.09	£54.22	£325.31
01/02/2024	11700203022	CHES01	CEC	£142.00	£0.00	£142.00
02/02/2024	450249	FORREST	FORREST RECRUIT	£408.00	£81.60	£489.60
05/02/2024	1198	BLIT02	BLITZ FIREWORKS	£44,300.00	£8,860.00	£53,160.00
05/02/2024	1199	BLIT02	BLITZ FIREWORKS	£3,590.00	£718.00	£4,308.00
05/02/2024	GRANT24	CREA02	CREATIVE CREWE	£1,935.00	£0.00	£1,935.00
06/02/2024	811368	NALC01	NALC	£580.00	£116.00	£696.00
07/02/2024	16383	HIPS01	HIPSWING	£223.75	£44.75	£268.50
07/02/2024	GRANT	ADASTATUE	ADASTATUE	£1,000.00	£0.00	£1,000.00
08/02/2024	55147	DG	DG OFFICE	£118.77	£23.76	£142.53
08/02/2024	CANVA24	CANVA	CANVA	£99.99	£0.00	£99.99
08/02/2024	GRANT24	VISY01	VISION	£530.00	£0.00	£530.00
09/02/2024	9193	CRIM01	CRIME WATCH	£30.00	£6.00	£36.00
09/02/2024	450449	FORREST	FORREST RECRUIT	£408.00	£81.60	£489.60
09/02/2024	2006114632	HMLR	LAND REG	£6.00	£0.00	£6.00
10/02/2024	4762015	WATE02	WATERPLUS	£50.30	£2.48	£52.78
12/02/2024	10513	LJPRINT	L J PRINT LIMITED	£10.00	£2.00	£12.00
12/02/2024	10514	LJPRINT	L J PRINT LIMITED	£40.00	£8.00	£48.00
12/02/2024	272734	MUSEUM	MUSEUM ASSOC	£199.53	£5.47	£205.00
15/02/2024	34	COOP01	CO OP BANK	£8.40	£0.00	£8.40
15/02/2024	1147	WHITERIBB	WHITE RIBBON UK	£134.42	£26.88	£161.30
15/02/2024	55172	DG	DG OFFICE	£87.25	£4.11	£91.36
15/02/2024	11700203676	ANSA01	ANSA	£39,529.23	£7,905.85	£47,435.08
15/02/2024	CRES125	CREWEUTC	CREWEUTC	£1,500.00	£0.00	£1,500.00
16/02/2024	450641	FORREST	FORREST RECRUIT	£408.00	£81.60	£489.60
16/02/2024	GAZEBO	CREWEAFVBC	CREWE AFVBC	£508.51	£0.00	£508.51
18/02/2024	431	SAMEDIFF	SAME DIFFERENCE	£620.00	£0.00	£620.00
19/02/2024	55181	DG	DG OFFICE	£5.99	£1.20	£7.19
20/02/2024	HVI-1594	HAMPS	HAMPS VALLEY	£880.00	£176.00	£1,056.00
21/02/2024	9788	CHESHWOOD	CHESHIRE WOODLANDS	£1,298.00	£259.60	£1,557.60
21/02/2024	14004	WISH01	WISHING WELL	£35.00	£0.00	£35.00
21/02/2024	411559	SSE01	SOUTHERN ELECTRIC	£311.64	£15.58	£327.22
22/02/2024	301741	TUDO01	TUDOR	£834.25	£166.85	£1,001.10
22/02/2024	425761	SSE01	SOUTHERN ELECTRIC	£161.88	£8.09	£169.97
22/02/2024	446724	SSE01	SOUTHERN ELECTRIC	£535.86	£26.79	£562.65
23/02/2024	458040	FORREST	FORREST RECRUIT	£408.00	£81.60	£489.60
23/02/2024	91425678	MMU	MMU	£110.00	£22.00	£132.00
23/02/2024	HCL000709	PURCELL	PURCELL	£8,268.75	£1,653.75	£9,922.50
26/02/2024	210671	VINCIWORKS	VINCI	£715.00	£143.00	£858.00
26/02/2024	DDAY2024	RBLC01	RBL CREWE	£500.00	£0.00	£500.00
26/02/2024	ON ACC 4652	ZERO02	ZERO GROUP	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
27/02/2024	12753	COUNTER	COUNTERCULTURE	£10,000.00	£2,000.00	£12,000.00
27/02/2024	12757	COUNTER	COUNTERCULTURE	£12,000.00	£2,400.00	£14,400.00
27/02/2024	100584	BELCHER	SBELCHER	£10,000.00	£2,000.00	£12,000.00
28/02/2024	3785	MMCL01	MM CLEANING	£205.00	£41.00	£246.00
28/02/2024	5936	NGL01	NGL TECH	£353.60	£70.72	£424.32
29/02/2024	2830	6A	6A ARCHITECTS	£15,000.00	£3,000.00	£18,000.00
29/02/2024	43912	ZERO02	ZERO GROUP	£27.24	£5.45	£32.69
29/02/2024	5605261	RIGHTFUEL	RIGHTFUEL	£25.00	£5.00	£30.00
01/03/2024	67846	FIFI01	FIFIELD	£487.81	£0.00	£487.81
01/03/2024	1047405	BRIG01	BRIGHTER BILLS	£282.69	£56.54	£339.23

01/03/2024	2006181575	HMLR	LAND REG	£6.00	£0.00	£6.00
01/03/2024	CD970090293	HELPINGHAN	HELPING HANDS	£197.90	£39.58	£237.48
04/03/2024	2469	RAREEARTH	RARE EARTH DIGITAL	£352.50	£70.50	£423.00
05/03/2024	1079	BUDE	BUDE SOLUTIONS	£2,000.00	£400.00	£2,400.00
05/03/2024	116838	PETH01	PET HIRE	£69.00	£13.80	£82.80
05/03/2024	BAVARIAN	MAYOR	CHESHIRE EAST	£60.00	£0.00	£60.00
06/03/2024	2839	6A	6A ARCHITECTS	£15,000.00	£3,000.00	£18,000.00
07/03/2024	10638	LJPRINT	L J PRINT LIMITED	£82.00	£16.40	£98.40
07/03/2024	2703252999	ADOBE01	ADOBE	£101.25	£20.25	£121.50
07/03/2024	GRANT	CLEANTEAM	CREWE CLEAN TEAM	£2,350.00	£0.00	£2,350.00
08/03/2024	55289	DG	DG OFFICE	£118.30	£17.39	£135.69
08/03/2024	304808	TUDO01	TUDOR	£47.45	£9.49	£56.94
08/03/2024	304809	TUDO01	TUDOR	£98.90	£19.78	£118.68
08/03/2024	2006204425	HMLR	LAND REG	£24.00	£0.00	£24.00
08/03/2024	EBK263349	MUSEUM	MUSEUM ASSOC	£117.00	£0.00	£117.00
09/03/2024	5080476	WATE02	WATERPLUS	£47.68	£2.39	£50.07
11/03/2024	05_0424_CREW	JOOGLE	JOOGLEBERRY	£1,250.00	£250.00	£1,500.00
11/03/2024	55297	DG	DG OFFICE	£22.75	£4.55	£27.30
11/03/2024	GRANT2024	CLASP	S C CLASP	£1,210.00	£0.00	£1,210.00
13/03/2024	9307	CRIM01	CRIME WATCH	£75.00	£15.00	£90.00
13/03/2024	11700209353	ANSA01	ANSA	£799.10	£159.82	£958.92
13/03/2024	11700209358	ANSA01	ANSA	£270.40	£54.08	£324.48
14/03/2024	11700209380	ANSA01	ANSA	£2,887.19	£577.44	£3,464.63
15/03/2024	55324	DG	DG OFFICE	£129.50	£25.90	£155.40
15/03/2024	2006226787	HMLR	LAND REG	£18.00	£0.00	£18.00
15/03/2024	GRANT	CREATECHAM	CREWE CREATIVE CHAM	£1,622.80	£0.00	£1,622.80
16/03/2024	TRAIN	CREWEMAYOR	MAYOR OF CREWE	£76.10	£0.00	£76.10
18/03/2024	11700214187	ANSA01	ANSA	£132.86	£26.57	£159.43
18/03/2024	GRANT	MALAYALI	MALAYALI ASSOC	£550.00	£0.00	£550.00
19/03/2024	55348	DG	DG OFFICE	£52.70	£10.54	£63.24
19/03/2024	75357	HOLD01	HOLDFAST	£240.00	£48.00	£288.00
19/03/2024	20397360	CIM	CIM	£525.00	£105.00	£630.00
20/03/2024	368	BODY01	BODY POSITIVE	£3,000.00	£0.00	£3,000.00
20/03/2024	4802	GROUNDWORK	GROUNDWORK	£31,070.00	£6,214.00	£37,284.00
20/03/2024	55350	DG	DG OFFICE	£6.50	£0.00	£6.50
20/03/2024	55351	DG	DG OFFICE	£-5.85	£-1.17	£-7.02
20/03/2024	128046	WIREHOUSE	WIREHOUSE EM SERV	£495.00	£99.00	£594.00
20/03/2024	1061588	UKPOS	UKPOS	£93.20	£18.64	£111.84
21/03/2024	55359	DG	DG OFFICE	£8.35	£1.67	£10.02
21/03/2024	11700214449	CHES01	CEC	£429.00	£0.00	£429.00
25/03/2024	21537	COUNTY	COUNTY LOOS	£1,105.00	£221.00	£1,326.00
26/03/2024	10683	LJPRINT	L J PRINT LIMITED	£196.00	£0.00	£196.00
27/03/2024	3811	MMCL01	MM CLEANING	£194.00	£38.80	£232.80
28/03/2024	6073	NGL01	NGL TECH	£353.60	£70.72	£424.32
28/03/2024	2006263106	HMLR	LAND REG	£6.00	£0.00	£6.00
29/03/2024	HCL000723	PURCELL	PURCELL	£8,268.75	£1,653.75	£9,922.50
31/03/2024	BAL	CRIM01	CRIME WATCH	£35.00	£7.00	£42.00
31/03/2024	CRED	AMBE03	AMBERON	£-546.68	£-109.34	£-656.02
31/03/2024	CRED	ICO	ICO	£-5.00	£0.00	£-5.00
31/03/2024	CRED	SSE01	SOUTHERN ELECTRIC	£-60.00	£0.00	£-60.00
31/03/2024	CRED	CREWEAFVBC	CREWE AFVBC	£-0.51	£0.00	£-0.51
31/03/2024	CREDIT	GLITE	GLITE FANCY	£-30.00	£0.00	£-30.00
31/03/2024	GRANT	STPA01	ST PAUL'S CENTRE	£500.00	£0.00	£500.00
31/03/2024	RAILWAY	BLAI01	BLAIN	£70.00	£14.00	£84.00
			TOTAL INVOICES	£234,899.69	£43,270.04	£278,169.73

Crewe Town Council Reserves Policy

Introduction

Town Councils are required to hold financial reserves to meet the financial needs of the organisation, there is no statutory minimum (or maximum) level of reserves. Crewe Town Council (CTC) has no power to hold revenue reserves other than those for reasonable working capital needs or specific earmarked purposes.

The Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) Practitioners' Guide, which sets out the 'proper practices' for how the council must maintain and run its accounts, recommends that the minimum level of general reserves should be between three and twelve months of net revenue expenditure. According to the guidance for authorities with income and expenditure over £200,000, of which CTC is one, it states that the lower end (three months, or 25%) is appropriate ^(5.32-5.36)

The Council's Internal and External Auditors review the council's reserves annually.

General Reserve

The general reserve is not ringfenced (earmarked) for any specific expenditure. Its purposes are to smooth the impact of uneven cashflow or cover unexpected/emergency expenditure, including opportunity to be responsive to projects and activities that arise during a financial year that had not otherwise been known prior to that point. It is not intended to fund on going expenditure. Currently the general reserve is not replenished as part of the budget process, where the general reserve falls below the required recommended levels the RFO will include this discussion as part of the budget setting process on a year by year basis. ^(5.27)

In line with the national guidance (above), CTC will hold a general reserve of between a minimum of 25% and a maximum of 100% of its net revenue expenditure (NRE) - this is the difference between its budgeted income and expenditure. The General Reserves are held in the balance of the Council CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund.

The level of the General Reserve is presented to the Finance and Governance Committee and Full Council as part of the Budget Setting and Year End Accounting reports.

Earmarked Reserves

The council may establish Earmarked Reserves (EMR) where it reasonably believes it may incur expenditure in the future. EMR will be identified as part of the closure of accounts procedure and authorised by Council. Any EMR that is not utilised and is no longer required will be returned to the General Reserve as part of the closure of accounts process, this is in order to avoid the build-up of unused resources which should be released for general use. Per the JPAG there is no upper or lower limit to EMR ^(5.38)

Changes to Earmarked Reserves

The discussion and approval of movement from Earmarked Reserves should be approved by Council (see NB for exception) all requests/ requirements will be presented to Council for approval.

End of Year Accounting

The Earmarked Reserves will be reviewed annually and any additions, deletions, virements and use of funds will be presented to Council for approval during the budget setting process.

NB:

Capital Equipment/Capital Contingency Reserves

These reserves are available to purchases fund equipment/fixed asset purchases. These reserves are monitored by the RFO who will arrange for the accounting movements to take place as and when purchases are made, and all purchases are entered on the Fixed Asset Register or Inventory. Should the fund be required to be used for other unexpected asset maintenance/purchases through revenue budgets this movement will be presented to Finance and Governance Committee and Council for noting and approval.

Appendix

Extracts from Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioner's Guide March 2022

5.27. The key stages in the budgeting process are

- *decide the form and level of detail of the budget;*
- *review the current year budget and spending;*
- *determine the cost of spending plans;*
- *assess levels of income;*
- *bring together spending and income plans;*
- *provide for contingencies and consider the need for general and earmarked reserves;*
- *approve the budget;*
- *confirm and submit the precept or rates and special levies;*
- *review progress against the budget regularly throughout the year - at least quarterly in all but exempt authorities - including a year-end projection and a clear minuted commentary of likely significant variances from the budget;*
- *virements (transfers between budget lines) are permitted but not required - they should be used to clarify the situation of the authority alongside budget variances arising from unforeseen circumstances.*

5.32. The general reserve of an authority comprises its cash flow and contingency funds to cover unexpected inflation, unforeseen events and unusual circumstances.

5.33. The generally accepted recommendation with regard to the appropriate minimum level of a smaller authority's general reserve is that this should be maintained at between three and twelve months of net revenue expenditure.

5.34. The reason for the wide range is to cater for the large variation in activity level between individual authorities. The smaller the authority, the closer the figure may be to 12 months expenditure, the larger the authority, the nearer to 3 months. In practice, any authority with income and expenditure in excess of £200,000 should plan towards 3 months equivalent general reserve.

5.35. In all of this it is important that each authority adopt, as a general reserve policy, the level appropriate to their size, situation, risks and plan their budget so as to ensure that the adopted level is maintained.

5.36. Authorities with significant self-generated income (other than the precept or levy) should take into account situations that may lead to a loss in revenue as well as increased costs and adapt their general reserve accordingly.

5.38. There is, in practice, no upper or lower limit to EMR/CRRs save only that they must be held for genuine and identifiable purposes and projects, and their level should be subject to regular review and justification (at least annually and at budget setting), and should be separately identified and enumerated. Significant levels of EMRs in particular may give rise to enquiries from internal and/or external auditors.

held for genuine and identifiable purposes and projects, and their level should be subject to regular review and justification (at least annually and at budget setting), and should be separately identified and enumerated. Significant levels of EMRs in particular may give rise to enquiries from internal and/or external auditors.

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CREWE TOWN COUNCIL

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Adopted by Council on 4th October 2022

Review Date: April 2024

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Other associated documents-please see Constitution on
Website or in Dropbox Member-Officer Protocol
Equalities Policy

INTRODUCTION

This Handbook covers important aspects of employment and we ask that you read it carefully in conjunction with the Contract of Employment given to you when you commence employment. It also sets out the Council's approved Personnel Policies and Rules of Employment.

This document supersedes the version of November 2014 and is written to inform employees of their rights and conditions of employment but does not form part of your contract of employment. It complements the Council's Personnel Procedures which are written from a management perspective.

Crewe Town Council has adopted the collective agreement known as the "Green Book" issued by the NJC for Local Government Services (comprising representatives of employers & employees). The Green book contains four parts. Part 1 is Principles and Part 4 joint advice. It divides terms and conditions into key national conditions (Part 2) and national provisions which may be modified locally (Part 3).

The Council's Employee conditions of service as set out in this handbook, build on the Green Book. Local procedures are developed in accordance with ACAS guidelines.

The Council sets out to reward the commitment of its staff, consistent with its financial resources and to provide a satisfying and flexible working environment in which staff are given the opportunity to develop.

People are our most important asset and the quality and attitude of individuals is therefore the key to our continued success. Because of this, we will always treat each employee as an individual, and respect their rights and sensitivities.

NB. References to notifications to be made to the Town Clerk should be read as Chairman of Personnel Committee when the employee concerned is the Town Clerk.

ABSENCES

Absence causes reduced levels of customer service and additional pressure on remaining employees to cover, often at short notice. The Council's Absence Policy provides a framework which helps us all to manage absenteeism and provides support to everyone involved. It recognises the need for a mutually responsible and caring approach to managing absence consistently.

We do accept and understand that from time to time, our staff will be ill, may need to take time away from work to look after their family, or may need to take time off to attend to some other urgent matter. However, for the above reasons, we do view persistent absence from work as a serious matter. Dealing with long term sickness will require a different approach to that needed for repeated short-term absences.

Absence rates will be monitored within our organisation. Along with an employee's absence rate, we will always review and consider the reason for their absence and will discuss this with the employee. By taking the time to understand why our staff are absent from work, we will be able to explore options with them and hopefully find solutions that will help them to attend work regularly. We will always treat staff fairly and will not discriminate in the way we deal with absences or grant time off.

The Absence Policy requires that every employee's absence record is assessed and reviewed with them after every period of absence. The purpose of the review will be:

- To welcome the employee back to work and provide an update about any developments which have occurred during their absence
- To check that an employee is fit for work and to understand their wellbeing needs
- To see whether the Council can provide any additional support to help rehabilitation
- To review the employee's absence record & discuss any patterns of absence which are evidential, and which may cause concern.
- To discuss with the employee the impact of their absence on the Council.

The form of the review will of course vary according to each individual's absence record.

APPOINTMENTS

ABSENCE NOTIFICATION

Employees must follow the procedure below for all periods of absence including:

- sickness
- appointments-dental/hospital etc
- other genuine emergency situations

Prior permission must be obtained from your Manager for all absence other than unexpected sickness. An Absence Record Form must be completed before the absence commences, for all absences other than unexpected sickness, injuries, or other genuine emergency situations.

Absence for reasons of sickness, injury or other genuine emergency situations must be notified as soon as possible, by telephoning your Manager by 9.30 am. (In the case of the Town Clerk, a notification will be made to the Deputy Town Clerk who will advise the Personnel Chairman). It is the employee's responsibility to keep the Council advised of circumstances which are preventing the employee from attending work and their likely return date. (Text messaging is not permitted).

In the case of absence because of an emergency situation, you are entitled to take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off during working hours in order to take action alternatively

you may be required to take annual holiday entitlement (or time off in lieu) to cover the period of absence. In extreme cases such as bereavement of a close family member, the Town Clerk has discretion to grant compassionate leave.

In cases of sickness of 7 calendar days or less, the Self Certification Form will be completed immediately upon return to work. Where, however, the absence is expected to or lasts for a period in excess of 7 days, Fit Certificate(s) [often referred to as Medical Certificates] will be required from a Doctor to cover the employee for the duration. Fit Certificates must be forwarded immediately by the employee. Failure to do so may result in sick pay being delayed or withheld and disciplinary action being taken. On the expiry of your fit certificate, you will be assumed to be fit for work, unless evidence is supplied to the contrary.

If you are taken ill whilst at work and need to go home, the absence must be counted as sick leave and a self-certificate completed. If you go home before 11.00am a full day's absence must be shown on the self-certificate for that day. If you leave after 11.00am a half day's absence must be shown on the self-certificate for that day. Unauthorised absence will lead to disciplinary action which may include dismissal.

Long term sick leave will be reviewed at regular intervals under the Absence Policy. If after a reasonable period you remain unable to work, the Competency Procedure may be invoked.

Pay during absence

You are not entitled to be paid your wage/salary when absent from work unless authorised. However, if your absence is due to illness or injury you will qualify for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) if you comply with the Absence Procedure. You may also qualify for Council Sick Pay to make up the difference between (SSP) and your normal salary. See the appropriate section of this handbook.

If you are absent from work due to incapacity caused through an accident and the Council has continued to pay you, the Council reserves the right to recover such sums as appropriate as part of any case for compensation pursued against a third party.

Holidays. For booking holidays or time off in lieu, see Holiday Entitlement below.

ABSENCE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE – EXCESSIVE SHORT-TERM ABSENCE

While we appreciate that there are occasions when sickness absence is unavoidable, we have to be attentive to our operational and business needs at all times. Accordingly, where you have high levels of short term sickness absence, this will be assessed and reviewed periodically and an absence management procedure may be invoked. This process could ultimately result in the termination of your employment.

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5 occasions of absence and/or 14 cumulative days of absence over a rolling 12 month period will normally be considered high levels of sickness absence which will result in the absence management procedure being invoked.

All cases of absence will be assessed on an individual basis in order to offer the fairest approach to an employee's circumstances, taking into account the reason for the absences.

Our absence management procedure is non-contractual and there may be situations in which it is not appropriate to follow the procedure set out below. In particular, we reserve the right not to follow the full procedure in the event of high levels of absence during the probationary period, or within the first 2 years of your employment.

You may bring a companion with you to any meeting which takes place under the absence management procedure, who may be either a trade union representative or a colleague.

The absence management procedure will initially involve us inviting you to an absence review meeting, at which we will:

- a) Discuss the reasons for absence.
- b) Determine the likelihood of further absences.
- c) Consider whether medical advice is required.
- d) Consider what, if any, measures might improve your health and/or attendance.
- e) Consider a way forward, action that will be taken and a timescale for review and/or a further meeting under the absence management procedure.

Following the meeting, confirmation of any decision made, the reasons for it, and of the right of appeal will be given to you in writing. As an outcome of the meeting, you may be warned that your absence levels are unacceptably high and that an improvement is required.

If your absence levels fail to improve, you may be invited to a second absence review meeting, at which we will:

- (a) Discuss the reasons for and impact of your ongoing absences.
- (b) Discuss the likelihood of further absences.
- (c) If it has not been obtained, consider whether medical advice is required. If it has been obtained, consider the advice that has been given and whether further advice is required.
- (d) Consider your ability to return to/remain in your job in view both of your capabilities and our business needs and any adjustments that can reasonably be made to your job to enable you to do so.
- (e) Consider possible redeployment opportunities and whether any adjustments can reasonably be made to assist in redeploying you.
- (f) Consider a way forward, action that will be taken and a timescale for review and/or a further meeting(s).

Following the meeting, confirmation of any decision made, the reasons for it, and of the right of appeal will be given to you in writing. As an outcome of the meeting, you may be given a final warning that your absence levels are unacceptably high and that you are at risk of dismissal.

If your absence levels fail to improve, you may be invited to a third absence review meeting, at which we will:

- (a) Review the meetings that have taken place and matters discussed with you.
- (b) Consider any further matters that you wish to raise.
- (c) Consider whether there is a reasonable likelihood of you achieving the desired level of attendance in a reasonable time.
- (d) Consider the possible termination of your employment.

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Following the meeting, confirmation of any decision made, the reasons for it, and of the right of appeal will be given to you in writing. As an outcome of the meeting, you may be dismissed because your absence levels are unacceptably high. Termination will normally be with full notice or payment in lieu of notice.

ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS, REWARDS AND HOSPITALITY

The acceptance of gifts and hospitality are particularly sensitive areas. The way in which you receive a gift/hospitality depends on the type of relationship involved and the context in which the gifts/hospitality are offered. Staff should always bear in mind the following points:

There must be nothing in your behaviour, which might give rise to a suspicion that you are acting in your own private interest, which might lead to a conflict of interest.

Your actions should never give the impression to the public; to any organisation with which you deal or to your colleagues that a gift or reward could influence the way in which you deal with any person or organisation.

Staff should always inform the Town Clerk of gifts/hospitality invitations/rewards made to them and the Town Clerk should advise the Mayor. Failure to do so will lead to serious disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

You must comply with the Officer Code of Conduct set out as Appendix 1 to this Handbook.

ACCOMPANIMENT

"Workers" have a statutory right to be accompanied by a fellow worker or by a trade union official, where they are required or invited by their employer to attend certain disciplinary, or grievance hearings and they make a request to be so accompanied. This right applies not only to employees working under a contract of employment, but also to workers who are not genuinely self-employed, agency workers, home workers and casuals.

The 'companion' will be either:

- a fellow worker (another worker of the same employer);
- a full time official employed by a Trade Union; or
- a lay trade union official or workplace representative who has been specifically certified in writing by their union to act as a companion at disciplinary or grievance hearings.

The statutory right applies to:

Disciplinary meetings which could result in:

- the administration of a formal warning;
- the taking of some other action, which will include dismissal;
- the confirmation of a warning issued or some other action taken.

The Council also allow an employee to be accompanied under the Appeal Procedure or Competence Procedure.

In the case of a Grievance Meeting there may be no automatic legal right for a worker to be accompanied at a fact-finding interview (an investigatory meeting) prior to a formal disciplinary meeting, although if that investigatory interview, for instance, centres on a specific individual and disciplinary proceedings are likely to follow then the right to be accompanied is likely to apply.

ACCOMPANYING PERSON

A worker who has been requested to accompany a colleague employed by the same employer is entitled to take a reasonable amount of paid time off to fulfil this responsibility. A lay trade union official or a workplace representative is also entitled to reasonable paid time off by the employer provided that the worker who has requested to be accompanied is employed by the same employer.

Acting as a companion is voluntary and employees are under no obligation to do so.

The right to be accompanied by a trade union official is not limited to where the trade union is recognised by the employer.

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The Council may, at its discretion, allow you to bring a companion who is not an employee or union official (for example, a member of your family, but not a legal representative) where this will help overcome a particular difficulty caused by a disability or where you have language difficulties.

The companion will be allowed to participate in the hearing and to ask questions. The companion has the legal right to address the hearing but does not have the legal right to answer questions on behalf of the worker. Facilities should be made available to allow a reasonable amount of time for preparation and to confer privately during the course of the hearing.

If the designated companion cannot attend a hearing at the time proposed, the worker can suggest a reasonable alternative which must be within 5 working days of the first date suggested.

ADOPTION LEAVE

Any employee who is adopting a child and meets certain qualifying conditions has the right to take 26 weeks ordinary unpaid adoption leave and the right to an additional 26 weeks of unpaid absence.

To qualify, you will need to have been continuously employed for at least 26 weeks. Statutory Adoption pay may be able to be claimed by some employees.

If this may apply to you, you are advised to discuss the matter with the Town Clerk and if necessary, with the Council's HR Advisers.

ALCOHOL/SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Drugs and alcohol can have an impact on the workplace. Misuse can lead to accidents at work, reduced efficiency, poor decision making, lost productivity, absenteeism, etc, not only for the individual but also for others.

We expressly prohibit the use of "illicit substances" which we define as including any illegal drugs (Class A, B or C), any prescription drugs that have not been prescribed to you and any psychoactive substances or legal highs.

Whilst we do not want to dictate how you spend your time outside of work, you should be mindful to ensure that any consumption of an illicit substance or alcohol the night before/preceding your shift, does not render you unfit to drive or over the relevant legal limit, if you need to drive; nor should you be under the influence or unfit to work the following day/ shift.

If you are required to drive as part of your duties, you should not consume alcohol before arriving on duty or whilst on duty. It is an absolute requirement for a driver to be under the relevant legal drink-drive limit. It is illegal for any person to drive or attempt to drive a motor vehicle while unfit to drive through the use of alcohol or an illicit substance.

Suspension

When there is reasonable belief that you are under the influence of alcohol or any illicit substance on reporting for work or during the course of work, you will be sent home immediately.

It is a criminal offence to be in possession of, use or distribute any illegal drugs. If we suspect you have committed any such offences during the course of your employment, the alleged offence will be investigated by us. This may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you up to and including summary dismissal and the matter being reported to the Police.

You must not:

- report, or endeavour to report, for duty having consumed an illicit substance, or alcohol likely to render you unfit and/or unsafe for work;

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- consume or be under the influence of an illicit substance or alcohol while on duty, including during authorised breaks;
- consume or be under the influence of an illicit substance or alcohol while on our premises or any premises on which we may operate;
- be in possession of, or store any illicit substance or alcohol on your person, in personal areas such as lockers and desk drawers;
- attempt to sell or give an illicit substance to any other employee or other person during the course of your employment;
- attempt to sell or give alcohol to any other employee or other person during the course of your employment.

This also includes business functions where you are representing us.

Any breach of our rules on the misuse of illicit substances or alcohol may lead to serious disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Additional rules

Special rules may apply in relation to alcohol, where we may sponsor an event for employees (e.g., Christmas or farewell events). In these circumstances any variation to the no-alcohol policy will be communicated in advance of the event.

In addition to our zero tolerance rules above, there may be other instances of misconduct at work, or absence from work, caused as a result of excessive drinking or drug taking outside of the workplace, such as lateness, absences relating to a hangover or attending work visibly hungover or smelling of alcohol. Any instances of this nature may fall short of the zero tolerance rules above, however, will still be dealt with under the normal disciplinary rules.

Prescription drugs

You should inform us of any prescribed medication that may have an effect on your ability to carry out your work properly. Prescription drugs that cause drowsiness must not be used while at work. Failure to disclose this information will be dealt with as a disciplinary offence.

Drugs/ alcohol dependency

Drug and alcohol dependency problems could arise for a variety of reasons and over a prolonged period of time.

If you are suffering from a drug or alcohol dependency you should advise a member of senior management of your own choosing.

We will seek to provide reasonable assistance by treating absences for treatment and/or rehabilitation as sickness absence.

If you do not finish a programme of treatment, or your recovery and return to work does not go as planned, we will meet with you to decide what further action, if any, should be taken.

However, if you are found in breach of the workplace rules as set out in this policy, you may still be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

The Town Council expressly prohibits the use of any illegal drugs or of any prescription drugs that have

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~~not been prescribed to you.~~

~~It is a criminal offence to be in possession of, use or distribute an illicit substance. If the Town Council suspects you have committed any such offences whilst on Town Council premises, whilst within a Town Council vehicle or whilst engaged elsewhere on Town Council business, the offence will be investigated and may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal being taken against you and the matter being reported to the Police.~~

~~You may not:~~

- ~~-report, or endeavour to report, for duty having consumed drugs or alcohol likely to render you unfit and/or unsafe for work;~~
- ~~-consume or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on duty, including during authorised breaks;~~
- ~~-store drugs or alcohol in personal areas such as lockers and desk drawers;~~
- ~~-attempt to sell or give drugs or alcohol to any other employee or other person on Town Council Premises or while on Council business.~~

~~After a full investigation, if for any reason, you have found to have committed any of the offences listed above you may be liable to serious disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.~~

~~You should inform your manager of any prescribed medication that may have an effect on your ability to carry out your work properly and safely. Drugs that cause drowsiness, must not be used while at work.~~

~~If you are suffering from a drug or alcohol dependency you should advise a member of senior management of your own choosing. The Town Council will seek to provide reasonable assistance by treating absences for treatment and/or rehabilitation as sickness absence. If you fail to accept help or fail to continue with treatment you may be subject to the disciplinary procedures.~~

~~Alcohol must not be brought on to the Council's premises or consumed in any circumstances without the consent of the Town Clerk.~~

~~Any individual thought to be under the influence of excess alcohol will be escorted from the premises and escorted home and may be subject to action under our disciplinary and dismissal procedures which could result in termination of employment.~~

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ANTI TAX-EVASION POLICY

The Council has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of tax evasion, whether under UK law or under the law of any foreign country.

Employees of the Council must not undertake any transactions which:

- a. Cause the Council to commit a tax evasion offence; or
- b. Facilitate a tax evasion offence by a third party.

The Council is committed to acting professionally, fairly and with integrity in all its business dealings and relationships and implementing and enforcing effective systems to counter tax evasion facilitation.

At all times, business should be conducted in a manner such that the opportunity for, and incidence of, tax evasion is prevented.

This policy applies to all persons working for the Council, and its Members, including but not limited to agency workers, seconded workers, volunteers, contractors, external consultants, third-party representatives and business partners, sponsors or any other person associated with it.

APPEAL PROCEDURE

An appeal against a disciplinary/competency/grievance/redundancy decision must be notified to the Town Clerk, in writing, within five working days of the receipt of written confirmation of disciplinary/competence action taken.

The appeal will be considered as soon as possible, and an invitation will be made to discuss the matter fully. The procedure is designed to ensure that employees are treated fairly and lawfully in all matters of discipline, competency and dismissal. An employee is entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or accredited trade union representative.

Commented [BE1]: I will leave this wording as is and change below.

During the appeal meeting, the onus will be on the employee to put forward the grounds for appeal and any new evidence or mitigating circumstances which could alter the original decision. The employee can be requested to provide prior written notification of the reasons for the appeal. If any new information comes to light, we will provide you with details in writing. You will have reasonable opportunity to consider this information before the meeting. If you raise any new matters in your appeal, we may need to carry out further investigation.

Following the appeal, we may:

- confirm the original decision;
- revoke the original decision; or
- substitute for a different outcome;

The outcome of the appeal will be final, it will be notified to you in writing and copies of all correspondence, will be retained on the personnel file.

Appeals against action taken by a manager will be undertaken by the Town Clerk. Appeals against action taken by the Town Clerk will be undertaken by members of the Appeals Committee who have not been part of the original decision, or an independent person appointed by the Committee.

If an employee does not accept the annual Employee Development Review, and this cannot be resolved with the Manager, an appeal may be made to the Town Clerk. The EDR will be reviewed with both the Manager and employee present and the Town Clerk's decision will be final. If the original appraisal was undertaken by the Town Clerk, the review will be undertaken by the Chairman/Vice Chairman of Appeals Committee. The Town Clerk may appeal against his/her EDR and it will be reviewed by 3 members of Appeals Committee not involved in the original review.

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ATTENDANCE

The Council requires regularity of attendance from its employees. This is of the utmost importance in maintaining an efficient business and high-quality service to customers. Breaches of this requirement may invoke the Council's Disciplinary Procedures.

BEREAVEMENT

If you suffer any other bereavement in your immediate family - that is, the death of a parent, spouse, brother, sister, son, daughter, in-laws, legal guardian or partner, paid leave will be allowed for the funeral. Additional compassionate leave of up to 5 days may be allowed for immediate family bereavement at the discretion of the Town Clerk. (In the case of the Town Clerk, the discretion will lie with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Personnel Committee). Time off for funerals will also be allowed for more distant relatives and close friends, at the discretion of the Town Clerk (or Chairman & Vice Chairman of Personnel Committee).

BULLYING

Workplace bullying is a separate issue from harassment, but the effects can be the same. While workplace harassment benefits from a legal definition, there is no standard definition of bullying. Within the working environment bullying can be described as the use of a position or power to coerce others by fear, oppression or threat.

The Council will not tolerate bullying behaviour at any level, and it is the responsibility of everyone, and particularly managers to do everything possible to eliminate any form of bullying which they become aware of.

Allegations of bullying will be dealt with under the Dignity at Work Policy which forms Appendix 2 of this Handbook and if appropriate the grievance or disciplinary procedure. Any employee who feels they are being bullied should consult any manager or the Town Clerk.

CAMERA TELEPHONES/EQUIPMENT

It is accepted that in the course of your work that you may need to use any of the following:

- the camera function of a mobile phone
- a digital or other camera;
- a camcorder or similar device
- a tape or other recording device for sound or pictures.

You should note these rules do not restrict any confidentiality obligations in your Statement of Particulars of Employment, this Handbook, any of our policies currently in force or any other confidentiality or non-disclosure agreement. These continue in full force and effect.

CAR PARKING

Some parking facilities are provided for employees' cars. However, the Council disclaims all liability, whether in negligence or otherwise, for loss of or damage to any vehicle and/or its contents, howsoever caused, whilst left on the premises.

The Council encourage employees to use a more sustainable form of transport where possible, and where a vehicle is not required for business purposes.

COLLECTIONS FOR CHARITIES AND FUND RAISING

The Town Council is keen to assist legitimate charitable and community activities, provided they do not interfere with the business of the Council. To ensure this does not happen and that the cause or activity concerned is genuine, all such collections and fund-raising must receive prior authorisation from the Town Clerk. Organisers should ensure that no pressure is placed on staff to contribute.

COUNCIL CAR POLICY

The Council currently does not have a policy which entitles employees to the provision of a car as part of their contract of employment or the equivalent of an annual cash payment.

For use of your own car, see Vehicles and Driving section below.

COUNCIL SICK PAY

The Scheme is intended to supplement Statutory Sick Pay so as to maintain normal pay during defined periods of absence. Employees are entitled to receive Council sick pay after successful completion of their Probationary Period or after 4 months employment for the following periods, providing the Absence Procedure has been fully complied with:

During 1 st year of service	1 month full pay and 2 months half pay
During 2 nd year of service	2 months full pay and 2 months half pay
During 3 rd year of service	4 months full pay and 4 months half pay
During 4 th & 5 th year of service	5 months full pay and 5 months half pay
After 5 years of service	6 months full pay and 6 months half pay

The amounts are calculated in accordance with the Green Book. The Council has discretion to extend the period of sick pay in exceptional cases.

COMPETENCE PROCEDURE

This procedure is separate from the Disciplinary Procedure and is not intended to deal with misconduct, rather cases where an employee is unable for any reason to satisfactorily carry out the work required by the job description. It provides a framework within which managers can work with employees to maintain satisfactory performance and to encourage improvement where necessary. It is for guidance and does not form part of your contract of employment.

The Council will make every effort to discuss with the employee, the reasons for the inability to satisfactorily carry out work. It will jointly with the employee, seek solutions such as offering training or development opportunities, additional equipment or if possible, changing the duties of the post. It will also look at the time or location if these are relevant. It may be necessary, dependent upon the circumstances of the competence issue, to suspend the employee on full pay, or to limit the scope of the work, whilst the necessary alternatives are investigated.

The capability issue may be associated with health or disability, the Council will seek as much information as possible and may require medical reports. The Council will see if it can make reasonable adjustments which will help you with your disability at work. The issue will never be determined on age grounds unless there are any statutory requirements.

If these options do not provide a solution, the Council will seek to offer suitable alternative employment where possible. Termination of the Contract of Employment will only be pursued as a last resort.

Stage 1 Competence Hearing

In the first instance, performance issues should normally be dealt with informally between you and your manager as part of day to day management or stemming from the annual Employee Development Review. Informal discussions may be held to:

- Clarify the required standard
- Identify areas of concern
- Establish causes of poor performance
- Setting lengths for improvement and/or
- Agreeing a time scale for review

The formal procedure will be used for more serious cases, or where informal discussions have not resulted in a satisfactory improvement. The hearing will be held with your manager, another manager or the Town Clerk. You must also take reasonable steps to attend a hearing. Failure to do so without good reason may be treated as misconduct. You will be entitled to be accompanied to a formal hearing.

The purposes of the first stage hearing include:

- Setting out the required standards that are considered not to be met;
- Establishing the likely causes of poor performance;
- Allowing you the opportunity to explain the poor performance and ask relevant questions;
- Discussing measures which may help you improve your performance
- Setting targets for improvements;
- Setting a time scale for review;

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Following the hearing, we will if we deem it appropriate to do so, give you a written warning setting out:

- The areas in which you have not met the required performance standards;
- Targets for improvements;
- Measures such as additional training, or supervision which will be taken with a view to improving performance;
- A time scale for review;
- The consequences of failing to improve within the review period, or of further unsatisfactory improvement;

The warning will normally remain active for 6 months but will be a permanent part of your personnel record. At the end of the review period:

- If your manager is satisfied with your performance, no further action will be taken; or
- If your manager feels there has been a substantial but insufficient improvement, the review period may be extended, or
- If your manager is not satisfied, the matter may be progressed to stage 2.

Stage 2 Competence Hearing

If your performance does not improve within the review period, or if there are further instances of poor performance while your first written warning is still active, we will hold a second capability hearing. The Council reserve the right to proceed directly to the Stage 3 Competence Hearing where poor performance is serious enough to justify this. The purposes of the second capability hearing are similar to those of the first stage hearing but include the identification of further measure which may be appropriate.

Following the hearing, if we decide that it is appropriate to do so, we will give you a final written warning, setting out:

- The areas in which you have not met the required performance standards;
- Targets for improvement;
- Any measures, such as additional training or supervision, which will be taken with a view to improving performance;
- A further timescale for review;
- The consequences of failing to improve within the timescale or of further unsatisfactory performance;

A final written warning will normally remain active for 12months but will form a permanent part of your personnel record.

Your performance will be monitored and at the end of the review period we will write to inform you of the next step, as follows:

- If your Manager is satisfied with your performance, no further action will be taken;
- If your Manager is not satisfied, the matter may be progressed to a stage 3 capability hearing; or
- If the Manager feels that there has been a substantial but insufficient improvement, the review period may be extended;

Stage 3 Competence Hearing

If your performance does not improve within the further review period set out in the final written warning, or if there are further serious instances of poor performance while your final written warning is still active, we will hold a further capability hearing.

The purposes of the stage 3 hearing include:

- Setting out the required standards that are considered not to have been met;
- Identifying areas in which performance is still unsatisfactory;
- Allowing you the opportunity to explain the poor performance and ask any relevant questions;
- Establishing whether there are any further steps that could reasonably be taken to rectify the poor performance;
- Establishing whether there is any reasonable likelihood of the required standard of performance being met within a reasonable time; and
- Discussing whether there is any practical alternative to dismissal, such as redeployment to any suitable job that is available at the same or lower grade;

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In exceptional cases where we believe that there is a reasonable likelihood of the necessary improvement being made within a reasonable time, a further review period will be set, and the final written warning extended.

If performance remains unsatisfactory and there is to be no further review period, we may:

- Redeploy you into another suitable job at the same or [if your contract permits] a lower grade; or
- Dismiss you;

Dismissal will normally be with full notice or payment in lieu of notice, unless you are guilty of gross misconduct within the meaning of our disciplinary policy, in which case we may dismiss you without notice or any pay in lieu.

Employees are entitled to appeal against any dismissal decision, in accordance with the Appeal Procedure.

COMPUTER NETWORK

See IT Policy Documents included in this Handbook as Appendix 5

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

The Council encourages openness and the passing of information both internally; between itself and its partners and to the public. Nevertheless, during your employment you are likely to have access to confidential information relating to the Council's business or about clients or members of the public.

This may include:

- business plans, business strategy and marketing plans, not in the public arena
- financial information relating to financial results and financial forecasts, not in the public arena.
- details regarding employees and officers including the remuneration and other benefits paid to them.
- incidents and investigations relating to Town Council operations or business.
- information relating to any bids and tenders contemplated, offered or undertaken.
- confidential reports or research commissioned by or provided to the Town Council.
- any trade secrets including know-how and confidential transactions.
- details of any project on software development or any information relating to any type of replicated digital data medium including magnetic media tape, CD ROM or data designed to be circulated on the internet or any information relating to the methods, tools and techniques used by the Town Council.
- information relating to research activities, inventions, secret processes, designs, formulae undertaken
- details of any transaction, contract or dealings with any person or body in respect of which the Town Council owes an obligation of confidence to a third party.
- any information which you have been told is confidential and any information which has been given to you in confidence by clients, suppliers, or other persons.

This list is not exhaustive.

Unless acting in the proper performance of your duties, or required by law, you must not disclose to any person or body, or use, any confidential information that you obtain during the course of your employment. These restrictions apply to disclosure of confidential information to work colleagues apart from certain named individuals. These restrictions shall continue after your employment has been terminated but shall cease to apply to any information or knowledge that subsequently comes into the public domain, other than as a result of unauthorised disclosure by you.

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Confidential information, in whatever format made or received by you during the course of your employment is the Council's property. You must return to the Town Council, on request or upon termination of your employment, any confidential information which belongs to the Town Council and is in your possession or under your control. You must delete, on request, all confidential information in your possession and destroy any other documents and/or items which are in your possession or under your control and which contain or refer to any confidential information. You must not retain any copy/copies of any confidential information belonging to the Town Council.

At any time during your employment, or following termination of your employment, the Town Council may require you to provide a written undertaking that you have returned all property belonging to the Town Council including confidential information and that you have not retained any copy/copies of confidential information belonging to it.

CONTRACTS OF EMPLOYMENT

A Contract of Employment will be given to each employee on the first day of employment. It will contain the main terms and conditions of employment for the specific job role.

Two copies will be issued, one to be signed and returned by the employee, the other for his/her retention. Minor amendments to the Contract, e.g. a change in salary, will be amended by letter. More substantial changes, e.g. a promotion, may require the issue of a replacement Contract.

Please keep your Contract, any amendments, your job description, and person specification safe for future reference.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Staff are required to declare any interest they or a member of their family may have in accordance with the Officers' Code of Conduct.

DEPENDANTS

Employees have the right to reasonable time off without pay during working hours to deal with incidents involving a dependant. (See Absence above). The Town Clerk has the discretion to allow pay for this time off in urgent cases of real need to deal with the incident. (In the case of the Town Clerk, the discretion lies with the Chairman & Vice Chairman of Personnel Committee).

The entitlement is to:

- provide assistance when a dependant falls ill, gives birth or is injured or assaulted.
- make arrangements for the provision of care for an ill or injured dependant
- take action in consequence of the death of a dependant.
- care of a dependant following the unexpected disruption or termination of arrangements.
- deal with an incident that involves your child and occurs unexpectedly while the child is at school/other educational establishment.

You must inform your manager of the reason for your absence and how long you expect to be absent as soon as is reasonably practicable. Time off work under this right is envisaged as being no more than one or two days in most cases.

A dependant is defined as your spouse, civil partner, child, parent, a person who lives with you other than as your employee, tenant, lodger or boarder, any other person who would reasonably rely on you for assistance if he/she fell ill or was injured or assaulted, or who would rely on you to make arrangements for the provision of care in the event of illness or injury; or in relation to the disruption or termination of care for a dependant, any other person who reasonably relies on you to make arrangements for the provision of their care.

CARER'S LEAVE

You are entitled to take one week's unpaid leave to provide or arrange care for a dependant (see above for definition of a dependant). This is the maximum you can take in a single rolling period of 12 months. Part-time

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employees will receive a pro-rata entitlement.

You may take the leave in either individual days or half days, up to a block of one week.

You should notify xxxxx in advance of the day(s) that you are looking to take off. You are required to give notice by either twice the length of leave requested, or three days, whichever is the longest. We may waive this notice requirement where the other eligibility criteria of the regulations have been met.

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DISABLED PERSONS

The Town Council is a Disability Confident Committed employer. We aim to eliminate disability discrimination in the workplace by ensuring our processes are inclusive and accessible, following our Equal Opportunities and Diversity policy, considering all requests for reasonable adjustments, and conforming with Equality Act 2010. Should you experience any issues relating to a disability or wish to discuss your health needs, please speak to your line manager and/or the Town Clerk who will deal with this appropriately and in confidence

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION

This disciplinary procedure is designed to help and encourage employees to achieve and maintain acceptable standards of conduct and job performance at all times, including the need to:

- Fulfil the duties specified in their contract of employment.
- Be honest and act beyond suspicion of dishonesty.
- Maintain high standards of integrity and conduct to protect the council's image and reputation with the public.

1.1 This policy indicates the disciplinary procedure that will normally be followed in the event of misconduct. The following list provides examples of conduct that will normally be regarded as misconduct leading to disciplinary proceedings. The list is not exhaustive.

- Unsatisfactory time keeping.
- Time wasting.
- Absenteeism, including any absence from work during a working day without prior authorisation or instruction.
- Damage to, or unauthorised use of council property.
- Failure to comply with rules and regulations applicable to job requirements.
- Minor breaches of your contract of employment.
- Failure by an employee to perform the duties and responsibilities of his or her post to the standard expected by the council.
- Obscene language or other offensive behaviour.
- Insubordination or refusal to follow instructions.
- Any other conduct that from time to time is defined by the Council as amounting to misconduct or breach of Council General Rules.

This Procedure applies to all employees with over 2 years service, however we reserve the right to discipline or dismiss an employee without following this Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedure if they have less than 24 months' continuous service. In these circumstances we may proceed to a formal probation review or an employment review (if the matters for consideration fall outside the probation period), which are not subject to appeal.

This Procedure is for guidance and does not form part of your contract of employment. This Procedure does not apply to cases involving genuine sickness absence; proposed redundancies; or poor performance and competence.

1.2 GENERAL RULES

- Employees have an obligation to ensure that they conform to the requirements of the Equalities Policy and must not act in a manner which could be considered to be of an unlawful discriminatory nature against fellow employees, customers, or other people with whom they come into contact on the Council's business.
- Employees are expected to achieve and maintain a good standard of workmanship and cleanliness and to show a conscientious approach to the job or to the detail of that job to a standard that may reasonably be expected.
- To ensure maximum efficiency, employees are engaged on the basis that they must be prepared to undertake reasonable duties other than those for which they have been specifically engaged.
- The telephone, internet, emails or postal service must not be used for private purposes without prior permission.
- Visitors are not allowed on to the premises at any time without prior authority.
- An orderly and courteous manner must be maintained in front of customers, visitors and the public.
- It is not permitted to remove material or equipment of any kind from the Council or any other place of work without prior written permission.
- The Council's or customers'/clients' time, material or equipment must not be used for any

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unauthorised use.

- All authorised notices displayed are expected to be read and observed.
- Employees are expected to act wholeheartedly in the interests of the Council at all times. Any conduct detrimental to its interests or its relations with its customers, suppliers, the general public or damaging to its public image shall be considered to be in breach of the Council's rules.
- Employees must not perform, arrange, or carry out any work or activity which could be considered to be in competition with or which adversely affect in any way the Council's interests.
- Employees must act in accordance with the Council's operating procedures and policies.
- Employees must take reasonable care of the health and safety of employees and third parties.
- Comply with all reasonable instruction given by your manager.
- Comply with the Council's rules for IT and social media.
- Comply with Data Protection legislation and procedures.

1.3 For first instances of minor misconduct, the employee's manager or Town Clerk may speak to the employee informally before implementing a formal disciplinary procedure. However, there is no obligation for the employee's manager or Town Clerk to do this.

2. SCOPE

The procedure applies to all employees of Crewe Town Council.

3. VERBAL WARNINGS

Verbal Warnings are issued by a manager or the Town Clerk (or in the case of the Town Clerk, nominated members of Personnel Committee) for most first instances of general misconduct, depending on the seriousness of the offence. If the employee is given a Verbal Warning, he or she will be warned of the likely consequences of any further disciplinary offences or a failure to improve his or her conduct to the satisfaction of the Council. A note confirming the Verbal Warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file. A Verbal Warning will normally remain in force for 6 months but remain permanently on your Personnel record.

The Verbal Warning stage of the procedure may be omitted if the offence is of a sufficiently serious nature.

4. FIRST WRITTEN WARNING

In the case of a serious offence or repetition of an earlier minor offence the employee will normally be given a First Written Warning. A First Written Warning will be issued by the employee's manager or Town Clerk (or in the case of the Town Clerk, nominated members of Personnel Committee) and will set out:

- i. the nature of the offence and the improvement required (if appropriate) and over what period;
- ii. the likely consequences of any further offence or failure by the employee to improve his/her conduct to an acceptable standard;
- iii. that further offences will result in more serious disciplinary action; and
- iv. the employee's right of appeal.

A first Written Warning will normally remain in force for 12 months but remain permanently on your Personnel Record. The First Written Warning stage of the procedure may be omitted if the offence is of a sufficiently serious nature.

5. FINAL WRITTEN WARNING

If further misconduct occurs within the time period specified in a First Written Warning, or if the misconduct is sufficiently serious, the employee will be given a Final Written Warning. A Final Written Warning will be issued by the Town Clerk (or in the case of the Town Clerk, nominated members of Personnel Committee) and will set out:

- i. the nature of the offence and the improvement required (if appropriate) and over what period;
- ii. the likely consequences of any further offence or a failure by the employee to improve his/her conduct to an acceptable standard;
- iii. that further offences will result in more serious disciplinary action up to and including dismissal; and
- iv. the employees right of appeal.

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Final Written Warnings may also be issued in circumstances where the misconduct does not amount to gross misconduct but is sufficiently serious enough to warrant only one written warning. A Final Written Warning will normally remain in force for 12 months but will remain permanently on your personnel records.

6. STANDARD COUNCIL DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

- 6.1 The Council will investigate the alleged misconduct and will establish the facts surrounding the complaint as necessary, taking into account the statements of any available witnesses.
- 6.2 The Council will set out in writing the alleged conduct or other circumstances which lead the Council to contemplate dismissing the employee or taking disciplinary action against the employee and the basis for the allegation and will send the employee a copy of the statement inviting the employee to attend a disciplinary meeting to discuss the matter. The employee will be provided with a reasonable opportunity to consider his or her response to the information provided in the statement before attending the meeting. The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting.
- 6.3 Disciplinary meetings will normally be convened within 10 working days of the Council sending the employee the written statement referred to in 6.2 above. The employee may be accompanied to any disciplinary meeting by a fellow employee or by a representative of a trade union. The Council will be represented by the employee's manager or Town Clerk, an advisor to the Council, or if the disciplinary action is against the Town Clerk, members of Personnel Committee.
- 6.4 If the time or date proposed for the meeting is inconvenient (either for the employee or for the Employee's companion, should he or she wish to be accompanied to the meeting pursuant to 6.3 above) the employee may ask to postpone the meeting by up to 5 working days.
- 6.5 The meeting may be adjourned to allow matters raised during the course of the meeting to be investigated, or to afford the Council's representative(s) time to consider their decision.
- 6.6 After the meeting the Council will inform the employee of their decision and any applicable sanction within 5 working days. The meeting may be reconvened for this purpose. The decision will be confirmed to the employee in writing.
- 6.7 If the employee wishes to appeal against the decision, he or she must notify the Council in writing within 5 days of receiving written notice of the decision.
- 6.8 If the employee notifies the Council that he or she wishes to appeal, the employee will be invited to attend a disciplinary appeal meeting before the Council's Appeals Committee. The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend that disciplinary appeal meeting. The employee has the right to be accompanied to a disciplinary appeal meeting by a fellow employee or by a representative of a trade union.
- 6.9 A disciplinary appeal meeting will normally be convened as soon as possible following notification that the employee wishes to appeal. If the meeting date is inconvenient for the employee or the employee's companion, he or she may ask to postpone the meeting by up to 5 working days.
- 6.10 The appeal hearing will:
 - Consider any new evidence the employee wishes to put forward or any new evidence from the manager.
 - Review the original disciplinary penalty.
 - Not increase the severity of the original penalty
- 6.11 The disciplinary appeal hearing will not necessarily take place before any disciplinary sanction imposed by the manager takes effect. If the employee's appeal is against dismissal and the appeal is successful, the employee will be reinstated, and continuity of employment will be preserved.
- 6.12 The hearing may be adjourned to allow matters raised during the course of the meeting to be investigated, or to afford the Council's representative time to consider a decision.

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6.13 After the disciplinary appeal hearing the Council's will inform the employee of the final decision within 5 working days. The hearing may be reconvened for this purpose. The decision will be confirmed to the employee in writing.

6.14 There is no further opportunity for the employee to appeal.

7. COUNCIL DISMISSAL PROCEDURE FOR USE IN GROSS MISCONDUCT

In the case of further misconduct within the time period specified in any Final Written Warning or if the misconduct is sufficiently serious and the Town Clerk [or Personnel Committee] deems it to be appropriate to contemplate the dismissal, demotion or suspension (without pay) of the employee the following formal disciplinary procedure will be followed.

7.2 The following list provides examples of conduct that will normally be regarded as Gross Misconduct. This list is not exhaustive:

1. Refusal or repeated failure by an employee to carry out his or her duties.
2. Falsification of reports, records, documents or other information (including expense claims), whether or not for personal gain
3. Unauthorised disclosure of confidential information.
4. Assault, physical violence or bullying whilst acting or purporting to act on behalf of the Town Council.
5. Insulting, indecent or offensive behaviour towards a fellow employee or any other person whilst acting or purporting to act on behalf of the Town Council.
6. Discrimination or harassment of any individual on the grounds of a relevant protected characteristic during the course of your employment.

7. Incapacity at work due to the influence of alcohol, unprescribed drugs, alcohol or any other substance.
8. Negligently or wilfully causing damage to Council property.
9. Deliberately accessing internet sites containing pornographic, offensive or obscene material.
10. Theft, unauthorised use or possession of Town Council property or fraud.
11. Serious insubordination.
12. Conduct bringing the Town Council into disrepute.
13. Serious breach of health and safety.
14. Any other conduct that from time to time is defined by the Town Council.

7.3 If an employee is accused of any Gross Misconduct, he or she may be suspended from work on full pay pending the outcome of an investigation into the alleged offence(s). Such a period of suspension will not normally exceed 20 working days unless there are exceptional circumstances.

7.4 The Council's representative will investigate the matter and will establish the facts surrounding the complaint as necessary, taking in to account the statements of any available witnesses. As part of that investigation the employee will be interviewed.

7.5 If the Council's representative believes that there is sufficient reason, following a disciplinary hearing, to consider that the employee is guilty of gross misconduct his or her employment will be terminated summarily without notice or pay in lieu of notice.

7.6 The Council's representative will send the employee a statement, setting out the allegations of misconduct that led to the employee's dismissal and the basis for thinking that the employee is guilty of that misconduct. The date on which the employment terminated will be confirmed to the employee and the employee may be reminded of any continuing obligations he or she may have following the termination of employment. This statement will also explain the employee's right to appeal against the decision.

7.7 If the employee wishes to appeal against the decision, he or she must notify the Council's representative in writing within 5 working days of receiving notice of the

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decision.

- 7.8 If the employee appeals, the Council's representative will invite the employee to attend a disciplinary appeal hearing convened by the Chair /Vice Chairman of the Appeals Committee. The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the hearing. The employee has the right to be accompanied to a disciplinary appeal hearing by a fellow employee or by a representative of a trade union.
- 7.9 Any disciplinary appeal hearing will normally be convened as soon as possible following the Council's representative receiving notice from the employee that he or she wishes to appeal. If the date of the meeting is inconvenient for the employee or his or her companion the employee may ask to postpone the meeting by up to 5 working days.
- 7.10 After the disciplinary appeal meeting the employee will be informed of the Council's final decision within 5 working days, the meeting may be reconvened for this purpose. The decision will be confirmed to the employee in writing.

8. GENERAL PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

- 8.1. Verbal Warnings and First Written Warnings will normally be issued by the employee's manager or Town Clerk. Final Warnings and dismissals will normally be carried out by the Town Clerk. Disciplinary proceedings raised under the standard Council disciplinary procedure will also normally be investigated and any meetings to discuss the disciplinary proceedings conducted by the employee's manager or Town Clerk.
- 8.2. Where disciplinary proceedings are instigated against the Town Clerk, Verbal Warnings and Written Warnings will be given by the Personnel Committee. Any investigations and any meetings will be carried out by the Council's Personnel Committee. Dismissal of the Town Clerk will be ratified by Council. Any disciplinary appeal meeting will be conducted by members Appeals Committee who do not sit on the Personnel Committee.

DUTY OF FIDELITY

All Council employees, regardless of their seniority or level of responsibility, have a duty to always act in the best interests of the Council. This includes devoting all time and attention to the proper performance of duties during working time; avoiding actions or inactions that may bring the name or reputation of the Council into disrepute; and not undertaking work, either personally or on behalf of someone else, that would compromise the Council's services.

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

As part of the Council's drive to improve quality and efficiency, employees will undergo an annual employee development review and may be given individual targets which reflect contributions to the Council's business plan objectives. The results may be used as part of the criteria for determining any incremental progression.

EMPLOYEE'S PROPERTY

The Town Council accepts no responsibility whatsoever for damage or loss to employees' property left on the Council's premises. The Town Council will, of course, take every reasonable step to recover lost property, but you are advised not to leave articles of value on the premises.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY/PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY

Under the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969, the Council is insured against liability for personal injury and/or disease sustained by its employees arising out of or in the course of their employment.

Professional Indemnity cover provides protection against breach of professional duty. The policy is designed to protect you against claims made by third parties. A comprehensive list of all insurances is held by the Council and can be inspected by any member of staff on request.

ENVIRONMENT

The Council is very aware of their legal and moral responsibilities to look after the local and global environment. As a result, they have in place an Environment Policy and operating procedures which jointly govern how this is done. All employees are expected to contribute to implementing these policies and procedures.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES & DIVERSITY

The Council is an Equal Opportunities employer. It is firmly committed to equal opportunities policies which aim to eliminate discrimination wherever it may exist on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation or marriage or civil partnership, in the recruitment, promotion and training or application of any employment conditions of its staff and in the provision of its services. The Town Council will be proactive on equality and review its achievements in this respect.

You should ensure you refer and fully comply with our Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy at all times.

Disciplinary action will be taken against an employee found to be unlawfully discriminatory to prospective or current employees, customers, or suppliers. The Council will also expect its contractors and partners not to discriminate and to be positive about equality.

FLEXIBLE WORKING

~~You are entitled to submit two requests of this nature in any 12 month period, however the second request cannot be made whilst the initial request is still being processed. Employees with at least 6 months continuous service are entitled to request a formal flexible working arrangement, on a permanent basis, in terms of hours, location and pattern of work. If you have not submitted an earlier application to work flexibly within the previous 12 months.~~

Employees are requested to submit a written application to the Town Clerk for consideration in consultation with the chair of the Personnel Sub-Committee to discuss the circumstances and effect on the Council. A decision can be appealed and will be heard by the Appeals Committee.

In addition to this statutory condition, the Council has a family friendly policy and will consider requests for flexible working sympathetically, where it does not disrupt the business in any of the following ways:

- burden of additional costs;
- detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand;
- inability to reorganise work among existing staff;
- inability to recruit additional staff;
- detrimental impact on quality;
- detrimental impact on performance;
- insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work;
- planned structural changes within the Council.

It is intended that this policy will prove beneficial to both the employee and the Council, and the hours which you work in any week will normally be agreed with your manager.

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

You have a responsibility to contribute to 'good housekeeping' and to help to maintain the tidiness and cleanliness of the workplace. In particular, you are responsible for tidying up after completing work and leaving your workstation in a clean condition and for the safe collection and storage of materials delivered to your order. Staff should always seek to optimise the use of resources and minimise waste e.g. paper, heat, light, power etc.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

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Where there is a grievance relating to any aspect of employment, the following procedure should be adopted.

Wherever possible, grievances should be taken up with the relevant manager, or Town Clerk informally before the formal Grievance Procedure is used.

1. The grievance should be raised verbally, or in writing, and headed "Formal Grievance" and sent to the Town Clerk. Where appropriate a meeting will be held to enable the employee to give full details. Sufficient time will then be allowed for the facts of the case to be considered, and the outcome notified to the employee.
2. The grievance will normally be considered by the Town Clerk, however if they are part of the grievance issue, or has made the grievance, this will be undertaken by the Chair/Vice Chair of the Personnel Committee.
3. The employee is entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or accredited trade union representative.
4. The decision will always be confirmed in writing. If the employee is not satisfied with the outcome, they will have the right to appeal.

HARASSMENT

The Council recognises the right of every employee to work in an atmosphere free of harassment and to complain about it should it occur. The Council agrees to take appropriate steps to promote such a workplace. It is against the policies of this Council for any employee to harass another employee in any way. Such conduct will not be tolerated. All employees will be expected to comply with the Council's comprehensive Dignity at Work Policy, included in this Handbook as Appendix 2. The Policy also explains how you can get help or make a formal complaint if you feel you are being harassed or just feeling uncomfortable.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Please make sure you read and understand the Council's Health and Safety Policy, and the organisation and arrangements for fulfilling that policy. Each employee will be given a copy. You must have regard for the safety and well-being of yourself and others at work. Please report all potential hazards, dangerous occurrences and accidents to your manager or the Town Clerk. Advice is available from the Council's nominated consultants if necessary. It is important that you co-operate with any investigations into accidents or dangerous occurrences.

You will be issued with personal protective equipment and clothing where this is appropriate to your duties. You are required to wear this as directed.

Accidents

If you are injured during the course of your work or are involved in a dangerous incident, report this to your manager or the Town Clerk as soon as possible. Please ensure that an entry is made in the Accident Book, which is kept on the premises.

Fire Instructions

You must familiarise yourself with the instructions displayed on the notice boards. Please also acquaint yourself with at least the two fire exits nearest to the area in which you are working. Regular Fire Tests/Drills will be carried out.

First Aid

During normal working hours first aid treatment is available from appointed first aiders. Please have treatment for any injury sustained at work, no matter how slight it may appear at first. Names of qualified first aiders within the Council will be displayed on the notice board. All treatment must be logged in the Accident Book.

Display Screen Equipment/Eye Tests

To meet the requirements of the Display Screen Equipment Regulations, the Council will provide a free

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eye test for all staff who use VDU equipment as a major part of their job role. It is the Council's intention to optimise the use and application of display screen equipment within the Council, whilst safeguarding the health, welfare and job satisfaction of those involved in using such equipment.

HOLIDAY ENTITLEMENT

Annual holiday entitlement

The Council's holiday year runs from 1st April to the following 31st March. Allow employees to carry forward up to 5 days holiday entitlement into the following leave year at the Town Clerk's discretion

During your first full holiday year of employment with the Council (unless you have previous continuous local government service), you are entitled to 25 days holiday. Your entitlement for the holiday year in which you join the Council is calculated on a pro rata basis i.e. 1/12th of entitlement for each complete month of service, rounded up to the nearest whole day.

After 12 months or more continuous service with the Council or previous local authority, your holiday entitlement will then be increased by one day for each complete year of service up to a maximum of 5 days additional holiday (maximum 30 days).

As a condition of the holiday entitlement, you may be required to use part of your annual leave entitlement to enable offices to stay closed for the whole of the Christmas period.

Holidays are paid at your current wage/salary for the appropriate days. All holidays and bank holidays are allowed on a pro rata basis for part time staff. In the case of casual employees, your rate is enhanced to include holiday pay which is clearly shown on your payslip.

Paid holiday entitlement will be reduced, pro rata, in any year when your total absence due to sickness or injury exceeds an aggregate of twelve weeks.

You must agree the dates of your holidays with your Manager in advance which must be authorised and entered on your Time off/ Extra Hours Record. Where too many employees require the same holiday period which if granted would impair the efficiency of the operation, management will grant holidays on the basis of first request, first granted.

Subject to the required notice of the holiday dates requested being given in the usual way (see the section on Holiday entitlement) you will normally be able to use your holiday entitlement to observe special religious holidays.

On leaving the Council, you will receive payment for any part of the accrued annual holiday entitlement not taken, and for which you would normally have been paid. If you have taken more than your accrued entitlement at the date of leaving, the excess will be deducted from salary or other monies due to you. In calculating accrued entitlement for this purpose, your employment ends on the day you cease to work.

Public & Bank holidays

You are entitled to the following public & Bank holidays with pay.

New Year's Day	Spring Bank Holiday Monday
Good Friday	Late Summer Bank Holiday Monday
Easter Monday	Christmas Day
May Day	Boxing Day

An alternative day will be designated where any of these days fall on a Saturday or Sunday, where Saturday or Sunday do not form part of the normal working week. Precise holiday dates will be published as soon as possible each year.

Please note, that part-time staff will be allocated these bank holidays on a pro rata basis.

Sickness during holidays

If you are absent on sick leave, you will continue to accrue your full statutory holiday entitlement

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(currently 5.6 working weeks). However, any contractual holiday entitlement over and above the minimum statutory holiday entitlement will not accrue during any paid or unpaid period of sick leave once you have been continuously absent for a period of one month.

This entitlement is subject to the following strict conditions:

- The total period of incapacity must be fully certificated by a qualified medical practitioner (where it exceeds seven days).
- You must contact your manager by telephone as soon as you know that there will be a period of incapacity during your holiday.
- You must submit a written request no later than 3 days after returning to work setting out how much of the holiday period was affected by sickness and the amount of leave that you wish to take at another time.

If you are ill or injured before the start of a period of planned holiday, your manager will consent to you postponing the holiday dates to another mutually agreed time. Any period of sickness absence will then be treated in accordance with the rules on sickness absence. You must submit a written request to postpone the planned holiday, and this must be accompanied by a letter from your doctor confirming that you are unfit, or is still likely to be unfit, to take the holiday.

Your request to take any replacement holiday must be in accordance with our rules on holiday requests above. We may require you to take all or part of your replacement holiday on particular days and in such circumstances we will provide reasonable notice.

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~~Your manager may require you to take all or part of your replacement holiday on particular days. The Town Council is not required to provide you with any minimum period of notice to do this but will endeavour to provide reasonable notice.~~

HOURS OF WORK

Your normal hours of work are stated in your Contract of Employment but are based on a standard week of 37 hours. You are expected to work flexibly in accordance with the demands of the job and your specific hours will be agreed by you with your Manager. The Council reserves the right to change working hours after the usual consultation process with staff.

The Town Clerk will be responsible for ensuring adequate cover is maintained for the Council's services during working hours.

The Town Clerk will determine the need for overtime, when it is to be worked and the employees required, taking into account the circumstances appertaining at the time. Except in the case of an emergency, you will be consulted on any overtime requirements by the Town Clerk and as much notice as is possible will be given within the demands of business.

Overtime must be authorised in advance by the Town Clerk or relevant manager. Eligible staff will normally be given time off in lieu, for over time, but may, at the discretion of the Town Clerk, be paid at overtime rates. The first half hour worked on any day will not be classed as overtime, but as "flexible working", and will not attract time off in lieu or overtime payment. No payment is made for travelling time where overtime is worked, except in the case of split shifts.

Employees who earn in excess of Scale Point 22 are not normally eligible for overtime payments, except at the discretion of the Council.

Overtime payments are made at the following rates:

Weekdays,	Time and a half
Saturdays -	Time and a half
Sundays & public holidays. -	Double time.

Time off in lieu will always be on a single time basis

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Part-time employees are entitled to these enhancements for weekdays only after 37 hours

The Working Time Regulations determine entitlements for working hours, breaks, rest and holidays. The following is a guide only to the provisions relevant to the Council.

- Weekly working time will be limited to an average of forty-eight hours calculated over a reference period of seventeen weeks.
- The reference period may be amended by a *relevant agreement* (for the definition, see below).
- Absences through sickness, holiday or maternity leave are excluded from the calculation, but absences for other reasons will serve to reduce the average working time.
- Workers may opt out of the weekly working time limit by individual written agreement, but they retain the right to opt back in by giving three months' notice. In the event of any individual opting-out, the employer will have to maintain a list of those who have opted-out.
- Adult workers will be entitled to a rest period of not less than eleven consecutive hours and workers under the age of eighteen to a rest period of not less than twelve consecutive hours in each period of twenty-four hours during which they work.
- Adult workers will be entitled to a rest period of not less than twenty-four hours in each seven day period or a rest period of not less than forty-eight hours in each fourteen-day period.
- Workers under the age of eighteen will be entitled to a rest period of two days (i.e. each day starting at midnight) in each seven day period.
- Adult workers will be entitled to a rest break when daily working time is more than six hours. The rest break may be fixed by a *relevant agreement*, but, if not, it shall be an uninterrupted break of at least twenty minutes.
- Workers under the age of eighteen will be entitled to a rest break of thirty minutes when daily working time is more than four and a half hours.
- There are no relevant agreements currently in force at the Council.
- A significant exclusion from application of the Regulations is for those who regulate their own working time, particularly managers. If a person's working time is genuinely determined by him/herself, then there is only a statutory entitlement to paid holidays and health assessment.
- Holidays, daily rest, weekly rest and daily breaks are only entitlements and not obligations. If a worker chooses not to take up any entitlement, there is no obligation on the employer to provide it.

IDENTITY DOCUMENTATION

Before you started work, the Town Council will have requested documentation from you proving your entitlement to work in the UK. The Town Council is required to check and to satisfy itself that you are the rightful holder of any document/s that you provide. All documents will be checked for the likeness of photographs, dates of birth being consistent with your appearance, expiry dates, stamps, endorsements, and names.

Photocopies of the document/relevant parts of the document will be kept on your personnel file. Depending on the particular documentation which you have provided prior to commencing your employment, the Town Council may be required to undertake follow-up checks of your documentation on an annual basis. If in such circumstances you are unable to provide original copies of the documentation required in terms of the relevant legislation, your employment may be terminated.

Should there be any time limit on your right to live and work in the UK, you must provide evidence of your continued right to live and work in the UK on or before the expiry date of your current permission.

Alternatively, we may ask the Home Office to check your right to work status and provide us with a Positive Verification Notice if: -

- you are unable to show your documents because of an outstanding appeal, review or application with the Home Office; or

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- you have an Application Registration Card; or
- you have a Certificate of Application that is less than 6 months old; or
- you are a Commonwealth citizen who started living in the UK before 1988.

You are required to advise us of any changes to your immigration status that may affect your right to work in the UK.

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INDUCTION

For new employees, induction training is carried out as soon as possible after a he/she commences employment, to accelerate their ability to do the job. The objectives of this training are to ensure that the new employee is:

- able to understand the Council's philosophy, hierarchy, organisation, and geography.
- introduced to immediate colleagues and other relevant employees.
- familiar with all the conditions which relate to his/her employment.

INFORMATION AND CONSULTATION

The Council is exempt from the provisions of the Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 2004, but nevertheless will provide employees with a level of Information and consultation. This will include all statutory notifications and the right to comment on changes to working conditions.

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

The Council has a very strong commitment to the principles of 'Investors in People' national standard and all its human resource development policies and procedures reflect this.

JOB DESCRIPTION

A job description has been prepared for each post, to give an accurate description of the main duties, responsibilities and relationship involved. It does not include every activity that might have to be done, but whatever is necessary to show the nature and purpose of the job.

A copy will be issued with the Contract of Employment.

JURY SERVICE

Employees are entitled to time off work to fulfil their obligations with regard to Jury Service. In the event of an employee being summoned to attend for Jury Service, they must notify the Town Clerk immediately on receipt of the Jury Summons, giving details of dates they are required to attend the Court.

In the event that an employee is retained on Jury Service for a prolonged period, the employee has an obligation to notify the Town Clerk and should keep in regular contact throughout the period.

Employees are expected to return to normal working immediately following their release from their duties. Employees are entitled to payment for this time off but should claim expenses from the Court to cover their costs, and also compensation for loss of earnings. These will be payable to the Council.

LITERATURE

You may display, with the permission of the Town Clerk, relevant literature on the premises.

MAKING A PROTECTED DISCLOSURE (Whistleblowing)

You must notify the Town Clerk immediately if you have knowledge of (or have reason to suspect) any criminal activity, theft, fraud, or other suspicious act taking place within or relating to our services. Furthermore, everyone has a responsibility to be alert to strangers and suspicious persons who appear to have no obvious reason for being on (or loitering near) Council events or premises.

Employees are entitled to specific rights relating to the disclosure of certain types of information (or whistleblowing). This protection applies in the following circumstances where the employee has reasonable belief that:

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- a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed;
- a person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which he or she is subject;
- a miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur;
- the health or safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered;
- the environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged; or
- information tending to show any matter falling within any one of the preceding paragraphs has been, is being or is likely to be deliberately concealed.

However, there will not be protection for the disclosure if the employee commits an offence by making the disclosure, or it is a disclosure in respect of which legal professional privilege would apply.

Qualifying Procedures

In order for the disclosure to be protected, the employee must make it by one of the following methods or procedures:

- to the employer, or legally responsible person or appropriate person authorised by the employee to receive disclosures;
- to a legal advisor;
- to a prescribed person (i.e. to a listed regulatory body, such as the Health and Safety Executive, the Audit Commission or the Environmental Agency).

In addition, disclosure is protected if it is to an individual unconnected with the organisation, such as the police or the media. In this case an employee will only be protected if;

- the matter has previously been raised with the employer or prescribed person, or it has not been so raised because the employee reasonably believes that he or she will be victimised;
- if there is no prescribed person, the employee has a reasonable belief that a complaint to the employer would result in evidence being concealed or destroyed;
- the information has already been disclosed to the employer or prescribed person;
- the information is serious enough to justify bypassing one of the other specified procedures;
- the disclosure is made in good faith, in the reasonable belief that the claims are substantially true, not for the employee's personal gain; and
- it is "reasonable in all the circumstances" to make the disclosure.

MATERNITY & PREGNANCY

1. INITIAL OBLIGATIONS/NOTIFICATION OF PREGNANCY

You are required to notify your Manager of the following at least 28 days before you want your maternity absence to begin and in order to meet the requirements of Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP).

- That you are pregnant.
- Of the expected week of childbirth
- Of the date you want your maternity leave to start. This cannot be earlier than the 11th week before the week baby is due.

Although the latest you can leave it is 28 days before you want your absence to begin, it is advisable to inform your Line Manager as early as you are able, to ensure your Health and Safety rights are implemented and so that you can take your entitlement to time off for ante natal care. It is perfectly acceptable to inform your line manager of the pregnancy as early as you want, to take advantage of your rights, but not put your official written notification in until at least 28 days before wishing to commence maternity leave.

For the Council's part we will respond to your notification within 28 days, advising of your return to work date, along with your maternity pay entitlements. If you take your full entitlement to maternity leave your return to work will be 52 weeks from the start of your leave.

2. ANTE-NATAL CARE

Under the terms and conditions governing your employment you are entitled to paid time off for ante-natal care so long as you can show:

- You are pregnant

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- That the appointment was made on the advice of a GP, Registered Midwife or Consultant.
- That the purpose of the appointment is to receive antenatal care.

You are therefore asked to produce a certificate from your GP, Midwife or Consultant with evidence of appointments before being granted time off for the first time. Time off must be granted for any appointment that is made on medical grounds and, therefore, will obviously cover appointments for scans and tests.

Ante-natal care includes not only medical examinations but also relaxation classes and parent craft classes if recommended by your doctor or midwife. If you have a qualifying relationship with a pregnant woman, you will be entitled to take unpaid time off to accompany the pregnant woman on up to two antenatal appointments.

3. MATERNITY LEAVE ENTITLEMENT

- All employees are entitled to maternity leave of 52 weeks regardless of service. 26 weeks known as ordinary maternity leave and 26 weeks known as additional maternity leave.
- Maternity leave will start automatically before the chosen start date in two situations:
 1. Trigger by premature birth – this will start the maternity leave on the day after the date of birth.
 2. Trigger by sickness –if you are absent from work due to a pregnancy related reason after the beginning of the fourth week before the expected week of confinement (EWC), but before the date you have notified as your start date, the maternity leave begins automatically on the day after the first day of absence
- Maternity leave shall commence no earlier than 11 weeks before the week baby is due or from the time of childbirth if that is earlier. The week baby is due always starts with a Sunday, for example if baby was expected on Tuesday 30th June, then the week baby is due would be from Sunday 28th June to Saturday 3rd July.

4. MATERNITY PAY

a) If you have at least one year's continuous service at the 11th week before the week the baby is due, you will be entitled to the following:

Weeks 1-6 inclusive	9/10 of a week's pay (offset against payments made by way of Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)*
Weeks 7 –18 inclusive	where you have declared in writing you intend to return to work you will receive half pay without deduction except to the extent that the half pay plus SMP or Maternity Allowance (MA) exceeds full pay. This half pay is paid on the understanding that you will return to local authority employment for at least 3 months. If you are not intending to return you will receive your entitlement to SMP only. If you receive the half pay and do not return, then you must repay the Occupational Maternity Pay to the Council. SMP does not have to be repaid.
Weeks 19-39 inclusive	For the remaining 21 weeks you will receive your Entitlement to SMP.

- SMP is 90% of average earnings for the first 6 weeks, then it is in accordance with statutory payments and remains a taxable payment. If you are in receipt of an honorarium your maternity pay will be based on your substantive grade, and not the rate of your honorarium, as you will not be covering work of a higher grade during your maternity leave.

b) If you have less than 1 year's continuous service at the 11th week before the week baby is due you will receive your entitlement to SMP, which will be as follows:

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Weeks 1-6 inclusive	6 weeks at 9/10 of average pay.
Weeks 7-39 inclusive	SMP or 90% of average pay whichever is the lower.

In order to receive this, you must have 26 weeks service by the end of the 15th week before the week baby is due and your average earnings in the 8 weeks prior to this must equal the lower earnings limit.

If you do not meet this criterion then Payroll Services will issue you with an SMP1 form so that you may be able to claim Maternity Allowance from the Benefits Agency.

Please note that if your baby is born early, you may be overpaid, and this will be recovered from you.

5. PENSION

a) During any period of unpaid maternity/adoption leave you will not make any contributions. However, at the end of the maternity or adoption leave period you can, within 30 days elect to pay contributions for this unpaid period to allow it to count as pensionable service.

6. RIGHT TO RETURN

(a) Subject to (b) to return to the job in which she was employed under her original contract of employment and on terms and conditions not less favourable than those, which would have been applicable to her if she had not been absent. "Job", for this purpose, means the nature of the work, which she is employed to do, and the capacity and place in which she is so employed.

(b) Where it is not practicable by reason of redundancy for the authority to permit her to return to work in her job as defined in (a) above the employee shall be entitled to be offered a suitable alternative vacancy where one exists, provided that the work to be done in that post is suitable to her and appropriate to the circumstances, and that the capacity and place in which she is to be employed and her terms and conditions of employment are not substantially less favourable to her than if she had been able to return in the job in which she was originally employed.

(c) Suitable alternative employment may also be offered if exceptional circumstances other than redundancy (e.g. a general reorganisation), which would have occurred if the employee had not been absent, necessitate a change in the job in which she was employed prior to her absence. The work to be done should be suitable to her and appropriate to the circumstances and the capacity and place in which she is to be employed and her terms and conditions of employment should not be less favourable to her than if she had been able to return to the job in which she was originally employed.

(d) Exercise of the Rights to Early Return to Work

All employees shall notify the authority in writing 21 days before the day on which she proposes to return if this is before the end of the maternity leave period. The authority may postpone her return to work until a date not more than 21 days after the notified date of return. To do this the authority's notification shall be conveyed to the officer before the notified date of return and shall give the reasons for postponing her return until the later date.

(e) Where an employee is unable to return on the expected day due to sickness, the absence will be covered by the sickness absence policy in the normal way. For delays due to industrial action, work will be resumed as soon as reasonable.

If your baby is due after 3rd April 2011 you have the choice to transfer up to six months maternity leave to the child's father, should you wish to, which can be taken by the father once the mother has returned to work.

Further information on this is available by following the links on www.direct.gov.uk Or accessing the Paternity Leave guide on the intranet.

6. RELATIONSHIP WITH SICKNESS AND ANNUAL LEAVE/BANK HOLIDAYS

- (a) Maternity leave will not be treated as sick leave and will not therefore be taken into account for the calculation of the period of entitlement of sickness leave.
- (b) Ordinary and additional maternity leave is regarded as continuous service for the purpose of sickness and maternity schemes and annual leave. Annual leave continues to accrue during both ordinary and additional maternity leave.
- (c) Bank holidays that fall within the 26 weeks ordinary maternity leave and 26 weeks additional maternity leave will continue to accrue, and a substitute day will be provided.

8. RIGHT TO REQUEST PART TIME/CHANGED HOURS

If and when you decide to return to work after maternity leave you have the right to request changed hours if you wish, either on a temporary or permanent basis. The Council has an obligation to consider your request, and to look at whether this can be accommodated within your service area/job.

In order for full consideration to be given to any request, you should notify your Line Manager of your wishes at least 4 weeks before you intend to return. The right to request part time / changed hours does not equate to a right to have this request granted, as this depends upon the nature of your work and your job, however every attempt will be made to reach a mutually acceptable arrangement before you return to work. The Council has the right to delay your return from maternity leave for up to 28 days in order to make the necessary arrangements to accommodate this, so it is recommended that you make any such request as soon as you are able.

9. ANNUAL LEAVE DURING MATERNITY LEAVE

During the period of your maternity leave, whether paid or unpaid, you will accrue holiday entitlement for the period of absence. You may wish to consider taking any accrued holiday leave as part of your total period of absence before you return to work. The benefit to you of doing this will depend on when you are planning to start and finish your maternity leave. Please discuss this with the Town Clerk, who can discuss the options with you. You should be aware that you will not normally be allowed to carry over more than the 5 days allowed for in the Holiday and other Leave policy into any subsequent leave year. You should also be aware that if you do not return to work, or return on reduced hours, your holiday entitlement will be reduced on a pro-rata basis and may necessitate the recovery of an overpayment.

10. DEFINITIONS

- (a) A Week's Pay – Please liaise with the Town Clerk if you have a query in relation to the definition of a week's pay.
- (b) Childbirth - Childbirth means the live birth or a stillbirth after a pregnancy lasting at least 24 weeks.
- (c) Nothing in the above provisions shall be construed as providing rights less favourable than statutory rights.

11. MATERNITY SUPPORT LEAVE

Maternity support leave of 5 days with pay shall be granted to the child's father or the partner of an expectant mother at or around the time of birth. Alternatively leave may be granted to a sole carer who is nominated by the mother in the long-term absence of the child's father to provide full time care and assistance at or around the time of birth. Evidence of sole caring responsibility may be requested.

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Maternity Support Leave must be taken within 56 days of the date of birth. In addition, providing the employee has 26 weeks continuous service by the end of the 15th week before the week baby due they are entitled to a second week leave paid at the current statutory paternity rate.

If the baby is born early, leave can be taken at any time between the actual date of birth and the end of the 8 week period, running from the Sunday of the week the baby was originally due.

12. PARENTAL LEAVE

See section "Parental Leave" below.

13. PATERNITY LEAVE

See section "paternity Leave" below

14. KEEPING IN TOUCH DAYS

It may be that you want to keep in touch with new working arrangements, or any other changes during your maternity leave. Maternity leave regulations provide that you will be able to do 10 days work during your maternity leave without bringing your maternity leave to an end. Work is defined as any work done under the contract of employment and may include training or any activity undertaken for the purposes of keeping in touch with the workplace. There is no obligation for you to work during your maternity leave, and likewise you cannot insist that you are given work to do. You will continue to receive your SMP for any week in which you do work, and additional payment will be subject to agreement with the Town Clerk prior to any day worked.

Where an employee works on a KIT day during the ordinary maternity or adoption leave period, both the employee and the employer will pay pension contributions based on the pay the employee receives for that day.

N.B. Maternity leave will not be extended due to the fact that work has been carried out during the maternity leave period.

15. REASONABLE CONTACT

The maternity regulations make it clear that an employer and employee are allowed to make reasonable contact during maternity leave to discuss such issues as the return to work. This would not constitute 'work' and would not therefore count towards the 10 Keeping In Touch Days. The Regulations specifically provide that such contact will not bring the maternity leave period to an end.

In addition, the Council will also ensure that an employee is kept informed of other issues, such as job vacancies, significant workplace developments and training opportunities.

16. ESSENTIAL USER CAR ALLOWANCE

Essential car user allowance will be paid for Ordinary Maternity Leave and Additional Maternity Leave periods where applicable.

MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

If you are or have been unable to carry out your duties as a consequence of illness or injury, you may be required to have an examination by a medical practitioner nominated by the Council. Any expense incurred will be met by the Council and you will be required to provide a copy of the resulting medical report.

Should this requirement be implemented, you will be consulted in advance and given full reasons as to why it is required.

ACCESS TO MEDICAL REPORTS

In certain circumstances it may be necessary for the Council to obtain a Medical Report from an employee's Doctor/Specialist in order to establish:

- Reason for absence.

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- Duration of absence.
- When the employee will be able to return to work.
- What, if any, treatment is being prescribed.
- Whether the problem will recur.
- Whether the employee can do all the duties of the job.

The above will enable the Council to plan workloads. It is in the interests of both the employee and the Council to establish the employee's ability to work with the benefit of expert medical opinion.

Employees have certain rights under the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 which are as follows:

- Employees may withhold consent to the report being sought.
- Employees can request to see the report prior to it being forwarded to the Town Clerk
- If employees indicate that they wish to see the report in advance the Council will inform the employee when the Doctor/Specialist is written to and he/she will be informed that the employee wishes to see the report. Employees then have 21 days to contact the Doctor/Specialist regarding arrangements to see the report.
- Should the employee indicate that he/she does not wish to see the report prior to the Council the employee has the right to write to the Doctor within 21 days of the report having been received. It is our policy to send employees a copy of the report in any event prior to a meeting being arranged to discuss the content.
- Employees have the right to ask the Doctor/Specialist for a copy of the report for up to 6 months after it has been supplied. There may be a charge for this. The Doctor/Specialist cannot submit the report to the Council without the employee's consent.
- Employees may ask the Doctor/Specialist to amend any part of the report which is considered by the employee to be incorrect or misleading. If the Doctor/Specialist is not in agreement the employee may attach a statement of his/her views with the report.
- If the Doctor/Specialist thinks the employee or others would be harmed by the report or any part of the report it can be withheld from the employee.

The Council would stress that no decision will be made that could affect an individual's employment without full consultation with that individual and careful consideration of all the circumstances. Where the Council wishes to obtain a medical report, employees will be asked for their written consent.

MEDICAL SCREENING

Necessary paid time off will be granted for the purpose of cancer screening.

OTHER EMPLOYMENT

You must not become engaged or concerned in any other business in which your duties may conflict with the interests of the Council, without prior permission from the Town Clerk unless you are engaged on a zero hours basis. You must not become engaged in any secondary occupation that may interfere with your work. Officers earning in excess of Scale Point 22 must not be otherwise employed without the authority of the Town Clerk. The Town Clerk must obtain authority from Council before undertaking other employment.

PARENTAL LEAVE

Employees are entitled to statutory, unpaid parental leave for the purpose of caring for a child if they are a parent of a child born or placed for adoption, on or after 15 December 1999, or of a child entitled to a disability living allowance. The employee must have one years' service to qualify.

There are a number of statutory conditions which apply. The right to unpaid Parental Leave has been increased from 13 to 18 weeks per child and can be taken in blocks of up to 4 weeks. This right is available up to the child's 18th birthday.

PART TIME WORKERS

The Council will treat part time workers no less favourably than a full-time worker on the grounds that a worker is part-time.

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A part-time worker is someone who is paid according to the time worked and is not identifiable as a full-time worker having regard to the Council's custom and practice or to the Contract of Employment. Any comparison is with someone who is a 'comparable full-time worker', working at the same establishment and doing work which is the same or at least similar, and who has broadly similar levels of qualifications, skills and experience; comparison is also with a person working under the same type of contract (i.e. a part-time casual worker may have a different type of contract to a full-time permanent worker).

In general, part-time workers are entitled to pay and benefits on a pro-rata basis which gives part-time workers the right to pay and benefits proportionate to those of full-time workers. This will normally mean the same (hourly) rate of pay as a comparable full-time worker, however, rates of pay for overtime will be payable at the same rate as comparable full-time workers only after the part-time worker has worked more than the normal full-time hours.

PATERNITY LEAVE

If your wife, civil partner or partner gives birth to a child you are entitled to two weeks' paternity leave provided that you have 26 weeks' continuous service with us by the week that falls 15 weeks before the week in which the child is expected.

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Paternity leave is also available to you if a child is matched or placed with you for adoption provided that you have 26 weeks' continuous service ending with the week in which you or your Partner are notified by an adoption agency of being matched with a child. Either the adoptive father or the adoptive mother may take paternity leave where the other adoptive parent has elected to take adoption leave.

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Your paternity leave can be taken in a single block of two consecutive weeks, or split into one, or two, one-week blocks.

You are able to take your paternity leave at any point in the first year (52 weeks) after the birth or adoption of your child.

~~Fathers of new born children, employees married to or partners of the child's mother or the partner of those adopting children are entitled to one period of leave off work, with Statutory Maternity pay, of either one week or two consecutive weeks to care for the child or support the child's mother (or the person with whom the child is placed for adoption).~~

Statutory Paternity Pay will be at the same rate as Standard Maternity Pay (or 90% of average earnings if this is less). ~~To qualify employees must have been employed for at least 26 weeks in local government.~~

Your paternity rights will be in accordance with the current relevant statutory regulations. Further information regarding the procedures to be followed and your entitlements are available from the Town Clerk.

PAY POLICY

By adopting the Green Book, the Council will determine pay according to current pay scales. Actual scale points are based on job content, responsibility, qualifications and experience.

Pay Scales are reviewed annually in April through national negotiation.

Employees may be appointed to a specific scale point (Spot Salary) or to a scale. In the latter case they may progress through a series of annual increments until reaching the highest point of their scale. The annual increment will be subject to the annual Employee Development Review and will not be automatic.

Accelerated increments within the grade may be given on the grounds of exceptional merit or ability or on the post-holder gaining a qualification which is considered by the Council to be beneficial to the role of the post.

PAYMENT OF SALARIES/WAGES

Salaries are paid by credit transfer to the bank or building society of your choice normally on the fifteenth day of each calendar month.

You will be given an itemised statement recording your gross salary, deductions and the net amount. Charity deductions will be made on request.

PENSIONS

The Pensions Act 2008 requires the Council to enrol "eligible job holders" automatically into a qualifying pension scheme. An "eligible job holder" is aged between 22 and state pension age and currently (2019) has earnings above £10,000 p.a. They are required to contribute to the scheme. They can voluntarily opt out after being enrolled but have the right to re-join. The Council must again auto enrol the eligible person every 3 years.

"Non-eligible jobholders" who are not eligible for auto enrolment, can choose to opt into a qualifying scheme. They are aged 16-74 with qualifying earnings currently (2016) below £10,000 p.a. but greater than £6144 p.a. Employees aged 16-21 or between state age and 74 with earnings above £10,000 p.a. can simply opt in.

"Entitled workers", those aged 16-74 and currently (2019) earning less than £6136 p.a. are entitled by law to require an employer to join them in at least a non-contributory scheme.

The Council operates a local authority pension scheme as a standard condition of employment which is open to all employees (whatever their status under the 2008 Act) after they have completed 3 months of any probation period. The Cheshire Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is Crewe Town Council's nominated qualifying scheme.

If you are auto enrolled or choose to join the Cheshire Local Government Pension Scheme, the Council will pay into the Scheme, the Employer contribution. You will then be required to pay the employee contribution which currently ranges from 5.5% to 8.5% depending on full time equivalent salary.

Further information is available from the Town Clerk.

Where an employee has a contractual condition under a previous policy, that the Council will contribute to a pension scheme of his or her choice, this will be honoured as long as it is allowed under the current legislation.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Town Council will develop a performance culture with targets set for the Organisation as a whole or teams in the business plan. Employees will undergo an annual employee development review and will be given individual targets which reflect contributions to the business plan objectives. Regular performance monitoring will be undertaken.

PERSONAL DETAILS

The Town Council needs to keep up-to-date information on your home address and telephone number, together with the name, address, and telephone number of your next of kin (or other such person) for emergency contact purposes. Please inform the Town Clerk in writing of any changes of the above to personal details.

On the commencement of your employment, the Town Council will create a personnel file containing documents, letters, etc. relating to your employment. The Town Council holds personal data to ensure compliance with record keeping obligations and for the purpose of personnel administration. All personal data will be retained by in a manual or computerised form. The Town Council may use the information to contact you when required. Such contact may require to be made outside your normal working hours.

The Town Council will respect the confidentiality of any personal information that it keeps and comply with current data protection rules. Full details are contained in the Privacy notice which is given to you.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

In your appearance as well as in your behaviour, you should regard yourself as an ambassador for the Council and dress in clothing that is appropriate for your duties. The Council do not currently have a dress code however they reserve the right to introduce one, if appropriate to project a particular image of the Council, for example receptionists.

All employees are required to be neat and tidy in appearance. If you have direct contact with customers or members of the public, you must look smart.

If you are required to wear specific items of clothing, hairstyles, or jewellery in accordance with your ethnic background or faith, your needs will be accommodated where possible and practicable.

The Council reserves the right to insist that you do not wear particular items of clothing or jewellery which it believes may cause offence to customers, suppliers, or other employees or which may pose a risk to the health and safety of any person.

The Council will enforce these rules having regard to the differences for male, female, and transgender employees.

If the Town Council decides to introduce security ID badge or name badges you will be expected to wear them at all times so that they are clearly visible.

PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA

Data protection legislation regulates the way in which certain data about employees, both in paper and electronic form, is held and used. The Council will handle all personal data in accordance with its Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice which is given to you.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

A person specification has been prepared for each post, to set out the personal characteristics and experience likely to be required for a person to undertake the role. A copy will be issued with the Contract of Employment and job description.

PRIVATE TRADING

Private trading on the Council's or customers premises is not allowed.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

If you are new to local government, you are subject to a probationary period of up to six months during which time your performance and ability will be assessed. At the end of the period, and subject to a satisfactory report by your line manager, your probation period will have been fulfilled and your employment confirmed.

If your performance has not met expectations during the probationary period, the Council may extend the probationary period with an action plan being agreed. If ultimately performance remains unsatisfactory at the end of such extension your employment will not be confirmed, and your employment terminated.

PUBLIC DUTIES

Employees who hold certain public positions have the right to reasonable time off with pay during working hours to perform duties associated with these positions.

Where an allowance is claimable for loss of earnings, the employee must claim and pay the allowance to the Council.

Employees holding such positions are encouraged to discuss their position with the Town Clerk so that suitable arrangements can be made.

QUALITY POLICY

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The Council has a commitment to quality services and has adopted a Quality Policy. It may adopt an integrated quality management system as an aid to encourage and assist continuous improvement within the Council. It is intended to help develop a quality culture within the Organisation, and to equip it to move into the future with confidence.

The Quality procedures should be adhered to by staff at all times. If you believe they can be improved, do not ignore them, talk to your manager about changing them. Remember-Quality can only be improved with your help.

The Council have also determined to gain and maintain accreditation under the Local Council Award Scheme.

RANDOM AND SPECIFIC CHECKS

The Town Council may require you to submit to a personal search and/or a search of all your baggage, personal items, lockers, car etc., at any time while you are on Town Council premises or engaged on Town Council business. Searches may be required to protect both the Town Council and our employees from illegal activities such as:

- any theft of Town Council property or property belonging to another employee or third party.
- the possession or supply of illegal substances.

A request to carry out a search does not indicate any suspicion of wrongdoing; searches will normally be carried out at random. However, the Town Council reserves the right to stop and search you when there is a reasonable suspicion that you may have committed an illegal act.

If you are found to be in unauthorised possession of Town Council property, or property belonging to another employee or other third party you will be suspended on full pay and the matter will be the subject of further investigation. This may lead to serious disciplinary action including dismissal and you may also be reported to the police.

If you unreasonably refuse to submit to a search in accordance with these rules you will be subject to disciplinary action which could result in your dismissal. Please be assured that the Town Council will not resort to searches unless it is essential.

RECRUITMENT

The Council believes that it is important to recruit the right person to any vacancy, be it a new job or a replacement for an existing position. It will always make clear the qualities and experience it is looking for and will recruit in accordance with its Personnel Procedures.

The Council will rigidly apply its equality policies. Where appropriate existing employees will be encouraged to apply for other positions within the Council.

REDUNDANCY/REDEPLOYMENT POLICY

Introduction

This procedure will apply to all employees of the Council. It sets out the overall approach to be adopted should the need arise for redundancies within the Council.

General Principles

It is the Council's policy to provide to the best of its ability, security of employment for all its employees. However, it is recognised that over time, changes in the political environment, funding regimes and other operational requirements may impact on the staff resource required to deliver organisational objectives. It is the agreed aim of the Council to maintain operational efficiency and effectiveness to help safeguard the future employment of all its employees. Where a redundancy situation is anticipated all alternatives will be explored for any potential surplus staff.

If after exhausting all alternatives, redundancy is unavoidable the Council will endeavour to handle

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such redundancy in a consistent, objective, and sympathetic manner to minimise hardship for the employees concerned. The Council will rigidly apply its equal opportunity policies.

Consultation

Where the Council is considering redundancies or a reorganisation which is likely to impact on its workforce it will consult at the earliest opportunity. Such consultation will be undertaken with a view to reaching agreement and will be aimed at avoiding redundancies. All relevant information will be made available to the staff to support this process, with a reasonable timescale agreed to enable proper consideration to take place.

Selection Criteria

The Town Council will consult with the staff and seek to agree the criteria to be used for staff selection. When all avenues, including voluntary redundancy and early retirement have been exhausted and it is clear that compulsory redundancy is inevitable, the Town Council will agree the criteria to be used for staff selection.

- Specialism
- Functional area of work i.e. business unit
- Other relevant factors

The above selection definition would then be extended, and the criteria may include:

- Experience, skills, or qualifications (or a combination of these) to ensure the retention of a balanced staff profile to meet the future objectives of the business.
- Individual ability linked to a specialist business objective.
- Standard work performance supported by objective evidence which would include the performance management system
- Attendance history or disciplinary records

In respect of each criterion for each business unit there will be a definition of what is being measured. Each criterion will have a range of points addressing an individual's competence and the criteria will be weighted in line with their importance against each other and also against the relevant job. The weighting will be applied consistently for each business unit but may vary for different units in the same round of redundancy.

Whatever selection criteria are chosen, they will be objective and consistently applied. The actual selection will be in line with the criteria and cover all individuals within the relevant unit affected by the redundancy.

Action to Avoid/Minimise Compulsory Redundancy

All measures would be considered to minimise the need for compulsory redundancy. This would include:

- Planning and managing change as far into the future as possible.
 - Minimising external recruitment where staff can be retained or redeployed to fill existing vacancies or vacancies that are expected to arise in the short term.
 - Reducing or eliminating overtime.
 - The termination of temporary employees or contract staff where this would not impact on the achievement of business objectives.
- Seeking application for early retirement or voluntary redundancy before declaring compulsory redundancy.

Redeployment

For those members of staff affected by restructuring or redundancy, the Council is committed where possible, to redeploying them into other business areas.

A surplus employee, who is considered suitable, may be offered a higher or lower paid position. Full details of such opportunities will be given to the employee to enable them to decide whether or not the alternative position is acceptable.

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Where a higher paid position is accepted the salary for that post will apply.

Where an employee accepts an alternative position that is lower paid the following protection of salary arrangements will apply:

The salary for the lower paid position will be established and the difference between that and the old salary calculated.

- Fifty percent of this difference is the protected amount.
- On taking up a new position the salary will be enhanced by the protected amount for one year.
- On the first anniversary of taking up the new job the protected amount will be reduced to 40% of the difference.
- On the second anniversary of taking up the new job the protected amount will be reduced to 20% of the difference.
- On the third anniversary of taking up the new job the protected amount will be extinguished.

During the above three-year period the salary applicable to the new role will be reviewed in the normal way subject to satisfactory performance.

Where redeployment within the Council occurs a trial period of 4 weeks will apply.

When retraining is to take place as part of the redeployment, the trial period may be for a longer period. In these circumstances there will be a written training plan setting out the arrangements and stating the length of the trial period; this will be issued before the start of the trial period. Such trial periods are to allow both the individual and the Council to decide whether the alternative employment is mutually satisfactory. If, during the trial period, the job is not satisfactory to the employee or the job performance is not to the Council's standard, the employee will be made redundant. If the trial period is completed successfully, a full performance review will be undertaken 6 months after taking up the new post.

The individual's right to redundancy payment will not be affected by any trial period of redeployment unless dismissal occurred due to a reason unconnected with the redundancy in which case the entitlement would be lost.

Period of Notice

The period of notice for redundant staff will not be less than 30 days and where it is not possible to give such notice affected staff will be given pay in lieu of notice.

Appeals

Employees may appeal against their selection for redundancy. Appeals must be in writing setting out the detailed grounds of appeal. Such appeals will be heard by Members of the Appeals Committee.

Assistance to Staff

The Council will arrange support for redundant staff to assist them in finding alternative employment. This could include:

- Discussing future career plans
- Completion of CV's
- Interview skills
- Other guidance/support

Staff under notice of redundancy will be allowed reasonable time off on full pay to attend interviews or arrange training to enhance their future prospects.

Compensation

Redundancy compensation terms for those members of staff who are made redundant will be in accordance with the statutory redundancy calculator, increased to the actual weeks' pay rather than the statutory minimum. No further enhancements will be made.

REFERENCES

When you have been made a formal offer of employment, the Council will take up references from your previous employers. Any offer of employment is conditional upon satisfactory references being obtained.

Should it subsequently come to our notice that you have given inaccurate information, we may reconsider your employment. We will not accept references given to us directly by an employee or potential employee.

You may request to see a copy of a reference from a previous employer, but the Council may refuse to let the employee see the reference if, in doing so, it would disclose information about another individual who can be identified from the information or can be identified as a source of the information. It will be acceptable to let the employee see the reference if the third party has consented to the disclosure or it is otherwise reasonable in the circumstances to disclose the information.

When you leave the Council or apply for another job, your manager will normally give you a reference on behalf of the Council. This will be accurate and truthful as required by law. You will not be given an "open" reference, it will always be addressed to a particular person. References that are given by an employer, are exempt from the subject access provisions of the Data Protection legislation and therefore it is at the manager's discretion whether or not you are shown a copy of the reference.

RETIREMENT

The Council do not have a default retirement age and employees are welcome to remain with the Council beyond the state retirement age. Any termination of employment by the Council will not be related to age.

However, any employee retains the right to retire earlier if they so wish. The Council will be pleased to advise on any matter relating to retirement and help you make any adjustments. In certain cases, depending on circumstances and length of service, pension may be accessible before state retirement age.

SMOKE FREE POLICY

It is the policy of Crewe Town Council that smoking is not permitted in any part of its premises, entrances, or grounds, or in its vehicles. This Policy applies to all employees, members, consultants, customers, visitors, and contractors, whom it is intended to benefit.

The Council have decided that E-cigarettes (battery powered devices designed to replicate smoking behaviour without the use of tobacco which turn nicotine, flavour and other chemicals into a vapour that is inhaled by the user) are also prohibited.

The Council will not provide smoking areas on its premises and employees will not be given breaks for smoking during working hours. The Council will help employees who wish to stop smoking through approved NHS services and may give time off to attend such services by arrangement with management.

Overall responsibility for policy implementation rests with the Town Clerk, however all staff are obliged to adhere to and support the implementation of the policy.

Appropriate 'no-smoking' signs will be clearly displayed at the entrance to and within premises and in all vehicles.

STATUTORY SICK PAY

Certain employees are entitled to receive pay when they are absent from work due to sickness. This is known as Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) and is paid out and administered by employers on behalf of the State.

There are many requirements and conditions attached to payment of SSP both for the employee and the employer. If employees are to receive their entitlement, the following rules and procedures together

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with those set out in the procedure for Absence Notification, must be adhered to.

1. Notification

SSP cannot be paid to an employee unless and until the following written evidence is supplied:

- first 7 days of absence - a Self-Certification form, absence record form or Doctor's Certificate
- Thereafter - Doctor's Fit Certificate.

It is important to remember that no payment can be made for any intervals of sickness absence not covered by a certificate.

2 When SSP is Payable

SSP is normally only paid for a day or days worked. For example, if an employee works Monday to Friday and not at weekends, SSP will only apply to those 5 days.

In some cases, SSP can be paid when an employee is ill whilst on holiday -including bank/public holidays.

Employers cannot pay SSP for the first 3 days of an employee's sickness. Therefore, payment starts on the 4th day, and continues for as long as the employee is absent up to a maximum of 28 weeks in anyone period of sickness. However, if an employee is absent due to sickness within 8 weeks of a previous period of sickness and providing both periods of absence are for 4 days or more (calendar days), SSP will be paid from the start of the second period of absence.

SSP is paid in exactly the same way as normal earnings, although the employee's average earnings must be over the National Insurance Lower Earnings Limit to qualify for SSP.

3 When SSP is not payable

SSP is not payable in certain circumstances, the principal ones being:

- once employment has terminated
- where Statutory Maternity Pay is being paid

IMPORTANT

Any employee who has been absent due to sickness and is found not to have been genuinely ill, will be subject to disciplinary action which could include dismissal.

TIMEKEEPING

Employees are responsible for attending punctually for work in accordance with the hours defined within the Written Particulars of Main Terms of Employment.

Employees may not leave work prior to their normal finishing time without permission from their manager. In the event of an employee requiring time away from work during the normal working period, he/she must report to his/her manager upon leaving and returning to work.

Persistent lateness will be considered to be a breach of procedures and may result in disciplinary action. Lateness for work may result in pay being reduced accordingly.

TELEPHONE CALLS

You are requested to restrict personal telephone call to those which are essential and cannot be made outside working hours. The use of the Council's telephone is restricted to cases of emergency and local calls. International calls and premier rate calls (0900, 118, 070) should not be made without the specific consent of the Town Clerk.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Should you wish to terminate your employment, you must give the appropriate written notice stating the date you wish to leave in line with the conditions of your Contract of Employment. You will normally be expected to work your period of notice, but this may be waived or reduced at the discretion of the Council.

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You must ensure that any property issued to you by the Council is returned.

TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP

The Council does not recognise any trade union for collective bargaining purposes but does subscribe to the National Joint Council for local government for national negotiations.

Employees have the right to belong to or take part in the activities of any independent trade union. They also have the right not to be a member of a trade union or a particular trade union.

The Council will not discriminate against any person because they choose not to be a trade union member.

Employees only have the right to reasonable time off to take part in trade union activities or to carry out trade union duties if that trade union is recognised by their employer for collective bargaining purposes.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Town Council acknowledges the essential need to provide appropriate and systematic training and development for our employees. All employees will be encouraged to maximise their potential to achieve job satisfaction and reach the highest standard of efficiency and competence.

The Council has developed a comprehensive Training and Development Policy which will be available to all employees. This will be supported by an annual programme of training priorities.

TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE (ON COUNCIL BUSINESS)

1. Subsistence

No flat rate payment for subsistence will be made i.e. no payment where staff are out of the office for more than 5 to 10 hours and no overnight allowance. Reasonable meal/entertainment expenses incurred on Town Council business will be reimbursed on production of receipts.

2. Hotels

Where staff are required to stay overnight on Town Council business, the recommended benchmark for all staff is an AA 2- or 3-star hotel. Guidance can be obtained from the Town Clerk.

Where staff incur additional reasonable incidental costs whilst staying overnight on Town Council business these will be reimbursed. Receipts should where possible be obtained. All claims need to be authorised by the Town Clerk.

3 Air Travel

All reservations must be approved in advance by the Town Clerk.

4 Rail Travel

All staff will travel 2nd class with the option to reserve a seat. Staff may travel 1st class at the discretion of the Town Clerk where substantial amounts of work are to be undertaken during the journey.

5 Other Ad Hoc items

Subjects such as relocation and lodging allowances crop up infrequently and will be dealt with on an individual basis.

6 Payment of Expenses

Expenses are paid monthly by credit transfer to the Bank/Building Society of your choice.

To ensure accuracy and timely reclaim of costs, all expenses need to be claimed within 3 months of being incurred. Where claims are made outside this period the Town Council reserves the right to refuse payment.

UNOFFICIAL CLUBS, FUNDS AND SCHEMES

The Council is not responsible for the way in which any unauthorised employee funds, holiday clubs,

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saving schemes or lottery syndicates are conducted, or for the safety of those funds.

VEHICLES and DRIVING

FITNESS TO DRIVE

If you are required to drive on public roads on the Council's behalf, you must be physically and mentally capable of doing so in a safe, respectful, and secure manner. If you are too tired, physically, or mentally, or suffering from sickness or illness, you must not drive the vehicle.

DRIVING LICENCES

You must possess a full and valid Driving Licence for the relevant class of vehicle, before the Council will authorise you to drive on its behalf. Employees must produce their Driving Licence for inspection upon demand, as and when required.

Since 2015, the paper portion of Driving Licences has no longer been issued by the DVLA. Drivers with paper licences issued before 1998 will still be valid. New penalty points will only be recorded electronically and will not be printed or written on Driving Licences. Instead, this information will be held at DVLA, and can be viewed online. There is a facility that allows employees to 'share access' temporarily with their employer by clicking on an option 'Share your Licence', and this will provide management with a 72-hour window to view your Licence. No other information is taken during this temporary 'window', but it does allow employers to maintain an accurate Driving Licence audit without having to manually check licences every year.

We require all our employees who drive on our behalf to allow access to their Driving Licence details as described above.

vehicle. Always ensure the vehicle is secure overnight and is not left unattended in potentially vulnerable locations. The Council cannot be held responsible for personal belongings left in vehicles.

MOBILE PHONES

It is against the law, and dangerous, to drive whilst using a hand-held mobile phone, whether speaking, dialling, texting, or accessing other services such as the internet.

An offence is committed if the phone is being 'held' whilst in use. 'Cradling' a phone, for instance between ear and shoulder, is considered as being 'held'. Penalty upon conviction can range from a fixed penalty, licence penalty points, a minimum £200 fine, or a much higher fine on conviction at court (more for drivers of vans, goods vehicles, buses and coaches). If convicted of driving carelessly or dangerously while **CHANGES TO YOUR DRIVING LICENCE, ENDORSEMENTS AND DISQUALIFICATION.**

If you drive on the Council's behalf, you must inform management of any changes to your Driving Licence, including endorsements.

If you become disqualified from driving, your authorisation to drive on the Council's behalf is immediately and automatically revoked. The Council cannot guarantee to find alternative employment for a disqualified driver and, if the disqualification renders you incapable of doing your job, this could result in your dismissal, or discharge from your employment.

MOTORING OFFENCES, FIXED PENALTIES, AND PARKING FINES

Drivers are personally responsible for any fines or penalties incurred as the result of motoring offences, including fixed penalties, and parking or speeding fines. Employers are required by law to disclose details of a presumed driver if requested by the relevant authorities.

RULES OF THE ROAD

When driving on the Council's behalf, you must comply with all current road traffic legislation. You are expected to convey a high standard of driving etiquette; and to be respectful and courteous to all other road users at all times. Seat belts (both front and, when occupied, rear) are required by law to be worn at all times where fitted. The Council will not accept any responsibility for fines imposed for breach of this legislation.

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PROPERTY IN VEHICLES

Please ensure that no property is left unattended or on view in vehicles being driven on the Council's behalf. All removable items should be either locked away out of view or, ideally, taken with you when you leave the using a phone, then the penalties can increase to include disqualification, a fine of up to £1,000, and a prison sentence.

Employees must adhere to the following policy in relation to the use of mobile phones whilst driving:

- A driver should avoid making or accepting calls or text services whilst driving;
- If another employee is in the vehicle, he or she should make or accept any calls;
- If the driver is the sole occupant of the vehicle, he or she should find a safe place to stop the vehicle before making, accepting or returning calls;
- If it is essential for drivers to make or accept calls whilst driving, then a hands-free system must be used. Even when a hands-free system is available, drivers should not make or accept calls unless it is legal and safe to do so;
- Whenever possible, allow calls to go to a voicemail or messaging service, and return the calls on occasions when you are not driving. 'Not driving' means out of traffic and engine off. Your vehicle may be stationary, (e.g. in a traffic hold-up or at traffic lights), but this still amounts to 'driving'.

OTHER DISTRACTIONS

Do not forget the advice in the Highway Code regarding other distractions that might affect your concentration when driving. To drive safely, avoid:

- Loud music that could mask other sounds, inserting CDs etc or tuning the radio;
- Trying to read a map, adjust satellite navigation, or follow written instructions;
- Eating or drinking whilst driving.

See Smoke Free Policy above in respect of Council vehicles.

ACCIDENTS / INCIDENTS

If you are unfortunately involved in an accident or incident whilst driving on the Council's behalf, *you* should not under any circumstances express any opinion (one way or the other) on the degree of responsibility or the cause. Exchange particulars and nothing more.

If you are asked to give a statement to the police, remember that you may want to be legally represented before you give any statement. You are not obliged to make any comment.

It is a condition of the Council's insurance policy that the insurers are notified of all accidents/incidents, even if apparently of no consequence. You must provide management with a written report within 24 hours.

Whenever possible the following points should appear on the report:

- Names and addresses of the third-party driver and details of their insurers;
- Names and addresses of anyone else involved in the accident/incident;
- Names and addresses of all passengers in both your vehicle and any third party's vehicle;
- Names and addresses of all witnesses. It will be of considerable assistance if statements can be obtained from all witnesses at the time;
- Particulars of the attending emergency services.

USING YOUR OWN VEHICLE FOR COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

Where the Council authorises an employee to use a private car on official business, the employee will receive a casual user allowance in accordance with the approved Green Book rate. Where staff are travelling to the same function/meeting every effort should be made to travel together.

Business mileage is usually the distance travelled between your normal office and the place you are

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visiting. Where you are commencing travel from home for business purposes i.e. not to your normal office, then the business mileage to be claimed is from your home to the place you are visiting or your normal office to the place you are visiting, whichever is the lesser.

The Council's requirements regarding driving standards, cleanliness, driving etiquette, and rules of the road are the same as those outlined previously within this policy.

Private cars must be insured for business use. The Council reserves the right to request copies of the individual's insurance certificate, to ensure adequate cover is in place for the business use of the vehicle.

Appendix 1 –

OFFICERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

(Adopted by Personnel Committee on 28th January 2020

Review Date: April 2022

This version supersedes that of 2013.

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INTRODUCTION

The public are entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from all employees who work for local government. The purpose of this Code is to make a clear statement about the standards of conduct expected of employees of Crewe Town Council;

- o ensure the highest standards of conduct by identifying corporate standards which sit alongside professional codes and guidelines;
- o help all employees to act in a way which upholds the Council's standards and at the same time, protect them from criticism, misunderstanding or complaint; and
- o help build trust between the Council and the people who come into contact with those working for it.

The Codes themselves are printed in bold type and *beneath has been added procedural guidelines in italics.*

These Procedural Guidelines are intended to provide background information to help employees understand and interpret the requirements of the Code of Conduct. They cannot cover all circumstances and are not to be considered as a substitute for reading the Code itself.

STATUS OF THE CODE

This Code is based on the voluntary Code of Conduct approved by the Local Council Associations and the Local Government Management Board, adapted and/or amplified where perceived necessary to meet local circumstances or requirements. It also incorporates the principles contained in a draft national model Code of Conduct for Local Council Employees. The standards contained in it are the minimum that should apply.

The Code of Conduct embraces the seven principles of public life which were drawn up by the Nolan Committee and are endorsed by Parliament. These are:

Selflessness – Acting solely in terms of the public interest

Integrity – Avoiding placing yourself under any obligation to people or organisations that might inappropriately influence you in your work. You should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, your family, or your friends. You must declare and resolve any interests and relationships as detailed in the Code of Conduct.

Objectivity – Act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability – Be accountable to the public for your decisions and actions and submit yourself to scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness – being as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that you take. You should give reasons for your decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty – Act with honesty and be truthful.

Leadership – Exhibit these principles in your own behaviour. Actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

WHO IS THE CODE AIMED AT? The Code is intended to cover all employees under a contract of employment with the Council and casual or contract staff. Reference to “manager” is intended to mean Chairman of Personnel Committee when the Code is applied to the Town Clerk.

1 STANDARDS

- 1.1 The Council’s employees are expected to give the highest possible standard of service to the public, and must perform their duties with honesty, integrity, impartiality and objectivity. Employees will be expected, through agreed procedures and without fear of recrimination, to bring to the attention of the appropriate level of management any deficiency in the provision of service. Employees shall report to the appropriate manager any impropriety or breach of procedure that is more than trivial. (See making a protected disclosure in the Employee Handbook)
- 1.2 An employee shall be accountable to the Council for his/ her actions.
- 1.3 An employee shall at all time act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in him/ her. The guidance in this Code is based on these principles. At the end of the day the Council relies on the integrity, reasonableness, common sense and professional judgement of individual officers. Staff should not hesitate at any time, to seek advice on the interpretation of the Code, or when circumstances arise which, it does not cover.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

- 1.A In determining acceptable standards, employees are asked to familiarise themselves, not only with the Council’s Code of Conduct for Officers, but also with any operating procedures used, policy or governance documents including Standing Orders & Financial Regulations.

2 DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

- 2.1 It is generally accepted that open government is best. The law requires that certain types of information must be available to members, auditors, government departments, service users and the public. The Council itself is open about other types of information. Employees shall not however disclose any confidential information unless authorised to do so in writing by the Town Clerk or the Council. Employees must ensure compliance with the Council’s Information and Data Protection policy.

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- 2.2** Employees shall not use any information obtained in the course of their employment for personal gain or benefit, nor should they pass it on to others who might use it in such a way. Any particular information received by an employee from a councillor which is personal to that councillor and does not belong to the Council, should not be divulged by the employee without the prior approval of that councillor, except where such disclosure is required or sanctioned by the law.
- 2.3** Employees shall not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled under the Freedom of information Act or other legislation.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

- 2.A** The Council's employees receive information relating to the Council's business, as well as confidential information about clients and the public, businesses, Councillors and other employees. Much of this information needs to be treated as confidential and should not be betrayed either inside or outside work, even to family and friends. See the Council's Information and Data Protection Policy.
- 2.B.** Both councillors and the public have rights to certain information, particularly that listed in the Publication Scheme Information Guide and all officers should encourage people to access this.

3 POLITICAL NEUTRALITY

- 3.1** Employees serve the Council as a whole. It follows they shall serve all councillors and must ensure that the individual rights of all councillors are respected.
- 3.2** Employees must follow every lawful expressed policy of the Council and shall not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with or otherwise bias their work.
- 3.3** Subject to the Town Council's conventions, employees may also be required to advise political groups. They must do so in ways which do not compromise their political neutrality.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

- 3.A** *It is only to be expected that the Town Clerk will work closely with members of the Council. Confidentiality over discussions with particular groups is vital.*

4 RELATIONSHIPS

4.1 Councillors

Employees are responsible to the Council as a whole. For some, their role is to give advice to councillors, and all are there to carry out the Council's work. Mutual respect between employees and councillors is essential to good local government. Close personal familiarity between employees and individual councillors can damage the relationship and prove embarrassing to other employees and councillors and should therefore be avoided where possible. Employees must have regard to the Council's Member-Officer Protocol.

4.2 The Local Community and Service Users

Employees will always remember their responsibilities to the community they serve and ensure courteous, efficient and impartial service delivery to all groups and individuals within that community as defined by the policies of the Council. All members of the community should be treated fairly and with respect in accordance with the Council's Equalities statement. Employees will ensure that they are always fit to perform their duties effectively and will not allow standards to be impaired in any way.

4.3 Colleagues

Mutual respect between fellow employees is also essential to maintaining constructive working relationships and providing a high quality service to the community. It is also a key part of the Council's Equalities statement.

4.5 Contractors

All relationships of a business or private nature with external contractors, or potential contractors, shall be made known in writing to the Town Clerk or the Mayor where the relationship involves the Town Clerk. Orders and contracts shall be awarded on merit, by fair competition against other tenders or quotes, and no special favour should be shown to businesses run by, for example, friends, partners, or relatives in the tendering process. No part of the local community shall be discriminated against.

- 4.6 Employees who engage or supervise contractors or have any other official relationship with contractors and have previously had or currently have a relationship in a private or domestic capacity with contractors, shall declare that relationship to the Town Clerk or the Mayor (in the case of the Town Clerk) in writing.
- 4.7 In the event of employees engaging a Contractor for private work at home, who is known by the employee to be one of the Council's contractors, care shall be taken to ensure that the price paid for the work represents full value and thereby cannot be construed as an inducement or reward for the award of Council contracts. Especial care shall be taken in this respect by employees who engage or supervise contractors in the course of their employment.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

4A *The Town is a relatively small community, and it is impossible not to know some councillors in other walks of life. This must be correctly and openly managed without favour.*

4.B *It is not sufficient to ensure that a relationship with a contractor or potential contractor will not unduly influence their business involvement with the Council, but impartiality and integrity need to be demonstrated. It is necessary for such relationships to be open and beyond suspicion by the reasonable person.*

4.C *It is difficult to define precisely when a declaration should be made. The decision should be made after you have assessed the degree of influence that you may have over the Council's relationship with the particular contractor. If you are responsible for the administration of the contract, or are in any way involved in it, a declaration should always be made.*

5 APPOINTMENT AND OTHER EMPLOYMENT MATTERS

- 5.1 Employees involved in appointments shall ensure that these are made on the basis of merit. It is unlawful for an employee to make an appointment based on anything other than the ability of the candidate to undertake the duties of the post. In order to avoid any possible accusation of bias, employees shall not be involved in an appointment where they are related to an applicant or have a close personal relationship outside work with him or her.
- 5.2 Similarly, employees shall not be involved in decisions relating to discipline, promotion, training or pay adjustments for any other employee who is a relative, partner, etc.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

- 5.A *In cases where you are involved in deciding any matter relating to the appointment, promotion, discipline, pay, conditions of service or training opportunities for a person who is a relative, partner or with whom you have a close personal relationship outside work, you shall declare this to the Town Clerk or Mayor (in the case of the Town Clerk) and have no further involvement in the matter.*
- 5.B *In this paragraph "relative" means a spouse, partner, parent-in-law, son, daughter, step-son, step-daughter, child of a partner, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, or the spouse or partner of any of the preceding persons and "partner" means a member of a couple.*

6 OUTSIDE COMMITMENTS

- 6.1** You shall not become engaged or concerned in any other business in which your duties may conflict with the interests of the Council, without advising the Council. You shall not become engaged in any secondary occupation that may unduly interfere with your work.
- 6.2** The Town Council is consultee for making recommendations to the determining bodies for applications for various types of consent such as planning permission, licensing etc. and also determines grant applications. Staff members who are in any way concerned, connected or consulted in their work during the processing of such applications are precluded from preparing or assisting with those submissions in any private capacity on behalf of applicants (unless for their own submissions when, of course, their private interest in the matter would be perfectly clear and should be declared).
- 6.3** The general rule is therefore as follows:
- (a)** Staff at all levels shall not undertake any outside work which would put them in a position of conflict of interest. Such a conflict would arise when an employee is to be paid by a member of the public or any outside organisation or body for work which is in any way connected with the scope of his or her official duties.
- (b)** Employees shall follow such rules as the Council may from time to time impose on the ownership of intellectual property or copyright created during their employment.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

- 6.A** As some employees may only work part time or on a casual basis, this part of the Code is in no way intended to prevent them having other employment, merely to avoid conflicts of interest.

7 PERSONAL INTERESTS

- 7.1** An employee shall not in his/her official or personal capacity, allow personal interests to conflict with the Council's requirements, or use his/ her position improperly to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.
- 7.2** Employees shall declare to the Town Clerk or Mayor (in the case of the Town Clerk) in writing, any non-financial interests that they consider could bring about conflict with the Council's interests e.g. school governor, membership of local sports club, membership of the district or county council.
- 7.3** Employees shall declare to the Town Clerk or Mayor (in the case of the Town Clerk) in writing, any financial interests which could conflict with the Council's interests e.g. financial interests of a spouse or other member of the family in a contract.
- 7.4** Employees shall declare to the Town Clerk, membership of any organisation not open to the public without formal membership and commitment of allegiance and which has secrecy about rules or membership or conduct.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

7.A Non Financial Interests

The test as to whether an interest in an outside body Must be declared, is whether or not the interests of the body may conflict with those of the Council.

By way of advice, it **shall** always be appropriate to declare being a governor of a school within the Town, or membership of another council. Similarly, membership of a trust or statutory body operating within the Town shall be declared.

In the case of, for instance, local sports clubs, these should be declared when a conflict of interest may arise, e.g. where planning permission is sought, or where land is being brought from or sold to the Council.

7.B Financial Interests

The Council needs to be aware of all cases where an employee or his/her close relative, partner or associate has a financial interest in a business (including private company, public sector organisation and/or voluntary organisation) which are or are seeking to have business dealings or enter into a contract with the Council.

Examples of such interests are:

- Paid employment, directorships, consultancies or personal sponsorship.
- An interest in land or other assets, held or used by the business organisation.
- Share capital in the company exceeding £25,000 (the amount need not be declared) or more than $\frac{1}{100}$ th of the issued shares or securities

NB This does not include money invested in a Building Society or Bank where you have no influence over the dealings of that organisation.

7.C Organisations not open to the public with formal membership etc. E.g. Free Masons.

8 EQUALITY ISSUES

8.1 All local government employees shall ensure that policies relating to equality issues as agreed by the Council are complied with in addition to the requirements of the law. All members of the local community, customers and other employees have a right to be treated with fairness, respect and equity.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

8.A Reference should be made to the Equality Policy adopted by the Council. The Council celebrate diversity.

9 ROLES DURING TENDERING

9.1 Employees shall exercise fairness and impartiality when dealing with all customers, suppliers, other contractors, and sub-contractors.

9.2 Employees who are privy to confidential information on tenders or costs shall not disclose that information to any unauthorised party or organisation.

9.2 Employees shall ensure that no special favour is shown to current or recent former employees or their partners, close relatives, or associates in awarding contracts to businesses run by them or employing them in a senior or relevant managerial capacity.

10 CORRUPTION

10.1 Employees shall be aware that it is a serious criminal offence for them corruptly to receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward, or advantage for doing, or not doing, anything or showing favour, or disfavour, to any person in their official capacity.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

10.A It is essential to remember that dealings with officers and members of local authorities and other public bodies are subject to the provisions of special legislation with onerous requirements and imposing sanctions under criminal law designed to protect the public interest and public confidence.

The particular legislation is contained in:
The Public Bodies Corrupt Practices Act 1889
The Prevention of Corruption Act 1906
The Prevention of Corruption Act 1916
The Local Government Act 1972, Section 117(2)

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10.B In summary, anyone who corruptly gives, promises or offers any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage to any person as an inducement to or a reward for any member, officer or servant of a public body for doing or forbearing to do anything in respect of any matter or transaction is guilty of a criminal offence. Similarly, a criminal offence is committed by anyone who corruptly solicits, receives or agrees to receive for themselves or any other person such an inducement or reward.

10.C It is particularly to be noted that the giving or acceptance of any money, gift or other consideration is deemed to have been given or received corruptly unless the contrary is proved. This represents a departure from the general principle that a person is deemed innocent until proven guilty.

11 USE OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES

11.1 Employees shall ensure that they use public funds entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner. They shall strive to ensure value for money to the local community and to avoid legal challenge to the Council.

11.2 Employees shall not make personal use of property or facilities of the Council unless properly authorised to do so.

12 HOSPITALITY AND GIFTS

12.1 Employees shall only accept offers of hospitality if there is a genuine and clear need to impart information or represent the local Council in the community. Offers to attend purely social or sporting functions must be accepted only when these are part of the life of the community or where the Council should be seen to be represented. They shall be properly authorised and recorded. It is generally more acceptable to join in hospitality offered to a group of people rather than something unique to the individual, i.e. there is a degree of safety in numbers. Hospitality should only be accepted when it is reasonably incidental and, on a scale, appropriate to the occasion or circumstances.

12.2 When hospitality has to be declined, those making the offer shall be courteously but firmly informed of the procedures and standards operating within the Council.

12.3 Employees shall not accept significant personal gifts from contractors and outside suppliers, although the Council allow employees to keep insignificant items of token value such as pens, diaries etc.

12.4 When receiving authorised hospitality, employees shall be particularly sensitive as to its timing in relation to decisions which the Council may be taking affecting those providing the hospitality. Where it is known that a particular person or body has a matter currently in issue with the Town Council, an offer of hospitality shall be refused even if in normal times it would be acceptable.

12.5 Acceptance by employees of hospitality through attendance at relevant conferences and courses is acceptable where it is clear the hospitality is corporate rather than personal and where it is clear that any purchasing decisions are not compromised. Approval to attend a relevant conference or course will be considered to be approval of allied hospitality as outlined above. Where visits to inspect equipment etc are required, employees shall ensure that the Council meets the cost of such visits to avoid jeopardising the integrity of subsequent purchasing decisions.

12.6 Employees shall report to the Town Clerk or Mayor (in the case of the Town Clerk) the offer of any gifts or hospitality. These must be recorded in the register maintained by the Town Clerk

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

12.A Offers of hospitality and gifts in a Town Council will be rare but should be approached with caution. Members of staff should ask themselves what a member of the public, who may be critical or suspicious, might think. Offers of hospitality where any suggestion of improper

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influence is possible should be tactfully refused. Hospitality **shall** only be accepted when it is reasonably incidental, and on a scale appropriate, to the occasion or circumstances. If in doubt say no.

- 12.B Employees **shall** only accept reasonable or modest hospitality and, if in doubt as to whether such hospitality is reasonable or modest in the circumstances, the employee **shall** seek guidance from the Town Clerk or Mayor (in the case of the Town Clerk).
- 12.C Clearly, hospitality received in the ordinary course of business (for example working lunches) need not be declared or registered provided it is modest and reasonable.
- 12.D All hospitality received (other than that mentioned in 12.3 above) and hospitality offered but not accepted **shall** be registered in the Register of Hospitality (see below).
- 12.E Any employee receiving an offer of hospitality **shall** inform the supplier or contractor offering the same that the employee is under a duty to register hospitality received or offered but not accepted.
- 12.F A Register will be kept and maintained by the Town Clerk. The details to be included in the Register will be:
- i* the name of the employee concerned;
 - ii* the name of the contractor or the supplier or other party making the invitation;
 - iii* the nature of the hospitality received or offered but not accepted; and
 - iv* the date or receipt of hospitality.
- 12.G As with Declarations of Interest, it is the duty of each individual employee to register hospitality received, or offered but not accepted, within a reasonable period before or after that hospitality is received or offered and it is suggested for this purpose that a reasonable period would be no longer than 7 days after the hospitality is received or offered. Notices to be sent to Town Clerk or Chairman.
- 12.H Some offers of hospitality are clearly unacceptable, e.g. offers of holiday accommodation. Invitations to sporting fixtures or evenings at the theatre are acceptable only in accordance with paragraph 12.1 of the Code of Conduct for Officers, or when they are clearly required for the conduct of Council.

These rules also, of course, apply to offers by firms to members of staff of discounts going Gifts

Examples of the type of modest gifts which would normally be acceptable are: -

- Small gifts of office equipment or stationery given by way of trade advertisement to a range of officers or for use in the office. Nothing more elaborate than calendars, diaries, rulers or blotters would fall into this category;
- Small gifts of only token value given on the conclusion of an official courtesy visit e.g. to a factory or other premises.
- Gifts to a member of staff or a member of their family where the donor is a personal friend. Extreme care needs to be taken in such circumstances that friendships are equal in both directions and declarations are made in accordance with Section 4 of the Code.
- If a gift outside the exceptions arrives without warning, it must be handed to the Town Clerk or Mayor (in the case of the Town Clerk) to decide whether the gift should be returned (or passed to an appropriate charity) and to ensure the donor is informed of what has happened.

13. CONTACT WITH THE PUBLIC, PRESS & MEDIA

- 13.1** Employees should refer to the Protocol on Communications in the Information and Data Protection Policy. Basically, you should not make any statement to the media which you are not authorised to make. No employee should give a view which is contrary to or critical of Council policy. Employees should seek authorisation from the Town Clerk prior to speaking to the media.
- 13.2** Outside working hours, an employee is entitled to voice their opinion on issues affecting the local community e.g. at a neighbourhood forum. However, employees have a general duty of care to avoid a conflict of interest and should not criticise, damage, or act in any way against the Council.
- 13.3** Employees must comply with the Town Council's protocols and policies on social media and the use of emails. Again, employees have a general duty of care to avoid a conflict of interest and should not criticise, damage, or act in any way against the Council, or otherwise bring it in to disrepute.

14 SPONSORSHIP - GIVING AND RECEIVING

- 14.1** Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor a local government activity, whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily, the basic conventions concerning acceptance of gifts or hospitality apply. Particular care shall be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors.
- 14.2** Where the Council wishes to sponsor an event or service neither an employee nor any partner, spouse or relative must benefit from such sponsorship in a direct way without there being full disclosure to the Town Clerk or Mayor (in the case of the Town Clerk) of any such interest. Similarly, where the Council through sponsorship, grant aid, financial or other means, gives support in the community, employees shall ensure that impartial advice is given and that there is no conflict of interest involved.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

- 14.A** The Council shall not be seen to offer any special favours or business in return for sponsorship.

15 CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORKING HOURS

- 15.1** The Town Council does not wish to intrude on your interests/activities outside normal working hours. However, you should not become involved in activities which prevent you from fulfilling your duties or which result in adverse publicity for the Town Council. For the avoidance of doubt this requirement involves the appropriate use of social networking sites which are in the public domain.
- 15.2** In order to foster team spirit and good working relationships, the Town Council may offer you the opportunity to attend social events from time to time and may also organise work-related social events to which clients, as well as staff, are invited. Although such social events usually take place away from the workplace and outside of normal working hours, the code of conduct applies to such events. Whilst the Town Council does not wish to affect your enjoyment of such social events, certain rules of conduct are necessary for the protection and comfort of all those attending. Accordingly, if you attend a work-related social event, you must observe the following rules and principles:
- Alcohol should be consumed only in moderation.
 - The use of illegal drugs, including cannabis, is forbidden.
 - The policy on dignity at work should be observed.
 - Do not behave in a way that could offend, intimidate, embarrass or upset any other person, whether as a joke or not.
 - Do not swear or use intemperate language.
 - Do not behave in any way that could bring the Town Council into disrepute.
 - Any breach of the above rules may result in disciplinary action being taken against you under the disciplinary procedure.

16 DISCLOSURE OF CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

16.1 Criminal charges, or convictions, for offences of dishonesty, or violence committed during the period of your employment with the Town Council, whether committed during or outside normal working hours must be reported to the Town Clerk immediately. Such charges, or convictions, may result in disciplinary action being taken against you up to and including summary dismissal. Failure to disclose such criminal proceedings/convictions that arise during the period of your employment could also result in disciplinary action being taken against you up to and including summary dismissal.

16.2 A charge or conviction for any other type of offence during the period of your employment should also be reported to the Town Clerk. Such charges or convictions may result in disciplinary proceedings being taken against you, up to and including dismissal, where, in our opinion, the charge or conviction:

- affects your suitability for your role.
- impairs the reputation of the Town Council.
- seriously undermines the trust and confidence in you.

Appendix 2

Dignity at Work Policy

Adopted by Personnel Committee on 28th January 2020

Review Date: April 2022

Introduction

The Town Council is committed to creating a harmonious environment by ensuring equal opportunities and fair treatment for every employee in the workplace. One of the key aims of the policy is to provide a positive working environment in which all staff feel comfortable and in which everyone is treated with respect and dignity, regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief or any other personal factor or quality.

This policy aims to ensure that there is no bullying and harassment of and by any employee, contractor, or anyone else engaged to work on Town Council premises. The purpose of this policy is to provide you with both protection and a procedure to raise and effectively deal with a complaint either informally or formally, if you believe you have been harassed or bullied.

Bullying and Harassment

Bullying or harassment, including sexual harassment, will constitute unlawful discrimination where it relates to one or more of the protected characteristics, outlined above. Serious bullying or harassment may amount to other civil or criminal offences, e.g. a civil offence under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 and criminal offences of assault.

Bullying (whether or not linked to a protected characteristic) can be defined as is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, and/or an abuse or misuse of power that is meant to undermine, humiliate or injure another person.

Examples, though not an exhaustive list, which may constitute bullying are:

- threats, abuse, teasing, gossip and practical jokes;
- humiliation and ridicule either in private, at meetings or in front of customers or clients;
- name calling, insults, devaluing with reference to age, appearance;
- setting impossible deadlines;
- excessive monitoring;
- removing responsibilities;
- withholding information.

Cyber/ online bullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology which may include devices and equipment such as mobile phones, computers and tablets, as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat and websites. Examples of cyber/ online bullying may include unkind messages or emails, rumours sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

Harassment may be physical, written, verbal, non-verbal, online or via social media. It can be intentional or unintentional.

Harassment, in general terms, is unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, that:

- violates a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person; or
- is reasonably considered by a person to have the effect of violating their/his/her dignity or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them/him/her, even if this

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effect was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Conduct may be harassment whether or not the person behaving in that way intends to offend. Something which is meant to be 'banter' may offend another person. Different people find different things acceptable. Everyone has the right to decide what behaviour is acceptable to ~~them~~him or her and to have ~~their~~his or her feelings respected by others.

Harassment may occur where an individual is subjected to unwanted conduct due to ~~their~~his/her association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.

Harassment may also occur where a person engages in unwanted conduct towards another because ~~they have~~he/she has a mistaken perception that the recipient has a protected characteristic.

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Harassment may also occur where an individual is subjected to unwanted conduct from a third party, such as a client or customer. If you feel that you have been bullied or harassed by customers, suppliers, vendors or visitors, you should report any such behaviour in order that appropriate action is taken. Bullying or harassment of customers, suppliers, vendors or visitors or others will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.

For the avoidance of doubt the Town Council will treat a single incident as harassment if it is sufficiently serious.

All bullying and harassment are misconduct and is a disciplinary offence which will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure. Bullying or harassment will often be gross misconduct, which can lead to dismissal without notice.

Examples, though not an exhaustive list, of behaviour which may constitute harassment are:

- physical contact ranging from touching to serious assault;
- verbal, ~~and~~ written or online harassment through jokes, offensive language, gossip and defamatory references;
- unwanted nicknames related to a protected characteristic;
- excluding an individual from social activities due to his/her association with some one with a protected characteristic;
- ignoring an individual because they have/he/she has a protected characteristic when in fact they/he/she does not have the perceived protected characteristic;
- knowingly addressing or referring to someone using a pronoun (for example, he or she) with which an individual does not identify (misgendering);
- intrusion by pestering, spying, following etc.

The Town Council will treat all such complaints of harassment and bullying seriously and will investigate them promptly, efficiently and in confidence.

The main aim of this policy is to provide a framework for resolving complaints of harassment or bullying and for stopping any behaviour that is causing offence or distress.

Raising a Complaint

You have a right to complain if you are treated in a manner that you believe constitutes harassment or bullying. This will include behaviour that has caused you offence, humiliation, embarrassment, or distress.

Apart from complaints about the behaviour of colleagues, you also have the right to complain if you believe that you have been bullied or harassed by a third party, for example a customer, client, or supplier.

If you raise a complaint ~~under this policy~~, you are automatically protected and under no circumstances will you be subjected to any unfavourable treatment or victimisation as a result of making a complaint. However, if it is established that you have made a knowingly false or malicious complaint against another person about harassment or bullying, serious disciplinary action will be taken against you which may result in your dismissal.

If you witness an incident that you believe to be the harassment or bullying of another member of staff you should report the incident in confidence to your manager who will consider all such reports seriously and will treat the information in strict confidence, as far as it is reasonably possible to do so.

Reporting a Complaint

Before raising a formal complaint, you are encouraged in the first instance to talk directly and informally to the person to whom you believe is harassing you and explain clearly what aspect of the person's behaviour is unacceptable, or is causing offence to you, and request that it stop.

It may be that the person whose conduct is causing offence is genuinely unaware that their behaviour

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is unwelcome or objectionable and that a direct approach may resolve the matter without the need for formal action.

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If you would like support in making such an approach, you should contact your manager or the Town Clerk. However, if you feel unable to take this course of action, or if you have already approached the person to no avail, or if the harassment is of a very serious nature, you may decide to raise a formal complaint [under our Grievance policy, which details the procedure to follow.](#)

Formal complaints may be raised, in writing, with your manager or, if preferred, the Town Clerk. You may feel more comfortable speaking to them about it before putting it in writing, which is quite acceptable.

When lodging your complaint of harassment/bullying, you should state:

- the name of the person whose behaviour you believe amounts to harassment or bullying;
- the type of behaviour that is causing offence, together with specific examples if possible;
- dates and times when incidents of harassment or bullying occurred, and where they occurred;
- the names of any employees who witnessed any incidents, or who themselves may have been the victims of harassment or bullying by the same person; and
- any action that you have already taken to try to deal with the harassment or bullying.

Management Responsibility

When a complaint of harassment or bullying is received, there is a duty to investigate the matter thoroughly and objectively and to take corrective action in order to ensure compliance with the Dignity at Work Policy.

The Town Council will be responsive and supportive towards anyone who raises a genuine complaint of harassment or bullying. The Town Clerk will assist any manager in dealing with complaints of harassment or bullying.

The Town Clerk may suspend you from duty pending investigation for harassment or bullying for a temporary period whilst investigations are carried out. Such suspension will be for as short a time as possible and will be on full pay.

If you are accused of harassment or bullying you will be informed of the exact nature of the complaint against you and afforded a full opportunity to challenge the allegations and put forward an explanation for your alleged behaviour in a confidential interview, with a companion present if you choose. It will not be presumed that following an allegation of harassment you are guilty.

All forms of harassment and bullying will be regarded as serious misconduct, and if you are found to have harassed or bullied a colleague you will be liable to serious disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal.

Although not always necessary, if a complaint against you is not upheld, a voluntary transfer of either of the parties may be offered, if that is practicable. Such transfers will be consensual.

If it is agreed neither party will move, the Town Clerk will monitor and check the situation in terms of our duty of care to determine whether there has been any form of victimisation or retaliation.

Alternatively, where a complaint is upheld, it may be necessary, if practicable to relocate or transfer one of the parties to another department or function.

~~Following the meeting, you will be informed in writing of the outcome within 7 working days and told of any actions as a result of your complaint. If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, you may make an appeal. Your appeal should be made in writing to the Town Clerk. You should clearly state the grounds of your appeal, i.e. the basis on which you say that our findings were inaccurate or inappropriate. This should be done within 7 working days of the written notification of the outcome of the grievance. An appeal meeting will normally be arranged to take place within 5 working days of the submission of your appeal.~~

~~Following the appeal hearing, you will be informed of the outcome within 5 working days.~~

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The Town Clerk will maintain records of investigations and/or grievances into alleged incidents of harassment or bullying, the outcome of the investigations/grievances and any corrective or disciplinary action taken. These records will be maintained in confidence and in line with the provisions of the Data Protection legislation.

Exploitation of Workers

There is an obligation on employers under the Modern Slavery Act (2015) to address the issues of slavery and human trafficking, and to commit to the prohibition and avoidance of the violation of human rights (not only within the employer's own operations, but also in relation to those businesses with which products and services are provided or received).

- The Council is forthright and steadfast in complying with these obligations, and fully embraces not only the legal aspects of these issues, but also the moral and ethical duties and responsibilities in identifying and, where necessary, eliminating potential breaches of basic human rights.
- It is therefore the policy of the Council that practices such as forced labour, debt-bonded labour, and human trafficking are totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Similarly, inhumane treatment such as corporal punishment or other inhumane threats are also viewed as totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Furthermore, we expect corresponding standards, duties, and responsibilities to be upheld and maintained by all our officers and members, guests, sub-contractors, and business associates.
- Through our existing policies and procedures, we will always seek to promote the highest moral standards and will voluntarily and wholeheartedly support all statutory legislation and regulatory guidelines aimed at eliminating these totally unacceptable and inhumane practices.
- We encourage all those within our organisation and services, whether directly or indirectly, to report (without fear of prejudice or recrimination) any issues or concerns relating to the potential breaches of human rights.

Stress and Anxiety at Work

Workplace anxieties and stress are issues that could impact on the health, safety, and welfare of individuals, and it is important to identify potential situations that could escalate normal everyday situations into excessive pressures and anxieties. (see also Health and Safety Policy)

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines stress as *"the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them"*. This definition makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly; and stress, which can be detrimental to health and welfare.

The Council will therefore seek to identify situations that could lead to excessive stress or anxiety, with a view to eliminating, or controlling and minimising, the risks. To achieve this, we will:

- Encourage interaction and consultation between management and staff, with a view to identifying and preventing excessive stress levels;
- Encourage good management practices and appropriate information sharing;
- Offer impartial support (for instance, via our HR advisers) for staff affected by stress, whether in work or externally;
- Only undertake fundamental procedural changes within the organisation following appropriate consultation with staff members;
- Ensure staff members are fully capable of carrying out their role and duties;
- Monitor workloads to ensure that staff members are not struggling and overloaded;
- Monitor contractual working time and overtime to ensure that staff members are not struggling and overworking;
- Monitor holiday leave to ensure that staff members are taking their full annual entitlement;
- Ensure that, where available and appropriate, staff members are provided with meaningful role development opportunities;
- Consider training in management practices, and health, safety and welfare;
- Be vigilant, and offer additional support to individual employees who may be experiencing stress issues outside work (e.g. bereavement, divorce, family issues);
- Support staff members who have been off sick with stress and plan a structured and considerate return to work.

CREWE TOWN COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

Adopted by Council: 17th May 2022

Review Date: March 2025

INTRODUCTION

These Standing Orders were adopted by Council on 17th May 2022 and supersedes all previous versions. They are based on model standing orders of 2018 by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

Standing orders are the written rules of a local Council and are essential to regulate the proceedings of a meeting. The Council also use these standing orders to confirm or refer to various internal organisational and administrative arrangements. The standing orders are not the same as the policies of a Council but may refer to them.

Local Councils operate within a wide statutory framework and these Standing Orders reference many statutory requirements to which Councils are subject. The statutory requirements to which a Council is subject apply whether or not they are incorporated in a Council's standing orders.

Standing Orders are one of the Council's three principal governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for Members and Officers. They must be observed in conjunction with the Council's Financial Regulations and Standing Orders for Contracts.

Standing orders that are in **bold type** contain legal and statutory requirements, such standing orders may not be suspended. Standing orders not in bold are designed to help Councils operate effectively but they do not contain statutory requirements.

The word "Councillor" is used in the standing orders and, unless the context suggests otherwise, includes a non-Councillor with or without voting rights.

1. RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS

Applies to Meetings of Council, Committees and Sub-Committees.

- a Motions requiring notice on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the Chair of the meeting.
- b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
- c A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the Chair of the meeting as withdrawn.
- d If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- e An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion (as amended) becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- g An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if

requested by the chair of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chair.

- h A Councillor may move an amendment to his own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- i If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chair of the meeting.
- j Subject to standing order 1(k), only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Chair of the meeting.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chair of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- l A Councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- m The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate on the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.
- o Unless permitted by the Chair of the meeting, a Councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:-
 - i. to speak on an amendment moved by another Councillor;
 - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke;
 - iii. to make a point of order;
 - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
 - v. to exercise a right of reply.
- p During the debate on a motion, a Councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the Councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A Councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he is concerned by.
- q A point of order shall be decided by the Chair of the meeting and his decision shall be final.
- r When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
 - i. to amend the motion;
 - ii. to proceed to the next business;
 - iii. to adjourn the debate;
 - iv. to put the motion to a vote;
 - v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
 - vi. to refer a motion to a Committee or Sub-Committee for consideration;

- vii. to exclude the public and press;
 - viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.
- s Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the Chair of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived his right of reply.
- t Excluding motions moved under standing order 1(r), the contributions or speeches by a Councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the Chair of the meeting.
- u If, at the Chair's discretion, urgent business is added to the Agenda, the item may be discussed **but no formal decision may be made**. The Town Clerk does have delegated authority to deal with urgent matters in consultation with specified Members.

2. DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS

- a No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the Chair of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct. Such conduct may breach the Councillors' Code of Conduct.
- b If person(s) disregard the request of the Chair of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any Councillor or the Chair of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or be excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c If a resolution made under standing order 2(b) is ignored, the Chair of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

3. MEETINGS GENERALLY

- Full Council meetings ●
- Committee meetings ●
- Sub-Committee meetings ●

- a **Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- b **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- c **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice.**
- d All items of business will be set out on the agenda for all meetings and sent out with the summons to Councillors. Members of Council or Members of Committee may make a request to the Town Clerk to include relevant items on agendas if relevant to the respective terms of reference. The Town Clerk will where possible include the requested item, however their

decision is final. If the Town Clerk declines the request they will notify the Councillor of their decision and explain the reason for it.

- e **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**
- f Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.
- g The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the Chair of the meeting.
- h Subject to standing order 3(g), a member of the public shall not speak for more than three minutes unless directed by the Chair of the meeting. The Chair may at anytime instruct the speaker to end their input to the meeting.
- i
- j In accordance with standing order 3(e), a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The Chair of the meeting may direct that an oral or written response be given.
- k A person (Councillor or member of public) shall raise their hand when requesting to speak (and at Council only •, stand when speaking, except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort). The Chair of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.
- l A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct their comments to the Chair of the meeting.
- m Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the Chair of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
- n **Subject to standing order 3(o), a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To "report" means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present. The Chair should have regard if filming takes place, that Members of the public may not wish to be filmed. This right must be taken up without disturbing the meeting.**
- o **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**
- p **The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**
- q **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Mayor may in his absence be done by, to or before the Deputy Mayor.**

- r **The Mayor, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chair is absent from a meeting, the Deputy Mayor if present, shall preside. If both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are absent from a meeting, a Councillor as chosen by the Councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- s **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors and non-Councillors with voting rights present and voting.**
- t **The Chair of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.**

See standing orders 5(h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Mayor at the annual meeting of the Council.

- u **Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a Councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each Councillor present and voting gave thier vote for or against that question,** (or abstained from voting). Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.

v The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:

- i. the time and place of the meeting;
- ii. the names of councillors who are present and the names of councillors who are absent;
- iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
- iv. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
- v. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
- vi. if there was a public participation session; and
- vii. the resolutions made.

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

- x **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of Members of the Council are present therefore making the meeting quorate. In no case shall quorum of a meeting be less than three. (any Councillor who is disqualified from an item of business because he/she has declared a disclosable pecuniary or other relevant interest, does not count towards the quorum for that item).**

See standing order 4d(vii) for the quorum of a Committee or Sub-Committee meeting.

- y **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate, no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another

- meeting.
- z A meeting shall not exceed a period of two hours, unless the Council or Committee resolves to continue beyond this period.

4. COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

- a **Unless the Council determines otherwise, a Committee may appoint a Sub-Committee whose terms of reference and Members shall be determined by the Committee.**
- b **The Members of a Committee may include non-Councillors unless it is a Committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council**
- c **Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the Members of an advisory Committee and a Sub-Committee of the advisory Committee may be non-Councillors.**
- d The Council may appoint standing Committees or other Committees as may be necessary, and:
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference and any delegation to the Committee;
 - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing Committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;
 - iii. shall permit a Committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a Committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
 - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of Members of such a Committee;
 - v. shall, after it has appointed the Members of a standing Committee, appoint the Chair of the standing Committee, noting a Councillor may be appointed to the Chair or Deputy Chair of only one Committee
 - vi. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a Committee and a Sub-Committee which, in both cases, shall be no less than one-third of the Committee and Sub-Committee and in no case less than three;
 - vii. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a Committee;
 - viii. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a Sub-Committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a Sub-Committee;
 - ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a Sub-Committee that they are permitted to attend; and
 - x. may dissolve a Committee or a Sub-Committee.
 - xi. A member who has proposed a resolution which has been referred to any Committee of which they are not a member, may explain their resolution to the Committee but shall not vote.
 - xii. Any Council member is entitled to be present as a spectator at the meetings of any Committee or Sub-Committee of which they are not a member, except if a resolution has been passed to exclude the press and public. The Council member may speak on an item on the Agenda with the permission of the Chair, but may not join in the debate or vote.

xiii. A Councillor may be appointed to the Chair or Deputy Chair of only one Committee

5. ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS AND ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

- a **In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the Councillors elected take office.**
- b **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council decides.**
- c **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.**
- d **In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council decides.**
- e **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Council.** This will be followed by the appointment of Leader of Council.
- f **The Mayor, unless they have resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until their successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- g **The Deputy Mayor of the Council, unless they resign or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Mayor at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- h **In an election year, if the current Mayor has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Mayor has been elected. The current Mayor shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Mayor but shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- i **In an election year, if the current Mayor has been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Mayor has been elected. They may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Mayor and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- j Declarations by Councillors of any interests they may have in items on the agenda, shall clearly state the kind of interest as set out in the Councillor Code of Conduct.
- k Following the declaration of interests at the annual meeting, the business shall include:
 - i. **In an election year, delivery by the Mayor (Chair of the Council) and Councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Mayor of his acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**
 - ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;
 - iii. Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a Committee;
 - iv. Consideration of the recommendations made by a Committee;
 - v. Review of delegation arrangements to Committees, Sub-Committees, staff and other local authorities
 - vi. Review of the terms of reference for Committees

- vii. Appointment of Members to existing Committees;
- viii. Appointment of any new Committees in accordance with standing order 4 and appointment of its Members
- ix. Review of appropriate standing orders, standing orders in relation to contracts and financial regulations
- x. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses.
- xi. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
- xii. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
- xiii. Review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment;
- xiv. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks;
- xv. Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
- xvi. Review of the Council's complaints procedure
- xvii. Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation (*see also standing orders 11, 20 and 21*);
- xviii. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media
- xix. Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures
- xx. Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence
- xxi. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.

l Councillors may ask questions on any agenda item at a Council at the time that item is to be considered.

m The order of business at any ordinary meeting will be similar but exclude 5ki and v-xxi, unless these items are the subject of an officer's report.

6. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

a **The Mayor may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**

b **If the Mayor does not call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two Councillors, any two Councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting shall be signed by the two Councillors.**

c The Chair of a Committee or a Sub-Committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Committee or the Sub-Committee at any time.

d If the Chair of a Committee or a Sub-Committee does not call an extraordinary meeting within seven

days of having been requested to do so by two Members of the Committee or the Sub-Committee, any two Members of the Committee or the Sub-Committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Committee or a Sub-Committee.

7. PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

- a A resolution (whether affirmative or negative) shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least four Councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a Committee or a Sub-Committee.
- b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

8. VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS

- a Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the Chair of the meeting.

9. MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER

- a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- b No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least five clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 9(b), correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- d If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9(b) is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it, so that it can be understood, in writing, to the Proper Officer at least three clear days before the meeting.
- e If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the Chair of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the Councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.
- f The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- g Motions received shall be recorded and numbered in the order that they are received.
- h Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer of the reason for rejection.

10. MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE

- a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:

- i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
- ii. to move to a vote;
- iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
- iv. to refer a motion to a particular Committee or Sub-Committee;
- v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
- vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;
- vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
- viii. to require a written report;
- ix. to appoint a Committee or Sub-Committee and their Members;
- x. to extend the time limits for speaking;
- xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
- xii. to not hear further from a Councillor or a member of the public;
- xiii. to exclude a Councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
- xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
- xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements);**
- xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or
- xvii. to close the meeting.

11. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

See also standing order 20.

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

12. DRAFT MINUTES

- Full Council meetings ●
- Committee meetings ●
- Sub-Committee meetings ●

- a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on Councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.
- b There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 10(a)(i).
- c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Chair of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d If the Chair of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, they shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:

“The Chair of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the () held on [date] in respect of () were a correct record but their view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”

- e The Council will publish draft minutes for all meetings on its website not later than two weeks after the meeting has taken place.
- f Subject to the publication of draft minutes in accordance with standing order 12(e) and standing order 20(a) and following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed and removed from the website. The approved minutes will be published on the Council’s website within 2 weeks of approval.

13. CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS

See also standing order 3(w).

- a All Councillors and non-Councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.
- b All Councillors **must, in accordance with the Code of Conduct currently adopted by the Council, register in Cheshire East Council's Register of Councillors' Interests, details of their Disclosable Pecuniary Interests** and other interests stated in the Code, **by completing the appropriate form and delivering this to the Town Clerk, who will forward it to the Monitoring Officer.**
- c **Councillors must keep their registered interests up to date by completing the appropriate form and delivering this to the Town Clerk, who will forward it to the Monitoring Officer.** The Town Clerk will send out forms prior to the Annual Town Council meeting each year, to give Members the opportunity to update their interests in the Register.
- d Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a Councillor or non-Councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.

- e Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a Councillor or non-Councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have another interest if so required by the Council's code of conduct. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.
- f **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- g A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by a meeting of the Council, or by the Proper Officer in accordance with the Council's scheme of delegation and that decision is final.
- h A dispensation request shall confirm:-
 - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
 - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
 - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
 - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- i Subject to standing orders 13(d) and (f), a dispensation request shall be considered by the Proper Officer before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required OR at the beginning of the meeting of the Council.
- j **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(g) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:**
 - i. **without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;**
 - ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or**
 - iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

14. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

- a Upon notification by the Unitary Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a Councillor or non-Councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 11, report this to the Council.
- b Where the notification in standing order 14(a) relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chair of Council of this fact, and the Chair shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the Council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 14(d).
- c The Council may:-
 - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirement;
 - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory

responsibility for investigation of the matter;

- d **Upon notification by the Unitary Council that a Councillor or non-Councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

15. PROPER OFFICER

a The Proper Officer shall be the Town Clerk or other staff member nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.

b The Proper Officer shall:-

- i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the Council, a Committee or a Sub-Committee,**
- **serve on Councillors by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the Councillor has consented to service by email), and**
 - **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by Councillors is signed by them).**

See standing order 3(b) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full Council and standing order 3(c) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a Committee;

- ii. subject to standing order 9, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a Councillor has given written notice at least five days before the meeting confirming their withdrawal of it;
- iii. **convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Mayor, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office;**
- iv. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**
- v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
- vi. hold acceptance of office forms from Councillors and the Mayor;
- vii. hold a copy of every Councillor's register of interests;
- viii. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures;
- ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer;
- x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- xi. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation

Act 1980);

- xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
(see also standing order 23);
 - xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
 - xiv. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;
 - xv. refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chair or in his absence Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the Planning Committee;
 - xvi. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
- c The Town Clerk and other Officers of the Council shall have the authority and duties given to them under the Council's Scheme of Delegation and will report decisions taken under such delegation to each Council meeting.

16. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

- a The Council shall appoint an appropriate staff member to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

17. ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

- a "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide".
- b All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations.
- c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each Councillor as soon as practicable after 30th June, 30th September and 31st December in each year a statement to summarise:-
 - i. the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for each quarter;
 - ii. the Council's aggregate receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the year to date;
 - iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported and which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.
- d As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31st March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
 - i. each Councillor with a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
 - ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 1 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- e The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and

apply the form of accounts determined by the Council (income and expenditure) for the year to 31st March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all Councillors at least five days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30th June.

18. FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT

- a. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
 - iv. the inspection and copying by Councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
 - v. whether contracts with an estimated value below **£25,000** due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
- b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- c. **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £30,000 but less than the relevant thresholds in standing order 18(f) is subject to Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include a requirement on the Council to advertise the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website regardless of what other means it uses to advertise the opportunity unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement) approved and provided by Cheshire East Council.**
- d. Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be in accordance with the Council's adopted Standing Orders for Contracts.
- e. **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £214,904 for a public service or supply contract or in excess of £5,372,609 for a public works contract shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include advertising the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website and Central Government's Find a Tender service.**
- f. **A public contract in connection with the supply of gas, heat, electricity, drinking water, transport services, or postal services to the public; or the provision of a port or airport; or the exploration for or extraction of gas, oil or solid fuel with an estimated value in excess of £426,955 for a supply, services or design contract; or in excess of £5,372,609 for a works contract; or £884,720 for a social and other specific services contract (or other thresholds determined by the UK Government) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016.**

19. HANDLING STAFF MATTERS

- a. A matter personal to an Officer that is being considered by a meeting of Council or the Personnel

Sub-Committee is subject to standing order 11.

- b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's Town Clerk shall notify the Chair of the Personnel Sub-Committee or if they are not available, the Deputy Chair of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to Personnel Sub-Committee at its next meeting.
- c The Chair of Personnel Sub-Committee shall ensure a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of The Town Clerk is conducted in accordance with the terms of reference/delegation of the Sub-Committee and procedures and policy of the Council. The reviews and appraisal shall be confirmed in writing
- d Grievance matters will be dealt with in accordance with the policy set out in the Council's Employee Handbook and Personnel Policies.
- e Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.
- f In accordance with standing order 11(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 19(e).

20. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION

See also standing order 21.

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

21. RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION

See also standing order 11.

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

22. RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA

- a Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its Councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.

23. EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS

See also standing orders 15(b)(xii) and (xvii).

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b **Subject to standing order 23(a), any two Councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.**

24. RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES

- a Unless duly authorised by Council no Councillor shall:
 - i inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
 - ii issue orders, instructions or directions.

25. STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY

- a All or part of a standing order, **except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements**, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least 4 Councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9. Standing Order 26b will not apply where the proposed amendment is a response to a written report on a review of Standing Orders circulated in advance with the agenda of the meeting.
- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a Councillor as soon as possible.
- d The decision of the Chair of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

26. CONSTITUTION

- a The Council shall maintain and periodically update a Constitution to advise Members and the public how the Council conducts its business and how decisions are made.
- b The contents of the Constitution will be determined by Council but will always contain Standing Orders, Standing Orders for Contracts, Financial Regulations, Members' Code of Conduct and the Publication Scheme.
- c A up to date copy of the Constitution will be displayed on the Council's website.

27. PETITIONS

- a At any meeting, any Member may present a petition, signed by persons other than Members of the Council, which is relevant to some matter for which the Council has a responsibility or which affects the Town.
- b A Member wishing to present a petition shall give notice of his/her intention to do so to the Town Clerk at least twenty-four hours before the beginning of the meeting at which it is to be presented. The presentation of a petition will last for no more than three minutes.
- c No discussion will take place on any petition, but any Member may move that a matter raised by a petition be referred to the appropriate Committee or Sub-Committee. Once seconded, such a motion will be voted on without discussion.

28. HONORARY TITLES

- a The Council may introduce the award of honorary titles by resolution, in accordance with current legislation.

29. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- a The Council will maintain a Training and Development Policy for Members and Officers. They will determine and execute an annual training plan for Members.

30. PRAYERS AT COUNCIL

- a If the Council has adopted the General Power of Competence, it may if it wishes include prayers as part of the Council meeting.
- b If the Council is not eligible to adopt the General Power of competence and it wishes to hold prayers, prayers may take place before commencement of the meeting, but Members cannot be summoned to attend.

31. COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE COUNCIL OR AN OFFICER

- a The Council shall deal with complaints made against it in accordance with its Complaints and Compliments Policy adopted by the Council, except for those complaints which should be properly directed to the Monitoring Officer or to any other regulatory body listed in the Complaints Procedure for consideration. (see also Standing Order 14 regarding Code of Conduct complaints)

32. CANVASSING OF AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY MEMBERS

- a Canvassing of Members of the Council or of any Committee, directly or indirectly, for any appointment as an employee of the Council shall disqualify the candidate for such appointment. The Town Clerk shall make known the purpose of this sub-paragraph of this Standing Order to every candidate.
- b A member of the Council or of any Committee shall not solicit for any person any appointment under the Council or recommend any person for such appointment or for promotion; but, nevertheless, any such member may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment, providing they are not part of the selection process.
- c Standing Order Nos. 32a and 32b shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.
- d If a candidate for any appointment under the Council is to his knowledge related to any member or the holder of any office of the Council, he/she and the person to whom he/she is related shall disclose the relationship in writing to the Town Clerk. A candidate who fails so to do shall be disqualified for such appointment, and, if appointed, may be dismissed without notice. The Town Clerk shall report to the Council or to the appropriate Committee any such disclosure.

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Crewe Town Council

Internal Audit 2023/24

JDH BUSINESS SERVICES LTD

The internal audit of Crewe Town Council is carried out by undertaking the following tests as specified in the AGAR Annual Return for Local Councils in England:

- Checking that books of account have been properly kept throughout the year
- Checking a sample of payments to ensure that the Council's financial regulations have been met, payments are supported by invoices, expenditure is approved, and VAT is correctly accounted for
- Reviewing the Council's risk assessment and ensuring that adequate arrangements are in place to manage all identified risks
- Verifying that the annual precept request is the result of a proper budgetary process; that budget progress has been regularly monitored and that the council's reserves are appropriate
- Checking income records to ensure that the correct price has been charged, income has been received, recorded and promptly banked and VAT is correctly accounted for
- Reviewing petty cash records to ensure payments are supported by receipts, expenditure is approved and VAT is correctly accounted for
- Checking that salaries to employees have been paid in accordance with Council approvals and that PAYE and NI requirements have been properly applied
- Checking the accuracy of the asset and investments registers
- Testing the accuracy and timeliness of periodic and year-end bank account reconciliation(s)
- Year end testing on the accuracy and completeness of the financial statements
- The authority has complied with the publication requirements for the prior year AGAR.
- The authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights for the prior year AGAR
- The authority published required information on a website up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with relevant legislation.

The interim internal audit provides evidence to support the annual internal audit conclusion in the AGAR Annual Return for larger councils.

Conclusion

On the basis of the internal audit work carried out, which was limited to the tests indicated above, in our view the council's system of internal controls is in place, adequate for the purpose intended and effective, subject to the recommendations reported in the action plan overleaf.

J D H Business Services Ltd

ACTION PLAN

	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	FOLLOW UP
2023/24 year end internal audit			
1	The 2023/24 AGAR includes the incorrect figure in Box 7. for balances carried forward. The cash and investments figure of £1,623,181 has incorrectly been included in box 7 instead of closing Balance Sheet balances of £1,685,288.	<i>The AGAR accounts should be amended as noted.</i>	Implemented
2	<p>The Council already takes account of the reserves required to meet its needs through the annual budgeting process as required by the Local Government Finance Act 1992. However, there is no current adopted reserves policy.</p> <p>The purpose of a reserves policy is to set out how the council will determine and review the level of general, capital and other earmarked reserves that should be maintained and rules regarding use of reserves including approvals required. In</p>	<i>The council should establish a formal reserves policy covering general, capital and other earmarked reserves.</i>	Implemented

	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	FOLLOW UP
	particular, the reserves policy would set the range at which general reserves should be maintained to ensure financial security, working capital needs are met, and include sufficient contingency for unforeseen events.		
2023/24 interim internal audit			
1	Pay rises are notified to the payroll agent solely via an email from the clerk.	<i>The Chair should be copied into the email from the clerk noting the annual officer pay rise information, and all other pay rises/changes, to the payroll agent.</i>	Implemented
2	A checklist review of governance identified that policies for gifts and hospitality, and expenses, have not been established by council covering both councillors and staff.	<i>The council should consider establishing a gifts and hospitality policy, and an expenses policy.</i>	Implemented
3	Budgetary control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Although budgetary control reports downloaded for the Rialtas system are presented to council regularly, material variances are not analysed and explained as per 	<i>Material variances should be explained in the presentation of budgetary control information as required by Financial regulations.</i>	Implemented

	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	FOLLOW UP
	<p>the requirements of Financial Regulations:</p> <p>4.8. The RFO shall regularly provide the Council with a statement of income and expenditure to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least every second month and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose, “material” shall be in excess of £100 or 15% of the budget, whichever is the greater.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A budgetary control report was presented to the meeting held on 26th September 2023, however, the review of the information is not clearly indicated in the minutes which state ‘23/CTC/3/10. To consider the budget setting process for financial year 2024/25, as recommended by the Finance & Governance Committee The process and progress was agreed’ 	<p><i>Minutes should clearly state what budgetary control information was put to the meeting, the period it covered, and that the budgetary control information has been reviewed and noted by council, including any issues raised by councillors from review of the information.</i></p>	<p>Implemented</p>
4	<p>The council secured an independent review by a procurement specialist of procurement processes, documentation and policies which has resulted in a consistent suite of procurement</p>	<p><i>The council should implement the recommendations of the procurement report. In particular, a complete contracts register should be developed which also includes all SLAs. The register could also</i></p>	<p>Implemented</p>

	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	FOLLOW UP
	documentation and a report containing recommendations, including the development of a contracts register.	<i>include licenses to ensure they are renewed when required.</i>	
2022/23 year end internal audit			
1	The fidelity cover is currently £2,000,000, however, fidelity insurance should aim to cover the maximum projected cash and bank balances which is estimated as the year end cash and bank balances of £1,427,262 plus the estimated next precept instalment of £602,504, which is an estimated maximum projected balances of at least £2,029,766	<i>As part of risk assessment procedures, the council should annually estimate maximum projected cash and bank balances and review this against the current fidelity cover and set the level of fidelity insurance accordingly.</i> <i>The council need to review the current level of fidelity insurance as it does not cover maximum projected cash and bank balances.</i>	Implemented
2	The £amount of the precept request for 2022/23 is not recorded in the full council minutes which is a requirement of the Local Government Act 1992 as the December 2022 council meeting agreed the precept but did not state the monetary amount of the precept.	<i>The amount of precept requested must be stated in the council resolution of the minutes where the precept was decided.</i>	Noted

	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	FOLLOW UP
2022/23 interim internal audit			
1	The sole trustee charity is not being managed in accordance with the trust deed as there have been no meetings of the trustee to determine annual distributions since the town council became sole corporate trustee. The council is also encountering time consuming administrative challenges with the fund manager, for instance, to set up dividend payments to be paid into the charity bank account. The level of permanent endowment in the charitable reserves has still not been established.	<i>The council should carry out an options appraisal to determine the future of the charity to best ensure the charity objects are delivered. For instance, there are potentially other options available including, for example, transfer of the assets to a local charity with similar objects. The Charity Commission should be asked for guidance regarding all the options available to the council, and processes to be followed, to ensure the Charity Act and other requirements are complied with.</i>	2023/24 follow up - Implemented The council as sole trustee has resolved to close the JMcBride trust and the council has received the Charity Commission approval and closure notice. We are informed the funds will be allocated to an earmarked reserve to be applied for the original charitable purpose in the trust deed.
2	The council is not complying with the Financial Regulations (FRs) with regard to transfers between bank accounts and the CCLA deposit funds. Financial Regulations require the following: <i>8.8. Payments in respect of short term or long term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with Regulation 5</i>	<i>The Financial Regulations regarding transfers between bank accounts should be complied with.</i> <i>The requirements for transfers described in the risk assessment should match the requirements in the FRs.</i>	Implemented

	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	FOLLOW UP
	<p><i>(Authorisation of payments) and Regulation 6 (Instructions for payments).</i></p> <p>In addition, there is conflict between the requirements of the FRs and the risk assessment which simply states that the clerk can transfer money with no authorisation requirements: <i>'Transfers - Monies may be transferred between the Councils accounts by the Clerk'</i></p>		
2021/22 year end internal audit			
1	<p>A review of the nominal ledger identified that a grant received of £21487 had been incorrectly posted to expenditure cost centre 4286. The effect of this is to understate both income and expenditure by £21487. The draft accounts have now been amended to rectify this issue.</p>	<p><i>All grants received should be posted to a grant income cost centre.</i></p>	Implemented
2	<p>RECURRING ISSUE</p> <p>Testing of the detailed list of creditors identified that a significant element did not relate to goods and services received by the council in 2021/22 as they were</p>	<p><i>Year end procedures should be improved to ensure creditors included in the council balance sheet are completely and accurately stated.</i></p>	Implemented

	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	FOLLOW UP
	approved grants that were due to be paid. Therefore, the accounts have been adjusted to remove these invalid creditors and include them instead in earmarked year end reserves.		
2021/22 interim internal audit			
1	<p>The risk assessment does not address the risks of supplier fraud. Most standard local council insurance policies do not cover supplier fraud. The supplier fraud risks can be managed via robust policies and procedures including prevention actions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - training for staff to alert them to the potential risks of providing sensitive company information, by phone or other means, especially contract and account information. - establish a rigorous change of supplier details procedure - where a supplier has purported to have changed their bank details always call the supplier to check the veracity of a request, using details in your system, rather than those on any 	<i>The risk assessment should be updated to include supplier fraud including the adequacy of supplier onboarding controls.</i>	Implemented

	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	FOLLOW UP
	<p>associated letter or email. A person should be authorised to approve a supplier bank account change after having reviewed the process undertaken to verify the supplier details change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - periodic review of supplier accounts should also be undertaken to remove any dormant accounts. This reduces the likelihood of any old supplier information being used to secure fraudulent payments. - checking address and financial health details with Companies House - checking samples of online payments to supplier invoices to ensure the payment has been made to the supplier bank account 		
2	The investment dividends for the John McBride Charity are paid into the town council bank account.	<i>The investment provider should be provided with the correct bank account details to ensure all investment income is paid directly to the sole trustee charity.</i>	<p>2023/24 follow up – Implemented - Charity now closed by resolution of the sole trustee</p> <p>22/23 follow up Recommendation Outstanding – the council has encountered administrative challenges with completing this with the fund manager.</p>

	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	FOLLOW UP
2020/21 year end internal audit			
1	Testing of the detailed list of accruals identified that a significant element did not relate to goods and services received by the council in 2020/21 as they were grants that were due to be paid in 2021/22. Therefore, the accounts have been adjusted to remove these invalid accruals and include them instead in earmarked year end reserves.	<i>Year end procedures should be improved to ensure accruals included in the council balance sheet are completely and accurately stated.</i>	2022/23 follow up – implemented 2021/22 follow up - Recommendation Outstanding
2	The risk assessment does not address the risks of supplier (procurement) fraud.	<i>The risk assessment should be updated to include supplier (procurement) fraud including the adequacy of supplier onboarding controls.</i>	2022/23 follow up – implemented 2021/22 follow up - Recommendation Outstanding - the risk assessment currently only requires the VAT number of a new supplier to be checked as a supplier fraud prevention action. See 2021/22 issues.
3	The sole trustee charity accounts provided for review were incorrect as no prior year comparatives had been included, and cash	<i>The charity accounts have now been correctly amended. The council should ensure draft charity accounts are</i>	2023/24 follow up – Implemented - Charity now

	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	FOLLOW UP
	and bank balances in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities were incorrectly stated. In addition, there appears to be doubt as to whether the investments of the charity should be classified as restricted reserves, unrestricted reserves or permanent endowment funds.	<p><i>thoroughly reviewed before submission to internal audit to ensure they are complete and accurate and include prior year comparatives.</i></p> <p><i>Recurring Issue - charity investment funds: We previously recommended that the council needs to determine whether any of the brought forward Trust funds are Permanent Endowment funds, ie funds which cannot be expended due to restriction in the charity governing documents. This recommendation is still outstanding.</i></p>	<p>closed by resolution of the sole trustee.</p> <p>Implemented</p>
2020/21 interim internal audit			
1	A £20000 contract was agreed with CVS Cheshire East in February 2020 by the community plan committee but no signed SLA or contract was established for this supply of community development services.	<i>A signed SLA or contract should be established for all material contracts.</i>	No longer applicable as agreement not continued further after one year.
2	The cost of services provided by the local council association to support the council substantially exceeded the threshold for securing three quotations in the Financial	<i>When exemptions are relied upon in the Financial Regulations for not securing three quotations for a supply in excess of £3000, the decision and the exemption</i>	No issues identified in 2021/22 procurement testing

	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	FOLLOW UP
	Regulations (FRs). However, only one quotation was sought for these services which we were informed were considered specialist. The minutes do not record the exemption of the supply from standard procurement requirements of FRs due to the apparent specialist nature of the service.	<i>relied upon should be clearly recorded in the minutes.</i>	
3	In April 2020 smartphones were purchased using the payment card for £239.94. These assets were gifted to a local charity but as they were purchased through a payment card the council would not have been able to authorise the purchase and gift of these assets in advance. The payment card has now been cancelled so this issue should not recur.	<i>Internal controls should ensure that the council authorise in advance the purchase and subsequent gifting off assets to local organisations.</i>	Purchase of assets for third party organisations with the payment card has ceased
4	Review of the draft updated fixed assets register identified that each of the eleven allotment sites is now included as a cost of £47272.73 when they were previously recorded as gifted at a nominal value of £1 each.	<i>The draft fixed assets register should be reviewed and cross checked to the previous asset register to ensure the cost/value of assets complies with the requirements of the Practitioners Guide for Smaller Councils.</i>	Implemented
5	Recurring Issue - Member checks	<i>As part of ongoing probity controls over expenditure, the council should apply member checks to online payments and</i>	2023/24 follow up – Implemented

	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	FOLLOW UP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There was no evidence of an detailed member checks to source documentation of the monthly payroll from April to October - There is no evidence of member sample checks for online payments with supplier bank accounts from April to October 	<p><i>payroll during the year to satisfy themselves as to the validity of payments, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>To provide assurance that the correct suppliers have actually been paid the amounts the council has approved, periodically a nominated councillor should select a small sample of payments from the actioned online payments and agree the online payment bank details to the bank account details of the supplier on the invoice</i> - <i>Supplier fraud prevention controls – A nominated councillor should check bank details for the first payment to a supplier to a signed confirmation letter from the supplier. The same procedure should apply where a supplier has purported to have changed bank accounts (particularly if the request is via email).</i> - <i>Monthly payroll should periodically be agreed on a sample basis back to source documentation such as authorised salary</i> 	<p>Evidence of member checks seen for 2020/21, however, recommendation outstanding for 2021/22 as at date of interim internal audit.</p>

	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	FOLLOW UP
		<p><i>increases, timesheets, employment contracts</i></p> <p><i>All the above member checks should be evidenced by a signature and date.</i></p>	

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Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24 Form 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
 - The **Annual Internal Audit Report must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Sections 1 and 2 must** be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2024**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2024**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2024
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2024 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2023/24**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2023/24**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2024 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review. It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty) and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2024.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- **You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chair, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the bank reconciliation is incomplete or variances not **fully** explained then additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2023) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2024).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2024**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?		
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights , been provided for the external auditor?		
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?		
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?		
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?		
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?		
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?		
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2024 been reconciled to Box 8?		
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?		
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.		

***Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices**, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

Crewve ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY Town Council

www.crewvetowncouncil.gov.uk ENTER FULLY QUALIFIED WEBSITE/ENTER EBA ADDRESS

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

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

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

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

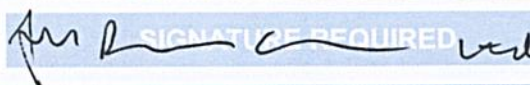
Date(s) internal audit undertaken

29/11/2023 and 12/04/2024

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

JDH BUSINESS SERVICES LTD

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

12/04/2024

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

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

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

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

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

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

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

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	
			<i>Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.</i>
1. Balances brought forward			<i>Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.</i>
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies			<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
3. (+) Total other receipts			<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
4. (-) Staff costs			<i>Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.</i>
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments			<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).</i>
6. (-) All other payments			<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
7. (=) Balances carried forward			<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>
8. Total value of cash and short term investments			<i>The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.</i>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets			<i>The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.</i>
10. Total borrowings			<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>

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

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

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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

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

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2023/24

In respect of

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02 as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/> .

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2024; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2023/24

(Except for the matters reported below)* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2023/24

We certify/do not certify* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2024.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

ENTER NAME OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

External Auditor Signature

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

CONFIRMATION OF THE DATES OF THE PERIOD FOR THE EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS

This form is only for use by smaller authorities subject to a review and should not be published on your website

Please submit this form to PKF Littlejohn LLP with the AGAR Form 3 and other requested documentation

Name of smaller authority: _____ **Crewe Town Council** _____

County Area (local councils and parish meetings only): _____ **Cheshire** _____

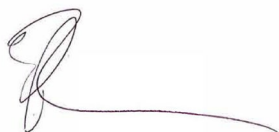
On behalf of the smaller authority, I confirm that the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights are as follows:

Commencing on ___Monday 3rd June 2024___

and ending on _____Friday 12th July 2024_____

(Please enter the dates set by the smaller authority as appropriate which must be 30 working days (i.e. Monday – Friday only, and not Bank Holidays) inclusive and must include the first 10 working days of July 2024 (i.e. Monday 1 July – Friday 12 July).

We have suggested the following dates: Monday 3 June – Friday 12 July 2024 The latest possible dates that comply with the statutory requirements are Monday 1 July – Friday 9 August 2024.)



Signed: _____

Role: _____ **Town Clerk** _____

BLANK

CONFIRMATION OF THE DATES OF THE PERIOD FOR THE EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS

This form is only for use by smaller authorities subject to a review and should not be published on your website

Please submit this form to PKF Littlejohn LLP with the AGAR Form 3 and other requested documentation

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County Area (local councils and parish meetings only): _____ **Cheshire** _____

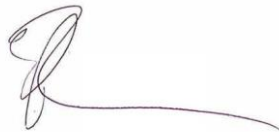
On behalf of the smaller authority, I confirm that the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights are as follows:

Commencing on ___Monday 3rd June 2024___

and ending on _____Friday 12th July 2024_____

(Please enter the dates set by the smaller authority as appropriate which must be 30 working days (i.e. Monday – Friday only, and not Bank Holidays) inclusive and must include the first 10 working days of July 2024 (i.e. Monday 1 July – Friday 12 July).

We have suggested the following dates: Monday 3 June – Friday 12 July 2024 The latest possible dates that comply with the statutory requirements are Monday 1 July – Friday 9 August 2024.)



Signed: _____

Role: _____ **Town Clerk** _____

Crewe Town Council Current Year
Bank - Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 31 March 2024

Confirmed Bank & Investment Balances

Bank Statement Balances			
31/03/2024	Coop Bank 68528948		£23,180.84
31/03/2024	CCLA A/C		£1,600,000.00
31/03/2024	Credit Union		£0.00
31/03/2024	CU Payment Card		£0.00
			£1,623,180.84
Unpresented Payments			£0.00
			£1,623,180.84
Receipts not on Bank Statement			£0.00
Closing Balance			£1,623,180.84

All Cash & Bank Accounts

1	Current Bank Account	£23,180.84
2	CCLA Deposit Account	£1,600,000.00
3	Credit Union Account	£0.00
4	Pre-Payment Card	£0.00
	Other Cash & Bank Balances	£0.00
	Total Cash & Bank Balances	£1,623,180.84

**Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 31/03/2024
for Cashbook 2 - CCLA A/C**

<u>Bank Statement Account Name (s)</u>	<u>Statement Date</u>	<u>Page No</u>	<u>Balances</u>
CCLA A/C	31/03/2024	50424	1,600,000.00
			<hr/> 1,600,000.00
<u>Unpresented Payments (Minus)</u>		<u>Amount</u>	
		0.00	
			<hr/> 0.00
			1,600,000.00
<u>Unpresented Receipts (Plus)</u>			
		0.00	
			<hr/> 0.00
			1,600,000.00
		Balance per Cash Book is :-	1,600,000.00
		Difference is :-	0.00

Signatory 1:

NameSignedDate

Signatory 2:

NameSignedDate

Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 31/03/2024
for Cashbook 1 - Current Bank A/c

<u>Bank Statement Account Name (s)</u>	<u>Statement Date</u>	<u>Page No</u>	<u>Balances</u>
Coop Bank 68528948	31/03/2024	338	23,180.84
			<u>23,180.84</u>
<u>Unpresented Payments (Minus)</u>		<u>Amount</u>	
		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
			23,180.84
<u>Unpresented Receipts (Plus)</u>			
		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
			23,180.84
		Balance per Cash Book is :-	23,180.84
		Difference is :-	0.00

Signatory 1:

NameSignedDate

Signatory 2:

NameSignedDate

Explanation of variances – pro forma

Name of smaller authority: **Crewe Town Council**

County area (local councils and **Cheshire**)

Insert figures from Section 2 of the AGAR in all **Blue** highlighted boxes

Next, please provide full explanations, including numerical values, for the following that will be flagged in the green boxes where relevant:

• variances of more than 15% between totals for individual boxes (except variances of less than £200);

• **New from 2020/21 onwards:** variances of £100,000 or more require explanation regardless of the % variation year on year;

	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	Variance £	Variance %	Explanation Required?	Automatic responses trigger below based on figures input, DO NOT OVERWRITE THESE BOXES	Explanation from smaller authority (must include narrative and supporting figures)
1 Balances Brought Forward	1,118,341	1,450,411				Explanation of % variance from PY opening balance not required - Balance brought forward agrees	
2 Precept or Rates and Levies	1,205,008	1,265,115	60,107	4.99%	NO		
3 Total Other Receipts	78,189	253,007	174,818	223.58%	YES		£9348 - invoiced to Crewe Heritage Trust for costs associated with strategic support; £6947 invoiced to South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce for funding towards establishing a Business Improvement District; £700 Christmas Market stall rent income; £10,000 invoiced to Crewe Heritage Trust for delivery of the Crewe Heritage Exhibition; £63528 fund from The John McBride Trust for community work; £55,000 UKSPF grant funding for feasibility and arts projects; £7400 grant fund from Cheshire East Council for the installation of the Knife Angel; £10,773 Community Infrastructure Levy income; £89311 interest from Bank/CCLA deposit account. Total £253,007
4 Staff Costs	302,013	340,954	38,941	12.89%	NO		
5 Loan Interest/Capital Repayment	14,433	14,117	-316	2.19%	NO		
6 All Other Payments	634,681	928,174	293,493	46.24%	YES		Detailed financial breakdown enclosed with these documents (ref 4.1). 2023/24 provided for a full year operation unhindered by previous covid-era restrictions and challenges, which meant that delivery is now returning to normal operation and opportunity.
7 Balances Carried Forward	1,450,411	1,685,288				VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED	
8 Total Cash and Short Term Investments	1,427,262	1,623,181				VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED	
9 Total Fixed Assets plus Other Long Term Investments and	135,588	178,796	43,208	31.87%	YES		All in year amendments reconciled and enclosed with these documents (ref 4.2). Some acquisitions and the value of the council offices have been amended to reflect recent transactions for properties at this site. This accounts for the majority of the variance.
10 Total Borrowings	39,750	26,500	-13,250	33.33%	YES		Low levels of loan remaining. See Box 5 above for payments to PWLB in 2023/24

Rounding errors of up to £2 are tolerable

Variances of £200 or less are tolerable

Working details for ANNUAL RETURN - Year ended 31 March 2024

		<u>Last Year £</u>	<u>This Year £</u>	<u>Variance £</u>	<u>Variance %</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>Code Description</u>
1		717,139	825,229			310		General Reserves
1		35,093	35,093			322		EMR - Elections
1		5,000	0			327		EMR - Chantry Court Fund
1		27,463	0			328		EMR - Grants
1		27,017	27,017			329		EMR - Christmas
1		7,976	6,776			334		EMR - Railway Cottages
1		1,439	0			339		EMR - Allotments
1		5,655	5,655			341		EMR - Place Branding
1		37,249	46,049			345		EMR -Heritage Projects
1		44,635	93,385			348		EMR - Strategic Events
1		10,000	10,000			349		EMR - Social Media/PR
1		3,685	6,685			350		EMR - Christchurch
1		9,000	9,000			351		EMR - Planning
1		50,000	33,204			352		EMR - Business Improvement Dis
1		1,996	1,526			353		EMR - Town Board Website
1		69,000	90,520			356		EMR - Town Centre Capital Proj
1		23,850	9,676			357		EMR - Queen's Jubilee
1		21,487	21,281			358		EMR- Hoardings & Frontages
1		20,657	100,749			359		EMR - Play Area Equipment
1		0	2,340			360		EMR - CCTV
1		0	14,200			361		EMR - Enforcement Officer
1		0	21,500			362		EMR - Knife Angel
1		0	9,676			363		EMR - Coronation Event
1		0	5,850			364		EMR - Key Community Support
1		0	5,000			365		EMR - Defibrillators
1		0	70,000			366		EMR - Conservation Area Review
1	Balances brought forward	1,118,341	1,450,411			Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of the previous year.		
2		1,205,008	1,265,115	60,107	4.99	1900	205	Precept
2	(+) Precept or Rates and Levies	1,205,008	1,265,115	60,107	4.99	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.		
3		0	6,947	6,947		1310	305	Grants Received
3		38,889	0	-38,889	-100.00	1310	465	Grants Received
3		10,000	55,000	45,000	450.00	1310	473	Grants Received
3		29,300	89,311	60,011	204.82	1880	205	Interest (CCLA)
3		0	10,773	10,773		1910	205	Community Infrastructure Levy
3		0	700	700		1995	350	Event income
3		0	63,528	63,528		1996	470	John McBride charity transfer

Working details for ANNUAL RETURN - Year ended 31 March 2024

	<u>Last Year £</u>	<u>This Year £</u>	<u>Variance £</u>	<u>Variance %</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>Code Description</u>
3	0	9,348	9,348		1999	200	Miscellaneous Income
3	0	10,000	10,000		1999	350	Miscellaneous Income
3	0	7,400	7,400		1999	473	Miscellaneous Income
3	(+) Total other receipts	78,189	253,007	174,818	223.58		Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4	227,348	257,901	30,553	13.44	4000	200	Salaries & Wages
4	23,438	26,161	2,723	11.62	4005	200	Tax & NI
4	51,227	56,893	5,666	11.06	4010	200	Pension Contributions
4	(-) Staff costs	302,013	340,954	38,941	12.89		Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5	14,433	14,117	-316	-2.19	4046	203	Loan Repayments
5	(-) Loan interest/capital repayments	14,433	14,117	-316	-2.19		Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6	867	656	-211	-24.34	4016	205	Bank Charges (Co-op)
6	598	2,072	1,474	246.49	4025	205	Employee Training
6	340	281	-59	-17.35	4030	205	Employee Travel/Subsistence
6	305	90	-215	-70.49	4035	215	Member Training
6	829	44	-785	-94.69	4050	210	Mayor's Allowance
6	134	299	165	123.13	4060	205	Refreshments/Catering
6	225	0	-225	-100.00	4060	210	Refreshments/Catering
6	3,085	3,295	210	6.81	4100	205	Audit Fees
6	870	940	70	8.05	4101	200	Accountancy Fees
6	2,500	3,760	1,260	50.40	4101	205	Accountancy Fees
6	251	0	-251	-100.00	4102	320	Volunteer Support
6	1,515	804	-711	-46.93	4105	205	Legal & Professional Fees
6	4,574	5,187	613	13.40	4110	205	Insurance
6	5,436	6,241	805	14.81	4111	205	Subscriptions
6	861	1,055	194	22.53	4115	205	Stationery
6	2,319	2,159	-160	-6.90	4116	205	Printing
6	1,275	2,368	1,093	85.73	4117	205	Cleaning
6	3,834	4,352	518	13.51	4120	205	Computer Equipment/Software
6	500	653	153	30.60	4123	205	Website
6	756	0	-756	-100.00	4125	205	Advertising/Publicity
6	3,770	3,948	178	4.72	4130	205	Telephones
6	348	464	116	33.33	4155	205	Room Hire Costs
6	348	0	-348	-100.00	4155	210	Room Hire Costs
6	4,008	3,664	-344	-8.58	4160	206	Utilities
6	3,683	3,816	133	3.61	4170	205	Equipment Purchase/Repair/Hire

Working details for ANNUAL RETURN - Year ended 31 March 2024

	<u>Last Year £</u>	<u>This Year £</u>	<u>Variance £</u>	<u>Variance %</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>Code Description</u>
6	6,452	4,105	-2,347	-36.38	4170	307	Equipment Purchase/Repair/Hire
6	299	171	-128	-42.81	4175	205	Clothing/PPE
6	22,657	97,522	74,865	330.43	4179	320	Play Area Improvement Scheme
6	32,160	33,360	1,200	3.73	4180	307	CCTV
6	5,550	3,407	-2,143	-38.61	4181	206	Contractors - Services
6	32,070	33,414	1,344	4.19	4181	310	Contractors - Services
6	7,145	0	-7,145	-100.00	4183	205	Contractors - Professional
6	135,717	161,197	25,480	18.77	4184	307	Rangers Service
6	11,968	10,163	-1,805	-15.08	4186	307	Regeneration Projects
6	16,949	36,176	19,227	113.44	4188	307	Cleaner Crewe
6	5,992	0	-5,992	-100.00	4252	350	Remembrance
6	0	5,176	5,176		4252	470	Remembrance
6	199	0	-199	-100.00	4255	350	Events
6	207	20,351	20,144	9731.40	4258	350	Heritage Activities
6	42,522	58,367	15,845	37.26	4259	350	Community Events and Summer Pr
6	63,795	34,546	-29,249	-45.85	4260	300	Grants Scheme
6	2,775	5,620	2,845	102.52	4271	350	Event Sustainability
6	11,250	20,000	8,750	77.78	4274	352	Strategic Event
6	51,127	47,890	-3,237	-6.33	4275	352	Infrastructure (Christmas)
6	-2,000	0	2,000		4281	465	Heritage Working Group
6	80	0	-80	-100.00	4281	473	Heritage Working Group
6	20,757	16,477	-4,280	-20.62	4287	352	Christmas Activities
6	1,008	7,063	6,055	600.69	4288	460	Event Seed Funding/Income Gene
6	1,600	5,182	3,582	223.88	4420	320	Parks & Allotments
6	12,120	34,451	22,331	184.25	4721	473	Public Realm
6	0	14,086	14,086		4723	473	Town Centre Promotion
6	16,796	31,070	14,274	84.98	4725	473	TC Business Group & BID Feasib
6	0	128,385	128,385		4727	473	Heritage Projects
6	3,536	0	-3,536	-100.00	4730	470	Community Development Commiss
6	6,420	8,010	1,590	24.77	4731	470	Sustaining Network
6	0	560	560		4742	474	Community Asset Projects
6	4,889	3,840	-1,049	-21.46	4754	470	Tree of Light
6	500	2,620	2,120	424.00	4755	474	Heritage Strat
6	504	0	-504	-100.00	4764	473	Food activities
6	12,425	37,644	25,219	202.97	4767	470	Health and Wellbeing
6	0	500	500		4768	470	Families/Early Intervention
6	18,815	0	-18,815	-100.00	4769	470	Social Isolation
6	10,150	5,189	-4,961	-48.88	4770	470	Winter Response
6	470	0	-470	-100.00	4991	473	Town Board Website
6	5,055	0	-5,055	-100.00	4992	206	Sinking Fund
6	28,384	13,802	-14,582	-51.37	4998	205	Strategic Allowance
6	1,108	1,682	574	51.81	4999	210	Civic Expenses

Working details for ANNUAL RETURN - Year ended 31 March 2024

		<u>Last Year £</u>	<u>This Year £</u>	<u>Variance £</u>	<u>Variance %</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>Code Description</u>
6	(-) All other payments	634,681	928,174	293,491	46.24			Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7	(=) Balances carried forward	1,450,411	1,685,288					Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. [Must equal (1+2+3)-(4+5+6)]
8		27,262	23,181			200		Current Bank Account
8		1,400,000	1,600,000			201		CCLA Deposit Account
8	Total value of cash and short term investments	1,427,262	1,623,181					The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9		135,588	178,796	43,208	31.87			Total Fixed Assets
9	Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	135,588	178,796	43,208	31.87			The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10		39,750	26,500	-13,250	-33.33			Total Borrowings
10	Total borrowings	39,750	26,500	-13,250	-33.33			The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

Agenda Item 9

Asset list reconcilliation

	2023/24 Stated	£178,796
	2022/23 Stated	£135,588
	<u>Difference</u>	<u>£43,208</u>
Added	2023/24 purchases	£24,780
Revaluation	Chantry Court increase in value	£22,500
Revalues	Westerman	-£1,105
& disposed	Stihl	-£298
	Stihl	-£412
	Christmas Lights	-£2,000
	dashcam	-£50
	Potable Pa System	-£100
	Ipad Air	-£100
	residual value £1 disposal	-£7
	Balance	£43,208
	<u>2022/23 & 2023/24 reconcile</u>	<u>£0</u>

Working details for ANNUAL RETURN - Year ended 31 March 2024

	<u>Last Year £</u>	<u>This Year £</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>Code Description</u>
1	717,139	825,229	310		General Reserves
1	35,093	35,093	322		EMR - Elections
1	5,000	0	327		EMR - Chantry Court Fund
1	27,463	0	328		EMR - Grants
1	27,017	27,017	329		EMR - Christmas
1	7,976	6,776	334		EMR - Railway Cottages
1	1,439	0	339		EMR - Allotments
1	5,655	5,655	341		EMR - Place Branding
1	37,249	46,049	345		EMR -Heritage Projects
1	44,635	93,385	348		EMR - Strategic Events
1	10,000	10,000	349		EMR - Social Media/PR
1	3,685	6,685	350		EMR - Christchurch
1	9,000	9,000	351		EMR - Planning
1	50,000	33,204	352		EMR - Business Improvement Dis
1	1,996	1,526	353		EMR - Town Board Website
1	69,000	90,520	356		EMR - Town Centre Capital Proj
1	23,850	9,676	357		EMR - Queen's Jubilee
1	21,487	21,281	358		EMR- Hoardings & Frontages
1	20,657	100,749	359		EMR - Play Area Equipment
1	0	2,340	360		EMR - CCTV
1	0	14,200	361		EMR - Enforcement Officer
1	0	21,500	362		EMR - Knife Angel
1	0	9,676	363		EMR - Coronation Event
1	0	5,850	364		EMR - Key Community Support
1	0	5,000	365		EMR - Defibrillators
1	0	70,000	366		EMR - Conservation Area Review
1	Balances brought forward	1,118,341	1,450,411	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of the previous year.	
2	1,205,008	1,265,115	1900	205	Precept
2	(+) Precept or Rates and Levies	1,205,008	1,265,115	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.	
3	0	6,947	1310	305	Grants Received
3	38,889	0	1310	465	Grants Received
3	10,000	55,000	1310	473	Grants Received
3	29,300	89,311	1880	205	Interest (CCLA)
3	0	10,773	1910	205	Community Infrastructure Levy
3	0	700	1995	350	Event income
3	0	63,528	1996	470	John McBride charity transfer
3	0	9,348	1999	200	Miscellaneous Income
3	0	10,000	1999	350	Miscellaneous Income
3	0	7,400	1999	473	Miscellaneous Income
3	(+) Total other receipts	78,189	253,007	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.	
4	227,348	257,901	4000	200	Salaries & Wages

Working details for ANNUAL RETURN - Year ended 31 March 2024

	<u>Last Year £</u>	<u>This Year £</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>Code Description</u>
4	23,438	26,161	4005	200	Tax & NI
4	51,227	56,893	4010	200	Pension Contributions
4	(-) Staff costs	302,013	340,954		Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5	14,433	14,117	4046	203	Loan Repayments
5	(-) Loan interest/capital repayments	14,433	14,117		Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6	867	656	4016	205	Bank Charges (Co-op)
6	598	2,072	4025	205	Employee Training
6	340	281	4030	205	Employee Travel/Subsistence
6	305	90	4035	215	Member Training
6	829	44	4050	210	Mayor's Allowance
6	134	299	4060	205	Refreshments/Catering
6	225	0	4060	210	Refreshments/Catering
6	3,085	3,295	4100	205	Audit Fees
6	870	940	4101	200	Accountancy Fees
6	2,500	3,760	4101	205	Accountancy Fees
6	251	0	4102	320	Volunteer Support
6	1,515	804	4105	205	Legal & Professional Fees
6	4,574	5,187	4110	205	Insurance
6	5,436	6,241	4111	205	Subscriptions
6	861	1,055	4115	205	Stationery
6	2,319	2,159	4116	205	Printing
6	1,275	2,368	4117	205	Cleaning
6	3,834	4,352	4120	205	Computer Equipment/Software
6	500	653	4123	205	Website
6	756	0	4125	205	Advertising/Publicity
6	3,770	3,948	4130	205	Telephones
6	348	464	4155	205	Room Hire Costs
6	348	0	4155	210	Room Hire Costs
6	4,008	3,664	4160	206	Utilities
6	3,683	3,816	4170	205	Equipment Purchase/Repair/Hire
6	6,452	4,105	4170	307	Equipment Purchase/Repair/Hire
6	299	171	4175	205	Clothing/PPE
6	22,657	97,522	4179	320	Play Area Improvement Scheme
6	32,160	33,360	4180	307	CCTV
6	5,550	3,407	4181	206	Contractors - Services
6	32,070	33,414	4181	310	Contractors - Services
6	7,145	0	4183	205	Contractors - Professional
6	135,717	161,197	4184	307	Rangers Service
6	11,968	10,163	4186	307	Regeneration Projects
6	16,949	36,176	4188	307	Cleaner Crewe
6	5,992	0	4252	350	Remembrance

Working details for ANNUAL RETURN - Year ended 31 March 2024

	<u>Last Year £</u>	<u>This Year £</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>Code Description</u>
6	0	5,176	4252	470	Remembrance
6	199	0	4255	350	Events
6	207	20,351	4258	350	Heritage Activities
6	42,522	58,367	4259	350	Community Events and Summer Pr
6	63,795	34,546	4260	300	Grants Scheme
6	2,775	5,620	4271	350	Event Sustainability
6	11,250	20,000	4274	352	Strategic Event
6	51,127	47,890	4275	352	Infrastructure (Christmas)
6	-2,000	0	4281	465	Heritage Working Group
6	80	0	4281	473	Heritage Working Group
6	20,757	16,477	4287	352	Christmas Activities
6	1,008	7,063	4288	460	Event Seed Funding/Income Gene
6	1,600	5,182	4420	320	Parks & Allotments
6	12,120	34,451	4721	473	Public Realm
6	0	14,086	4723	473	Town Centre Promotion
6	16,796	31,070	4725	473	TC Business Group & BID Feasib
6	0	128,385	4727	473	Heritage Projects
6	3,536	0	4730	470	Community Development Commiss
6	6,420	8,010	4731	470	Sustaining Network
6	0	560	4742	474	Community Asset Projects
6	4,889	3,840	4754	470	Tree of Light
6	500	2,620	4755	474	Heritage Strat
6	504	0	4764	473	Food activities
6	12,425	37,644	4767	470	Health and Wellbeing
6	0	500	4768	470	Families/Early Intervention
6	18,815	0	4769	470	Social Isolation
6	10,150	5,189	4770	470	Winter Response
6	470	0	4991	473	Town Board Website
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8		27,262	23,181	200	Current Bank Account
8		1,400,000	1,600,000	201	CCLA Deposit Account
8	Total value of cash and short term investments	1,427,262	1,623,181	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.	
9		135,588	178,796	Total Fixed Assets	
9	Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	135,588	178,796	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.	
10		39,750	26,500	Total Borrowings	

Working details for ANNUAL RETURN - Year ended 31 March 2024

	<u>Last Year £</u>	<u>This Year £</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>Code Description</u>
10	Total borrowings	39,750	26,500		The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

Crewe Town Council

1 Chantry Court
Forge Street
Crewe Cheshire
CW12DL

T: 01270 756975

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CREWE
TOWN COUNCIL

Annual Meeting of Council & 'Mayor Making'
May 16th 2023

MINUTES

In attendance: Cllr Clair Chapman	Cllr Dawn Clark	Cllr Martin Edwards
Cllr Irene Faseyi	Cllr Sally Graham	Cllr Lena Hogben
Cllr Marilyn Houston	Cllr Steve Hogben	Cllr Stuart Mackay
Cllr Jamie Messent	Cllr Toni Mortimer	Cllr Kev Murray
Cllr Jill Rhodes	Cllr John Rhodes	Cllr Dennis Straine-Francis
Cllr Simon Yates		

Also in attendance was Nan Walton – outgoing Mayor of Crewe

- CTC/23/1/1** To receive apologies for absence
Cllr James Pratt, Cllr Joy Bratherton, Cllr Alan Coiley.
RESOLVED: That Cllr Ben Wye's apologies are received and is given dispensation on the grounds of urgent personal issue.
- CTC/23/1/2** To note declarations of Members' interests
None
- CTC/23/1/3** To confirm and sign the minutes of the Crewe Town Council Meeting held on 28th March 2023
RESOLVED: That the minutes are approved as a true record of the meeting
- CTC/23/1/4** Public Participation
- A period not exceeding 15 minutes for members of the public to ask questions or submit comments in relation to the published agenda items.
- Speaker 1
Congratulated new members, specifically 2 members who were elected "opposition"
They referenced the sad spiral of decline. They asked questions relating to why Crewe Town Council hadn't objected to the town centre multi storey car park; the council's engagement with the highways authority; the reason for the Makers Market taking place on a Sunday; Why the traditional market is not thriving; and what the council did not put on events.
- It was clarified to the speaker that the council did object to the multi storey car park; That the council regularly reports pot holes and engages with senior management of the highways

services; that the Sunday delivery of the Makers Market is very successful, is as advised by the operator and falls on a day of free parking; that the traditional market is reflective of the national picture for traditional markets and traditional town centres due to the changing nature of shopping habits; that the council puts on a calendar of numerous events, that are free to access, including operation summer which had dozens of free activities and events for families and residents.

It was also commented that it was disappointing to hear such negativity about Crewe, which is a great and improving place to live and work, with huge opportunity through the investment and building work taking place.

- CTC/23/1/5** To confirm the Mayor (elect) as Mayor of Crewe for 2023/24
RESOLVED: That Cllr Dennis Straine Francis is elected Mayor of Crewe for the civic year 2023-24
- CTC/23/1/6** To confirm the Deputy Mayor (elect) as Deputy Mayor of Crewe for 2023/24
RESOLVED: That Cllr Dawn Clark is elected Deputy Mayor of Crewe for the civic year 2023-24

Following this, the meeting was adjourned to enable the incoming Mayor and Deputy Mayor to receive the insignia of office

The meeting was then reconvened

- CTC/23/1/7** To propose a vote of thanks and to present a past Mayor's Medal to the outgoing Mayor, Nan Walton
RESOLVED: Nan Walton was thanked for her term as Mayor and service to the town and received the past mayor's medal
- CTC/23/1/8** To receive an address from the Town Mayor
The address was received.
Cllr Jill Rhodes and former Cllrs Nan Walton and Benn Minshall were formally thanked for 10 years' service as councillors on Crewe Town Council.
- CTC/23/1/9** To note the minutes of committee meetings held since Council in March:
None
- CTC/23/1/10** To appoint a council leader and deputy leader
RESOLVED: That Cllr Jill Rhodes is appointed Leader and Cllr Jamie Messent appointed Deputy Leader
- CTC/23/1/11** To consider and approve constitutional governance as recommended by the Finance & Governance Committee
1. Constitution
 2. Standing Orders
 3. Financial Regulations
 4. Standing Orders for Contracts
 5. Council & Committee Terms of Reference
- RESOLVED:** That the governance documents are approved

- CTC/23/1/12** To consider the approval of committee structures and nominations to Committees
RESOLVED: That the committee structures as circulated are approved
- CTC/23/1/13** To consider and approve representations on outside bodies
1. Crewe Town Board – Cllr Jill Rhodes
 2. Crewe Pledge Management Board – Mayor & Deputy Mayor
 3. Crewe Town Allotment Federation – Cllr John Rhodes
 4. Crewe Town Board Blue & Green Infrastructure Steering Group – Cllr Ben Wye
- RESOLVED:** That the appointments to outside bodies are approved
- CTC/23/1/14** To confirm the Council’s adoption of the Councillor Code of Conduct
RESOLVED: That the council confirms adoption of the Councillor Code of Conduct
- CTC/23/1/15** To note and approve matters related to:
1. Council list of assets – to be received and noted
 2. Provision of Insurance cover – to be received and noted
 3. Affiliation to Cheshire Association of Local Councils. – to be considered and approved
- RESOLVED:** That matters related to the following are approved:
1. Council list of assets – to be received and noted
 2. Provision of Insurance cover – to be received and noted
 3. Affiliation to Cheshire Association of Local Councils. – to be considered and approved
- CTC/23/1/16** Internal auditor - to approve JDH Business Services as internal auditor 2023/24 & approve the Internal Audit for 2022/23
RESOLVED: That JDH Business Services is approved as the council’s independent internal auditor
- CTC/23/1/17** External support services
RESOLVED: That the external support services listed are approved
1. To approve Wirehouse Employer Services for HR and H&S support
 2. To approve Blain Boland & Co Solicitors for legal support
 3. To approve John Greenhall & Co for finance and accountancy support
- CTC/23/1/18** To note, consider and approve payments 1/2/2023 to 30/04/2023 to the value of £168,212.29 and spend to date as shown in the attached reports
RESOLVED: That the payments to the value of £168,212.29 are approved
- CTC/23/1/19** General Power of Competence
RESOLVED:
- i. That eligibility to adopt the Power is agreed
 - ii. To adopt the General Power of Competence with immediate effect
- CTC/23/1/20** To approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2021/22
RESOLVED: That the AGAR for 2021/22 is approved
- CTC/23/1/21** To receive the Meeting Calendar for civic year 2022/23
Received

CTC/23/1/22 To receive the Annual report for 2022/23
Received

CTC/23/1/23 To note the date of the next meeting of Council – 13th June 2023 at 7pm

Meeting closed at 7.32pm

Chair up to and including item 6 – Nan Walton

Chair from and including item 7 – Cllr Dennis Straine-Francis

Clerk – P Turner

Agenda Item 9

Report Statement

Report to: Crewe Council Annual Meeting 16th May 2023

Purpose: To consider the renewal of the General Power of Competence.

Author: Town Clerk

Background

The General Power of Competence (GPC) is a statutory power arising from the Localism Act 2011 (S.1-8). It gives Town and Parish Councils the power to do anything that an individual may do.

Currently Local Councils are restricted to the activities they may become financially involved in by the Local Government Act 1972 (Powers and Duties of Parish Councils), a copy of which is attached. To support Council's, an additional section S.137 was added, which allows Local Councils to spend £8.82 (2022/23) per elector on activities that are not included in the Powers and Duties Schedule.

In order for a Council to use the GPC, two relevant criteria must be met:

- A qualified Clerk;
- Minimum two thirds of its members must be elected.

The Council must decide its eligibility at a Full Council Meeting through the recording of a proper minute; eligibility must then be confirmed at the annual meeting following ordinary elections for as long as the Council wishes to continue using the power.

Restrictions on using the power include:

- The law (a Council cannot break the law);
- It must comply with procedural and financial duties and obligations;
- It must obtain relevant statutory permissions.
- It may not have the power to take on the statutory duties of principal authorities.

Should the power be adopted, then the following are a few examples of how it might be used:

- Set up a Community Transport Scheme.
- Form a Company.
- Carry out any such activity that could be exercised legally by an individual or company

Training in the use and benefits of the GPC is available via ChALC and has already been accessed by a number of staff and members.

Options

1. Maintain the Status Quo
2. Adopt the General Power of Competence

There is no statutory requirement for any authority to adopt to use the GPC, therefore Crewe Town Council may opt to work within the restrictions of LGA1972 and S137, however this is likely to create problems as the Town Council starts to deliver more services and activities in the Community.

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This power enables the Council to work with others: groups or individuals, to provide cost-effective services – cooperatives and companies. It encourages innovation and ensures that the Council can respond to local demands.

It gives the Council freedom to act, anywhere with anyone; there is no restriction to the Parish, this will be especially useful as we look at clustering and shared services. It can be used to support an individual and there is no requirement to 'prove' community benefit.

It gives the Council the power to create income. This may be done through bringing in charges for services (eg advertising in a newsletter) or investing in local companies to receive a share dividend.

The General Power of Competence provides 'Freedom' to the Council

Recommendation

It is recommended that Crewe Town Council:

1. Agree eligibility to adopt the Power.
2. Confirms its adoption of the Power of General Competence with immediate effect.

POWERS AND DUTIES OF PARISH COUNCILS

The powers which have been vested in Parish and Town Councils and Acts of Parliament are summarised in this document as a guide to Councillors and others. Each description is brief and is intended to be a general indication. Like all powers given to public bodies the powers of local councils are defined in detail in legislation and these details may include a requirement to obtain the consent of another body (for example the approval of the County Council to the provision of a car park). Local Councils must exercise their powers also subject to the provisions of the general law (for example planning permission is necessary for a sports pavilion). Information on all these details should be in the hands of the Clerk to the Council.

The powers are listed below. Where a power is marked with an asterisk the council may, in addition to exercising the power itself, help another body to act by giving financial assistance.

This list is intended as a summary of the principle functions of Local Council. It is not intended to be a definitive list of such functions.

FUNCTION	POWERS AND DUTIES	STATUTORY PROVISIONS
Accounts	Duty to appoint a Responsible Financial Officer to manage the Council's accounts	Local Government Act 1972 s 151
Acceptance of Office	Duty to sign declaration of acceptance of office (councillors and chairman)	Local Government Act 1972 s 83
Agency Arrangements	Power to arrange for the discharge of functions by another local authority	Local Government Act 1972 s.101
Allotments	Powers to provide allotments Duty to consider providing allotment gardens if demand unsatisfied	Small Holdings Allotments Act 1908 ss 23, 26 and 42
Archives	Power to make records held available to the public and support local archives	Local Government (Records) Act 1962, ss1 and 4
Baths and Washhouses	Power to provide public baths and washhouses	Public Health Act 1936 ss 221 222,223 and 227
Borrowing	Power to borrow money for statutory functions	Local Government Act 1972 Sch. 13

Agenda Item 9

<p>Burial Grounds, cemeteries and crematoria*</p>	<p>Power to acquire, provide and maintain shelters</p> <p>Power to agree to maintain monuments and memorials</p> <p>Power to contribute towards expenses of cemeteries</p>	<p>Open Spaces Act 1906, ss 9 and 10: Local Government Act 1972, s 214</p> <p>Parish Councils and Burial Authorities (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1970, s. 1</p> <p>Local Government Act 1972, s 214</p>
<p>Bus Shelters</p>	<p>Power to provide and maintain shelters</p>	<p>Local Government (Miscellaneous) Act 1953 s.4</p> <p>Parish Councils Act 1957, s 1</p>
<p>Bye Laws</p>	<p>Power to make byelaws for:</p> <p>Public walks and pleasure grounds</p> <p>Cycle Parks</p> <p>Swimming pools, bathing places baths and washhouses</p> <p>Open Spaces and Burial Grounds</p> <p>Mortuaries and post-mortem rooms</p> <p>Public Bathing</p> <p>Hiring of pleasure boats in parks and pleasure grounds</p> <p>Dogs and dog fouling in parks and open spaces</p>	<p>Public Health Act 1875, s 164</p> <p>Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 s.57 (7)</p> <p>Public Health Act 1936, s 223</p> <p>Open Spaces Act 1906, s 15</p> <p>Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 12 and 15</p> <p>Public Health Act 1936 s. 198</p> <p>Public Health Act 1936 s. 231</p> <p>Public Health Amendments Act 1907, s 44(2): Public Health Act 1961, s54</p> <p>Public Health Act 1875, s 164</p> <p>Open Spaces Act 1906 s 15</p>
<p>Charities</p>	<p>Power to appoint trustees of parochial charities</p>	<p>Charities Act 1993, s 79</p>

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Christmas Lights	Power to provide to attract visitors	Local Government Act 1972. s 144
Citizens Advice Bureau	Power to support	Local Government Act 1972, s 142
Clocks*	Power to provide public clocks	Parish Councils Act 1957,s 2
Closed Churchyards	Powers (and sometimes duty) as to maintain	Local Government Act 1972, s.215
Commons Land and Common Pastures	<p>Powers in relation to enclosure as to regulation and management and as to providing common pasture</p> <p>Power to protect unclaimed common land from unlawful interference</p> <p>Power to manage commons and village greens under a district council scheme</p>	<p>Inclosure Act 1845; Local Government Act 1984, s 8(4); Smallholding and Allotments Act 1908, s.34</p> <p>Commons Registration Act 1965, s.9</p> <p>Commons Act 1899, ss 4 & 5</p>
Community Centres and Village Halls	<p>Power to provide and equip community buildings</p> <p>Power to provide and equip premises for use of clubs having athletic, social or educational objectives</p>	<p>Local Government Act 1972, s 133</p> <p>Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19</p>
Conference facilities*	Power to provide and encourage the use of facilities	Local Government Act 1972, s.144
Consultation	Right to be consulted by principal councils if directed by Secretary of State	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s21; Local Government Act 1972, s 33A
Crime Prevention*	<p>Powers to spend money on various crime prevention measures</p> <p>Power to (a) install equipment, (b) establish schemes and</p>	<p>Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s 31</p> <p>Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s 31</p>

Agenda Item 9

	(c) assist others in so doing for the prevention of crime	
Delegated Functions	Power to assume a function delegated by another authority Power to ensure effective discharge of Council functions Power to employ someone to carry out Council functions	Local Government Act 1972 ss. 101, 111 and 112
Drainage	Power to deal with ponds/ditches	Public Health Act 1936, s. 260
Education	Right to appoint governors of primary schools	School Standards and Framework Act 1988, para 15 of Sch.10
Entertainment and the Arts*	Provision of entertainment and support of the arts including festivals and celebrations	Local Government Act 1972, s 145
Environment	Power to act for the benefit of the community by tackling and promoting awareness of environmental issues	Local Government Act 1972, ss 111 and 137
Flagpoles	Power to erect flagpoles in highways	Highways Act 1980, s 144
“Free Resource”	Power to incur expenditure not otherwise authorised on anything which in the council’s opinion is in the interests of the area or part of it or all or some of the inhabitants	Local Government Act 1972, s 137
Gifts	Power to accept	Local Government Act 1972 s 139
Highways	Power to repair and maintain footpaths and bridleways Power to light roads and public places	Highways Act 1980, ss 43 and 50 Parish Councils Act 1957 s 3: Highways Act 1980, s 301: Local Government Act 1972,

	<p>Provision of litter bins</p> <p>Power to provide parking places for vehicles, bicycles and motorcycles</p> <p>Power to make a dedication agreement for a new highway or widening of an existing highway</p> <p>Power to provide roadside seats and bus shelters</p> <p>Consent of Parish Council required for ending maintenance of highway at public expense, or for stopping up or diversion of highway</p> <p>Power to complain to district councils regarding the protection of rights of way and roadside wastes</p> <p>Power to provide traffic signs and other notices</p> <p>Power to plant trees, etc., and to maintain roadside verges</p> <p>Power to prosecute for unlawful ploughing of a footpath or bridleway</p>	<p>Sched. 14 para 27</p> <p>Litter Act 1983, ss 5 and 6</p> <p>Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s 57</p> <p>Highways Act 1980. ss 30 and 72</p> <p>Parish Councils Act 1957, s 1</p> <p>Highways Act, 1980 ss 47 and 116</p> <p>Highways Act 1980, s 130 (6)</p> <p>Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s 72; Countryside Act 1968</p> <p>Highways Act 1980, s 96</p> <p>Highways Act 1980, s 134</p>
Interests	Duty to declare an interest	Local Government Act 1972 s 94
Investments	Power to participate in schemes of collective investment	Trustee Investments Act 1962, s 11
Land	<p>Power to acquire land by agreement, to appropriate land and to dispose of</p> <p>Power to accept gifts of land</p>	<p>Local Government Act 1972, ss 124, 126 and 127</p> <p>Local Government Act 1972 s 139</p>

Agenda Item 9

	<p>Power to acquire land by compulsory purchase</p> <p>Power to obtain particulars of persons interested in land</p> <p>Power to acquire land for or to provide recreation grounds, public walks, pleasure grounds and open spaces and to manage and control them</p>	<p>Local Government Act 1972, s 125</p> <p>Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s 16</p> <p>Public Health Act 1875, s 16; Local Government Act 1972, Sched. 14, para 27; Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1980, s 44; Open Spaces Act 1906, ss 9 and 10; Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s 19</p>
Lighting	Power to light roads and public places	Parish Councils Act 1957, s 3; Highways Act 1980, s 301
Litter* and dog fouling	<p>Provision of receptacles</p> <p>Obligated to keep own land free of litter and dog faeces</p> <p>Dogs and dog fouling in parks and open spaces</p>	<p>Litter Act 1983, ss 5 and 6</p> <p>Environmental Protection Act 1990; Litter (Animal Droppings) Order 1991</p> <p>Public Health Act 1875 s 164 Open Spaces Act 1906 s 15</p>
Lotteries	Power to promote	Lotteries and Amusements Act 1976, s 7
Meetings	<p>Duty to hold annual parish meeting</p> <p>Duty to hold annual parish council meeting</p> <p>Power to convene a parish meeting</p>	<p>Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12 para 23</p> <p>Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12 para 7</p> <p>Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12 para 14</p>
Mortuaries and post-mortem rooms	Powers to provide mortuaries and post-mortem rooms	Public Health Act 1936, s 198
Nature Reserves	Power to designate statutory to the nature reserves and marine nature	National Parks and Access Countryside Act 1949, ss 15,

Agenda Item 9

	<p>reserves – English Nature can designate sites of specific scientific interest</p> <p>Powers to make management agreements with landowners and the English Nature to manage council-owned reserve land as a nature reserve</p>	<p>16 and 21; The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1982, ss 36 and 39 and Sched.12</p>
Newsletters	<p>Power to provide information relating to matters affecting local government</p>	<p>Local Government Act 1972 s 142</p>
Nuisances*	<p>Power to deal with offensive ditches, ponds and gutters</p>	<p>Public Health Act 1936, s 260 Public Health Act 1875, s 164</p>
Open Spaces	<p>Power to acquire land and maintain</p> <p>Power to acquire land for or to provide recreation grounds, public walks, pleasure grounds and open spaces, and to manage and control them.</p>	<p>Open Spaces Act 1906, ss 9 and 10; Commons Act 1899</p> <p>Public Health Act 1875, s 164; Local Government Act 1972, Sched 14, para 27; Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1980, s 44; Open Spaces Act 1906, ss 9 and 10; Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s 19.</p>
Parish Property, Records and Documents	<p>Powers to direct as to their custody</p>	<p>Local Government Act 1972, s 226</p>
Parking Facilities	<p>Power to provide parking places for motor vehicles, motorcycles and bicycles</p>	<p>Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, ss 57 and 63</p>
Parks, pleasure ground	<p>Power to acquire land for or to provide recreation grounds, public walks, pleasure grounds, and open spaces and to manage and control them.</p>	<p>Public Health Act 1875, s 164; (Local Government Act 1972, Sched 14 para 27); Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1890, s 44; Open Spaces Act 1906, ss 9 and 10</p>
Planning	<p>Right to be notified of and power to respond to planning applications</p>	<p>Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Sched. 1 para 8;</p>

Agenda Item 9

		Local Government Act 1972, Sched. 15 para 20.
Postal and telecommunications facilities	Power to pay telecommunications operators any loss sustained in providing post or telegraph office or telecommunications facilities	Post Office Act 1953, s 51; Telecommunications Act 1984, s 97
Public Buildings and Village Halls	Power to provide buildings for offices and for public meetings and assemblies	Local Government Act 1972 s 133
Public Conveniences	Power to provide	Public Health Act 1936, s 87
Public Enquiries	Power to make representations at public enquiries	Local Government Act 1982, s 222
Publicity	Power to publicise council and local authority functions	Local Government Act 1982, s. 142
Raising of Finances	Power to raise money through the precept	Local Government Act 1982, s 150
Records	Power to collect, exhibit and purchase local records	Local Government Act (Records) Act 1962 ss 1 and 2
Recreation*	Power to acquire land for or to provide recreation grounds, public walks, pleasure grounds, and open spaces and to manage and control them.	Public Health Act 1875, s 164; (Local Government Act 1972, Sched 14 para 27); Public Health Acts Amendment Acts 1890, s 44; Open Spaces Act 1906, ss 9 and 10; Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s 19; Commons Act 1899
	Power to provide gymnasiums, playing fields, holiday camps	-ditto-
	Provision of boating pools	Public Health Act 1962, s 54
	Power to provide a wide range of recreational facilities	Public Health Act 1961, s 54
Seats and Shelters*	Power to provide roadside seats and shelters	Parish Councils Act 1957, s 1

Agenda Item 9

Telecommunications facilities	Power to pay BT or any other telecommunications operator any loss sustained in providing telecommunications facilities	Telecommunications Act 1984
Tourism*	Power to contribute to the encouragement of tourism	Local Government Act 1972, s. 144
Town and Country Planning	Right to be notified of planning applications	Town & Country Planning Act 1990, Sched. 1 para 8
Town Status	Power to adopt town status	Local Government Act 1972, ss 245 and 245B
Traffic Calming	Power to contribute to the cost of traffic calming measures	Highways Act 1980, s 274a
Training	Power to train Councillors	Local Government Act 1972. s 175.
Transport*	Power to (a) establish car sharing schemes (b) make grants for bus services, (c) provide taxi-fare concessions; (d) investigate public transport, road use and needs; (e) provide information about public transport services Community Transport Schemes	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s 26-29
Village greens*	Power to maintain, to make bylaws for and to prosecute for interference with village greens	Open Spaces Act 1906, s 15 Enclosure Act 1857, s 12, Commons Act 1876, s 29
Village Signs	Power to use decorative signs to inform visitors	Local Government Act 1972 s 144
War Memorials	Power to maintain, repair, protect and adapt war memorials	War Memorials (Local Authorities Powers) Act 1923, s 1 as extended by Local Government Act 1948, s 133.
Water Supply	Power to utilise any well, spring or stream and to provide facilities for obtaining water from them	Public Health Act 1936, s 125

Agenda Item 9

Evidence of Town Clerk's Appropriate Qualification



This is to certify that

Peter Turner

Has been awarded

20 Credits at Level Three

on a programme entitled

Certificate in Local Council Administration

provided by

Society of Local Council Clerks

Unit Title	Unit Code	Credit(s)	Level
Core Roles in Local Council Administration	AC3/3/SO/002	3	Three
Law and Procedures for Local Councils	AC3/3/SO/005	5	Three
Finance for Local Councils	AC3/3/SO/003	5	Three
Management for Local Councils	AC3/3/SO/001	2	Three
Community Engagement	AC3/3/SO/004	5	Three

* Please note that the unit(s) listed above are not regulated by Ofqual

Phil Wilkinson

Phil Wilkinson
Ascentis Chief Executive

Learner Number 14146256
Award Date 05 Apr 2016
Certificate Number 5635939
Date of Issue 06 Apr 2016



Evidence of Proportion of members elected

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Elected</u>
Cllr Joy Bratherton	May 2023
Cllr Clair Chapman	May 2023
Cllr Dawn Clark	May 2023
Cllr Alan Coiley	May 2023
Cllr Martin Edwards	May 2023
Cllr Irene Faseyi	May 2023
Cllr Sally Graham	May 2023
Cllr Lena Hogben	May 2023
Cllr Steve Hogben	May 2023
Cllr Marilyn Houston	May 2023
Cllr Stuart MacKay	May 2023
Cllr Jamie Messent	May 2023
Cllr Toni Mortimer	May 2023
Cllr Kev Murray	May 2023
Cllr James Pratt	May 2023
Cllr Jill Rhodes	May 2023
Cllr John Rhodes	May 2023
Cllr Dennis Straine-Francis	May 2023
Cllr Ben Wye	May 2023
Cllr Simon Yates	May 2023

All members have been elected, exceeding the required level of two thirds.

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CREWE
TOWN COUNCIL

REPORT STATEMENT

Meeting: Finance & Governance Committee
Report Purpose: To gauge the interest for a Crewe Town Council Newsletter
Version Control: v1
Author: Communications Officer

1. Report Summary

The report seeks to gauge interest in creating a Crewe Town Council print newsletter and to provide information to Councillors about the associated practicalities and financial implications.

2. Background

A large proportion of our communications is undertaken via social media and digital channels. Our aim is to produce a print newsletter for Crewe residents, which will inform and raise awareness of Crewe Town Council activities for those who are unable or unwilling to access the information online and those who do not follow our current communication channels.

3. Position

The value of having a newsletter:

- To update residents who are not online and who may be unaware otherwise (improving reach)
- To raise awareness within the local population of Town Council activities and events
- To demonstrate to local residents how precept funds are used for the benefit of Crewe
- To build relationships with local residents and increase the potential to make connections
- To boost our content marketing opportunities
- To help correct misconceptions about Town Council remit and activities

Risks/disadvantages of not producing a newsletter:

- That a significant proportion of local residents are not aware of Town Council activities and events
- That our potential reach is not fulfilled
- That misconceptions can persist unchallenged

Topics for discussion:

- Would you like Crewe Town Council to produce a print newsletter?
- How best to distribute e.g. delivered to each home and/or business within the Town Boundary (30,000) or available at various key community points (10,000)?
- What would you like it to be called? E.g.

Agenda Item 10

- Connections
 - Headlines
 - Broadcast
 - Crewe's News
 - Round Up
 - On Point
 - On Track
 - Platform
- How often would you like the newsletter to be published e.g. every six months or quarterly?
 - Do you agree with the proposed content (see mocked up newsletter in the meeting pack)?

4. **Equality Impact**

The service is delivered within the council's equality and diversity policies.

5. **Sustainability Impact**

Social sustainability – an informative and engaging newsletter would provide more up-to-date and continuous information for the residents of Crewe.

Economic sustainability – although the printing and distribution of a newsletter would have costs associated with the project, it would also contribute towards the marketing of events and activities which would help to increase attendance and awareness and could be a more effective use of marketing funds to target specific segments of our local population.

Environmental sustainability – print only is needed for distribution but would use sustainable supplier and products.

6. **Community Impact**

An effective newsletter would better serve Crewe's community and its residents as it would help inform them with relevant and timely information in a format that is best suited to those who are not online. This should increase engagement with the local community.

7. **Governance**

Crewe Town Council Corporate Strategy.
Localism Act 2011.

8. **Financial Impact**

To print and make available to various key community points within Crewe:

An estimated £1,320 to print 10,000 copies. Town Rangers to distribute to key community hubs.

To deliver to each home within the Crewe town boundary:

An estimated £3,980 to print 30,000 copies.

An estimated £2,800 to deliver 26,596 copies (to businesses and residences) or £2,600 to residences only (based on an estimate received from Direct Letter Box Marketing). Remainder to be distributed to community hubs by Town Rangers.

9. **Resource Impact**

Communications Officer time to create content and format the newsletter.

Various officers' time to provide updates for the newsletter.

Distribution.

10. **Consultation/Engagement**

The newsletter could provide ongoing consultation and engagement opportunities and acts as a communication mechanism for the community which it serves.

11. **Wards Affected**

All.

12. **Conclusions**

1. That Crewe Town Council may look at additional means of engagement with the community that do not primarily use digital platforms.
2. That our current potential communications reach would be increased through a print newsletter
3. A newsletter could be a useful vehicle for raising awareness of the range of Town Council activities to a wider audience
4. A print newsletter could be an effective addition to existing marketing channels for the promotion of events and activities to encourage greater engagement

13. **Consideration Sought**

For members of the Finance and Governance Committee to consider the option highlighted within this report and consider whether to a) proceed with a newsletter and, if so, b) to provide direction.

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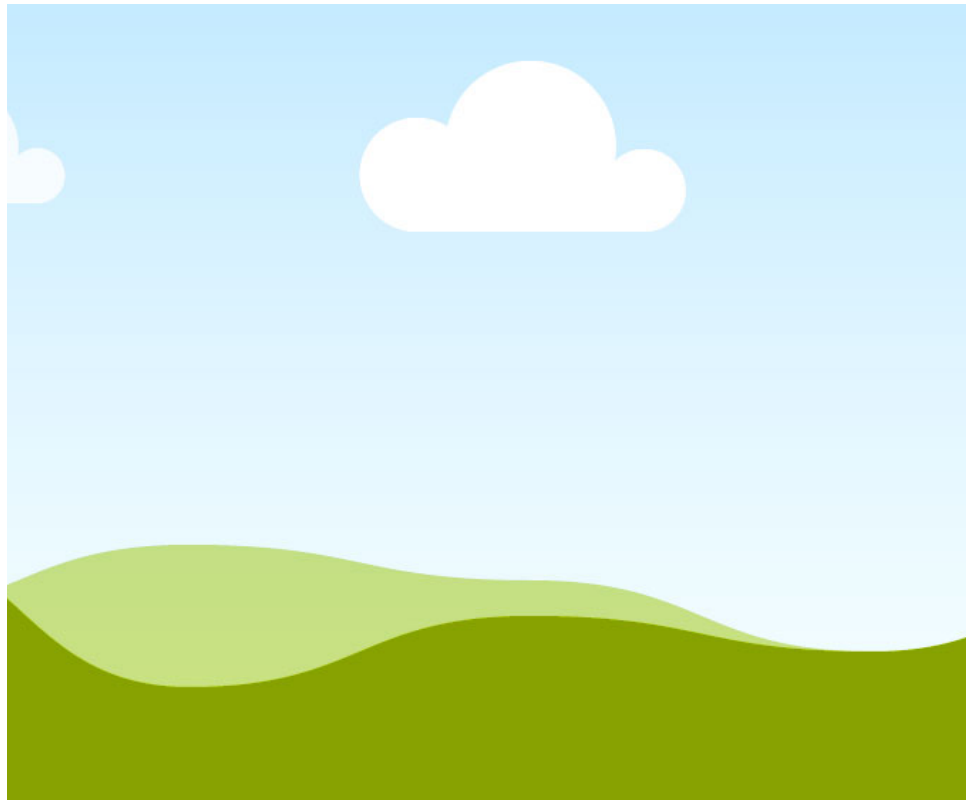
CONNECTIONS

News & updates for Crewe residents

SECONDARY FEATURE HERE

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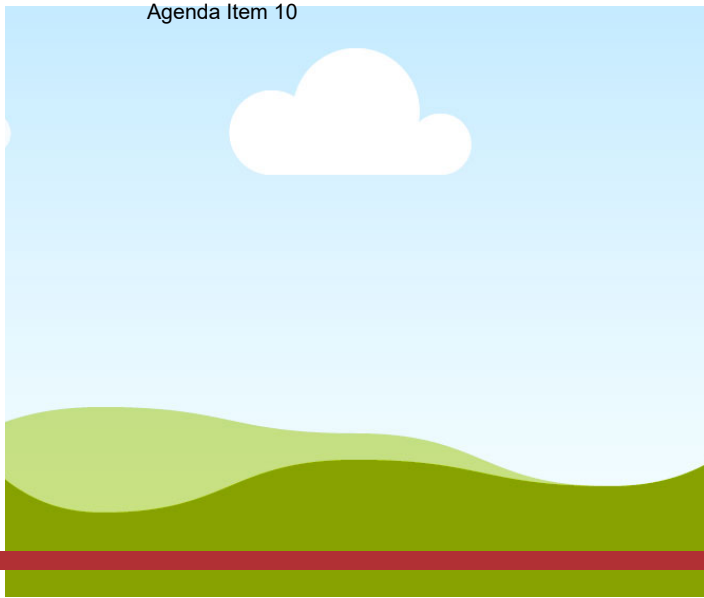
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Headline of latest news feature

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General Crewe news

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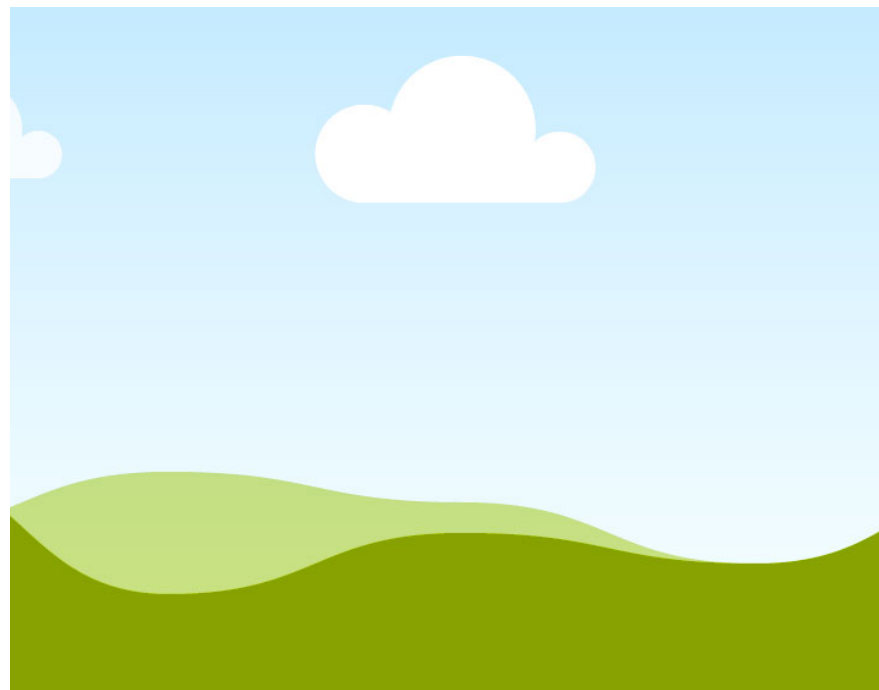
GENERAL CREWE TOWN NEWS

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General Crewe town news

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COMMUNITY & CIVIC

THE MAYOR

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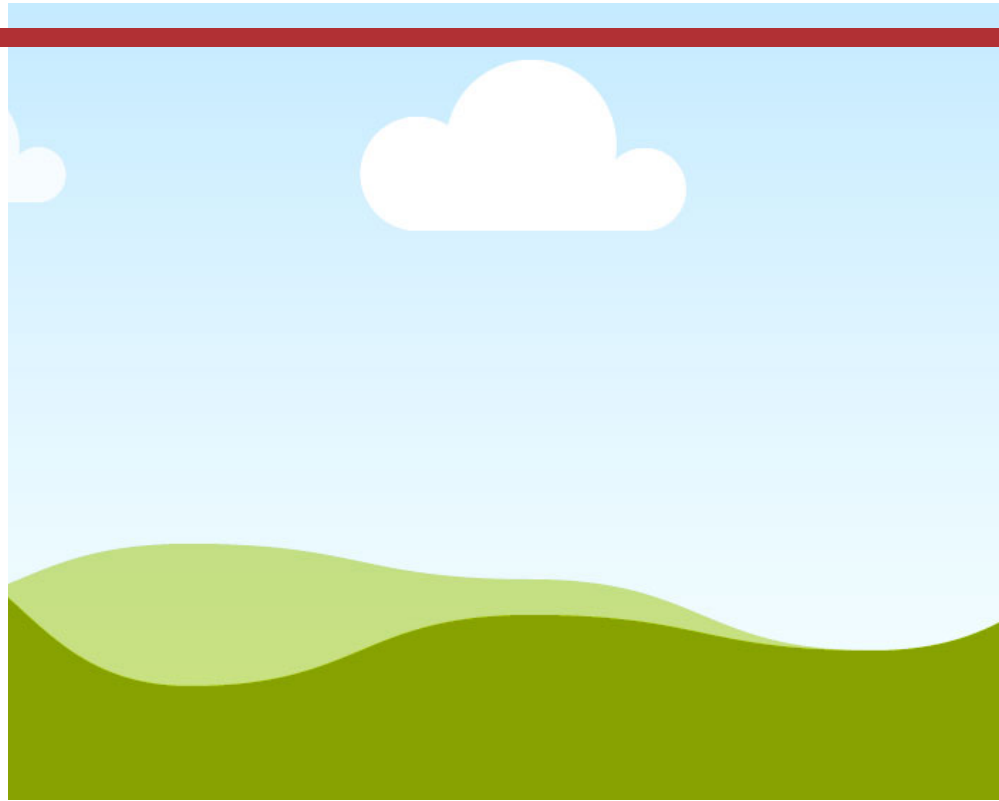
Maybe grants awarded since last time and details.

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How to book the Mayor

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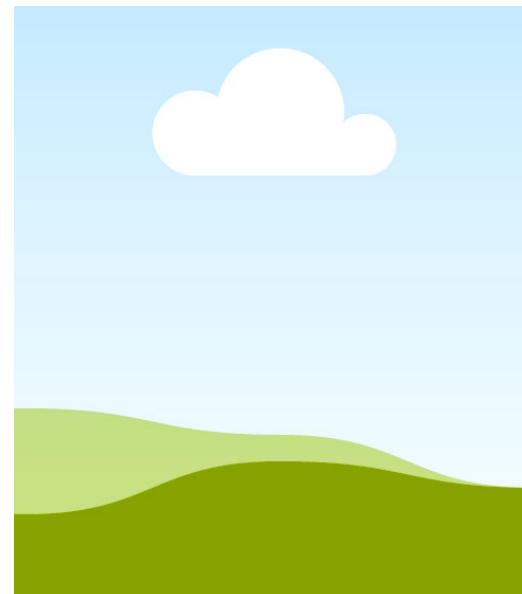


Town Ranger Service & updates

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EVENTS

NEWS

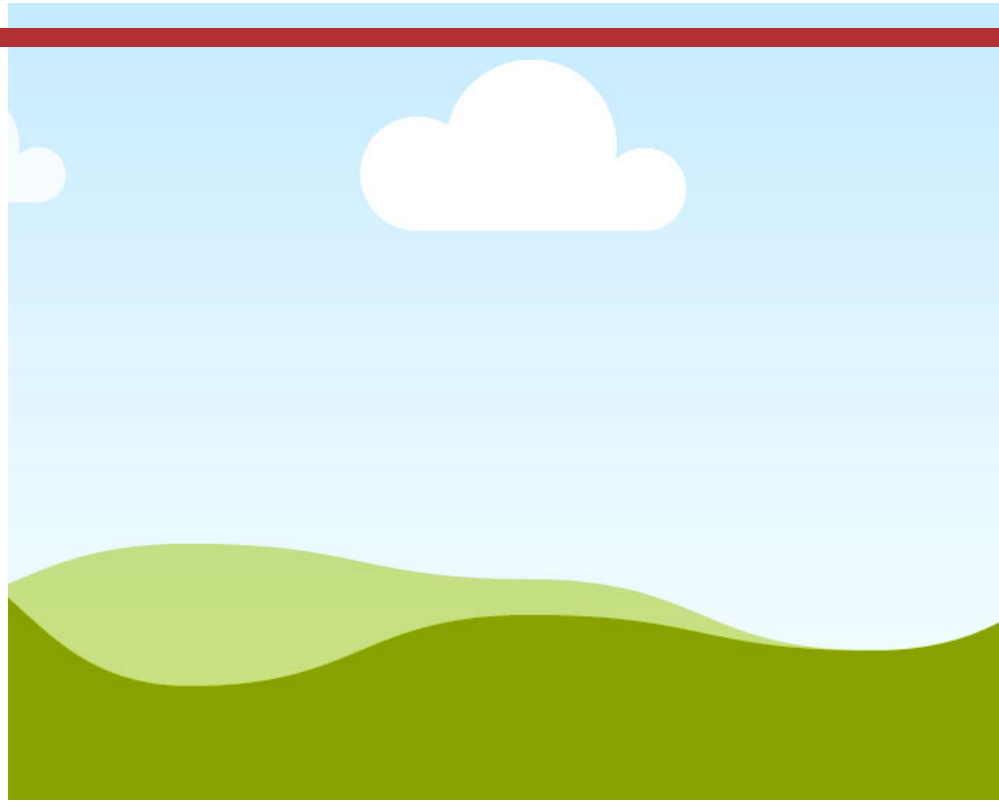
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Upcoming events...

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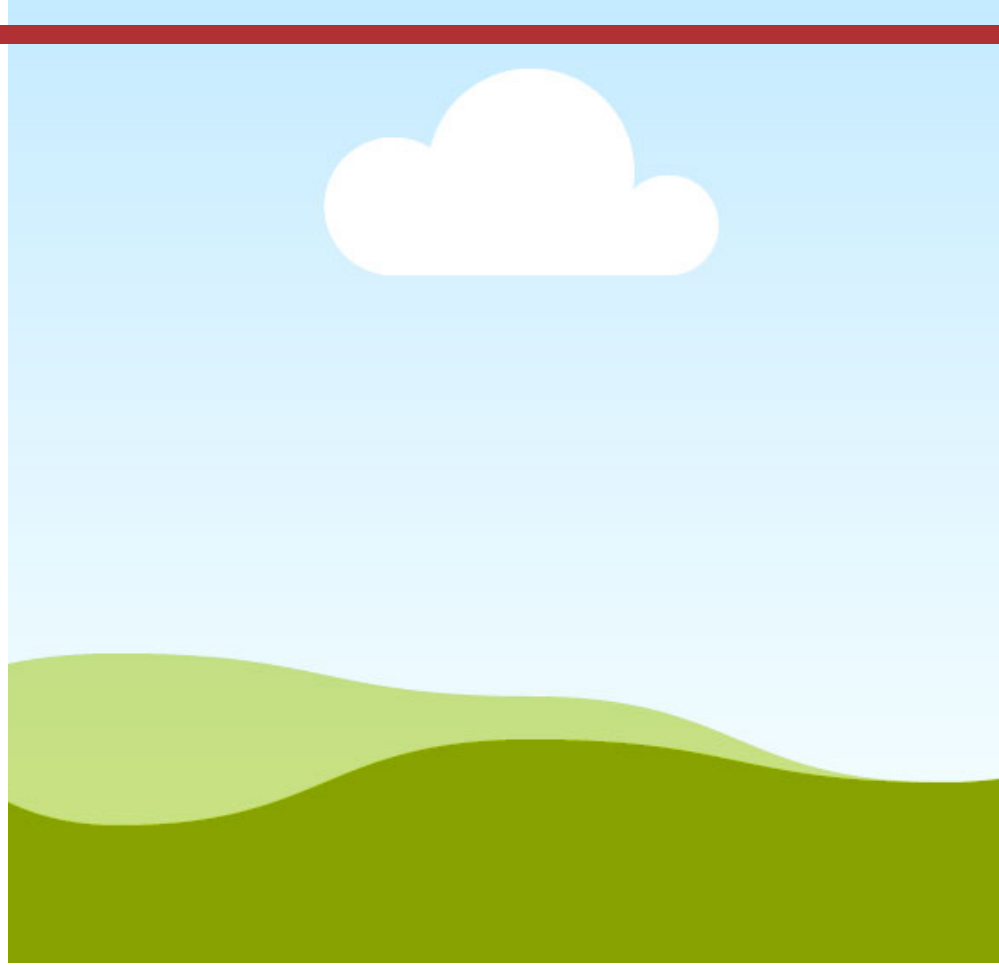
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Heritage news

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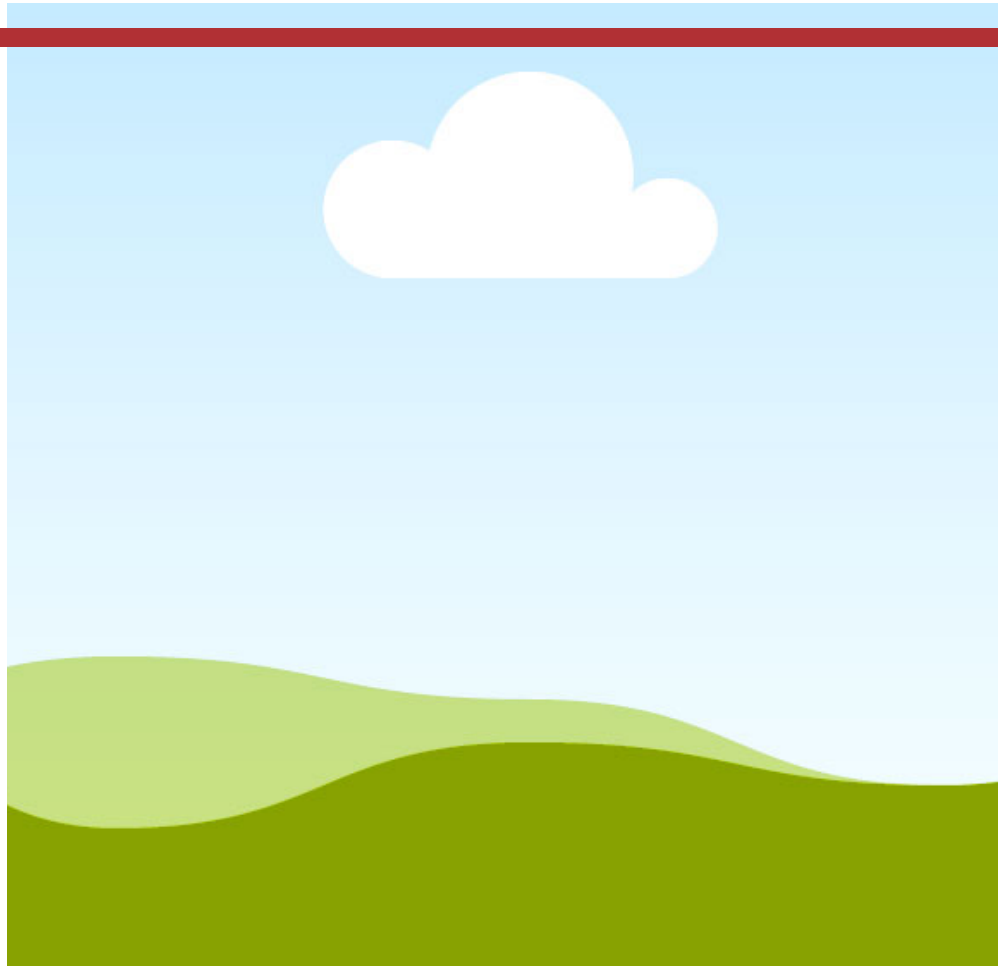
FUNDING

GRANTS SCHEME

Overview of Grants scheme, how to apply and website.

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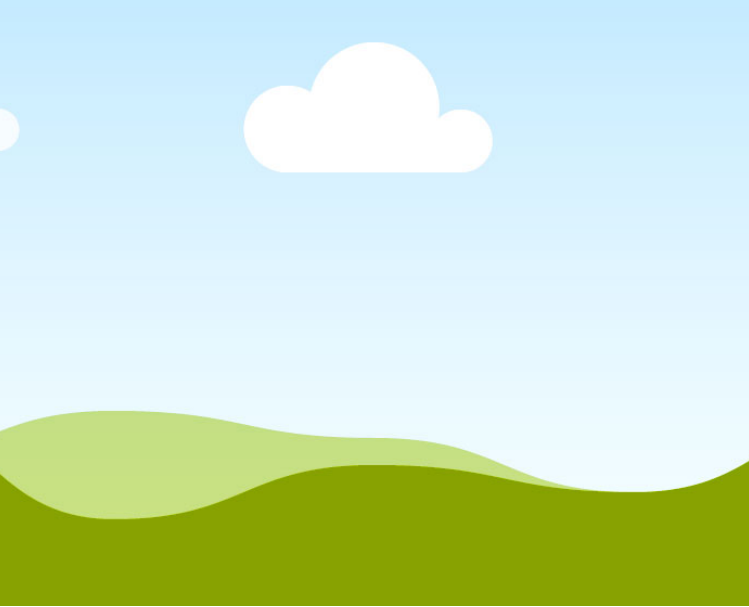
Project/Grants group spotlight

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Crewe Town Council news

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Spotlight on Council business

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UPCOMING TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS

Dates and meetings of each upcoming Committee meeting.

Also include a link to the YouTube channel with videos of past meetings.


How to submit a question for consideration at the public part of the meeting.

Aliquam in quam metus. Duis eu justo lobortis, lobortis leo eu, suscipit turpis. Suspendisse gravida in erat at malesuada..

Aliquam in quam metus. Duis eu justo lobortis, lobortis leo eu, suscipit turpis.

Cheshire East Council:
www.cheshireeast.gov.uk
 0300 123 5500

- Benefits
- Business Rates
- Car Parks
- Council Tax
- Crematorium and burial grounds
- Highways (eg potholes)
- Household Waste & Recycling
- Housing
- Libraries
- Licencing
- Parks & Green Spaces
- Planning & Building Regulations
- Public/Environmental Health
- Regeneration
- Road and Footpath Gritting
- Schools
- Social Services & Social Care



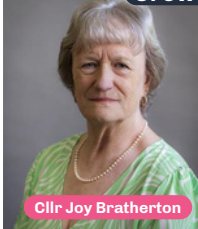
Crewe Town Council:
www.crewetowncouncil.gov.uk
 01270 756975

- Allotments
- Christmas Lights & the Switch On Event
- Community:
 - Crewe Community Plan
 - Development & Engagement
 - Grants
 - Programme of community events
- Crewe Town Rangers & public realm maintenance
- Floral displays and planting
- Funding:
 - Cleaner Crewe & alleyways projects
 - Foodbanks & Holiday Hunger projects
 - and Reviewing CCTV in Crewe
- Heritage:
 - Events & Open Days
 - Plaques
 - Promotion & development
- Investment in play areas
- Makers Market
- Public Access defibrillators
- Responding to Planning Applications in Crewe
- Town Mayor and civic activities



Crewe Town Councillors

Crewe North



Cllr Joy Bratherton



Cllr Toni Mortimer

Crewe East



Cllr Martin Edwards



Cllr Marilyn Houston

Crewe East



Cllr Jamie Messent



Cllr Jill Rhodes

Crewe South



Cllr Dennis Straine-Francis (Mayor)



Cllr Simon Yates



Cllr Clair Chapman



Cllr Dawn Clark (Deputy Mayor)

Crewe South



Cllr Alan Cooley



Cllr John Rhodes

Crewe West



Cllr Irene Faseyi

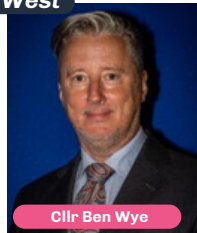


Cllr Steve Hogben

Crewe West



Cllr Stuart Mackay



Cllr Ben Wye

Crewe Central



Cllr Lena Hogben



Cllr Kevin Murray

Crewe St Barnabas



Cllr Sally Graham



Cllr James Pratt

Crewe Town Council

1 Chantry Court
Forge Street
Crewe
CW1 2DL

01270 756975
support@crewetowncouncil.gov.uk
www.crewetowncouncil.gov.uk



If you need help with the following, please contact Cheshire East Council (the Principal Authority for the Borough of Cheshire East):

Benefits 0300 123 5013	Births, deaths & marriages 0300 123 5019
Children, schools & families 0300 123 5012	Council Tax 0300 123 5013
Environmental Health 0300 123 5015	Housing 0300 123 5017
Planning 0300 123 5014	Potholes & highways 0300 123 5020
Social care & health 0300 123 5010	Waste collection & recycling 0300 123 5011

Cheshire East Council:
www.cheshireeast.gov.uk
0300 123 5500

<https://fixmystreet.cheshireeast.gov.uk>

Local GP Surgeries



Earnswood Medical Centre Dunwoody Way, CW1 3AW 01270 376666	Gresty Brook Surgery Brookhouse Drive, CW2 6NA 01270 650012
Grosvenor Medical Centre Grosvenor Street, CW1 3HB 01270 256340	Hungerford Medical Centre School Crescent, CW1 5HA 01270 275949
Millcroft Medical Centre Dunwoody Way, CW1 3AW 01270 275200	Rope Green Medical Centre Rope Lane, CW2 5DA 01270 275990

For medical emergencies, call 999

Dial NHS 111 for medical issues that do not require an emergency response.

111 is available 24/7, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobiles.





DLM Distribution Ltd, Unit 6
 88 Kettles Wood Drive
 Woodgate Business Park
 Birmingham
 B32 3DB

T: 0800 028 6353
 F: (0121) 453 9444
 E: enquiries@directletterboxmarketing.co.uk
 W: https://www.directletterboxmarketing.co.uk

Customer Reference: 30,000 Distribution Quote
Company: Crewe Town Council
Customer Name: Suzanne Thomas
Email: comms@crewetowncouncil.gov.uk
Tel:

Quotation Reference No: 00043923

Date: 31/01/2024

Distribution #1

Description			Start	End
Crewe 30,000 Distribution Quote				
Type	Paper Size	No. of Pages	Weight (gms)	Timescale
Solus	A4	8	0	

Sectors

Sector	Deliverable	Requested
N/A	0	30000
Total	0	30000

Rate Per Thousand: £85.00

Cost: **£2,550.00**

Totals

Subtotal:	£2,550.00
Discount:	£0.00
Net:	£2,550.00
VAT:	£510.00
Total:	£3,060.00

Unless otherwise stated prices are only valid for 14 days from date quoted. Prices are subject to raw material increases.

*ALL SURPLUS STOCK WILL BE RECYCLED 7 DAYS AFTER YOUR DISTRIBUTION IS COMPLETED UNLESS WE ARE INFORMED OTHERWISE WHEN BOOKING IN THE ORDER



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 E: enquiries@directletterboxmarketing.co.uk
 W: https://www.directletterboxmarketing.co.uk

Customer Reference: Crewe Town Council Boundary Quote
Company: Crewe Town Council
Customer Name: Suzanne Thomas
Email: comms@crewetowncouncil.gov.uk
Tel:

Quotation Reference No: 00043924

Date: 31/01/2024

Distribution #1

Description			Start	End
Crewe Town Council Boundary Quote				
Type	Paper Size	No. of Pages	Weight (gms)	Timescale
Solus	A4	8	0	

Sectors

Sector	Deliverable	Requested
N/A	0	25379
Total	0	25379

Rate Per Thousand: £85.00

Cost: **£2,157.22**

Totals

Subtotal:	£2,157.22
Discount:	£0.00
Net:	£2,157.22
VAT:	£431.44
Total:	£2,588.66

Unless otherwise stated prices are only valid for 14 days from date quoted. Prices are subject to raw material increases.

*ALL SURPLUS STOCK WILL BE RECYCLED 7 DAYS AFTER YOUR DISTRIBUTION IS COMPLETED UNLESS WE ARE INFORMED OTHERWISE WHEN BOOKING IN THE ORDER



CREWE
TOWN COUNCIL

REPORT STATEMENT

Meeting: Finance & Governance Committee
Report Purpose: To consider the disposal of the redundant Christmas Lights from storage
Version Control: v1
Author: Communications Officer

1. Report Summary

Following the appointment of a contractor for the delivery of Christmas lights displays in Crewe for 2024-2026, the redundant and end of use lights retained by the council are being stored by a contractor. The report seeks to progress disposal of the lights and associated fixings.

2. Background

Crewe Town Council, following its establishment in 2013, had to acquire a Christmas lights display for the town as the previous display was not available. Over the subsequent years, the display was enhanced and developed on an ad hoc basis to maintain the display and replace failed aspects.

The contract associated with this provision came to an end at the end of 2023 and a procurement exercise to appoint the provider for the coming 3 years was carried out. This resulted in a provider which will supply a new display, replacing the lights and infrastructure (eg catenary wires) that the council had been repeatedly advised was past expected useful lifespan., with dimming lights and aging fixings.

3. Position

The Crewe Christmas lights display up to 2023 and all associated fixings are stored locally by a local contractor. They are past anticipated useful life by a number of years and the past few years saw repairs and patching of the scheme as routine.

The new display will be provided by the contractor within the allocated budget and will be made up of new lights and fixings.

It remains that the former lights and fixings are in storage and will accrue costs for storage.

The lights and fixings are beyond anticipated useful life (although some still work at the point of take down of the 2023 display).

Enquiries have been made with contractors, suppliers and other local councils as to whether there is any interest in taking the lights on and if so, if there any value left in the lights.

4. **Equality Impact**

The service is delivered within the council's equality and diversity policies.

5. **Sustainability Impact**

Social sustainability – The provision of the Christmas lights scheme is a long standing expectation of the community and local businesses and adds value in the public realm during November and December.

Economic sustainability – The storage of the redundant lights will become a financial burden with now deliverable service value. The lights are not commercially viable and have limited market value due to age, inconsistency of colour and form and ad hoc repairs.

Environmental sustainability – the provision of the lights to date has been aimed to be minimal in terms of waste and provision remains LED so draws a low level of energy. Recycling of the old scheme would be a positive outcome.

6. **Community Impact**

The retention or disposal of the old lights will have negligible if any community impact.

7. **Governance**

Crewe Town Council Corporate Strategy.

Localism Act 2011.

Crewe Town Council Financial Regulations

8. **Financial Impact**

Storage of the lights will cost – estimated at £3,600 annually

The lights are held at a zero value on the council's asset register due to their age and lack of market value, meaning that disposal will not impact on the council's financial reporting.

There has been no interest from other local councils or lighting contractors and suppliers.

The lighting contractor up to 2023 has expressed an interest in acquiring the lights (and associated fixings) in their entirety for £600, expressing that they can reuse the frames, mountings and potentially some of the lights.

9. **Resource Impact**

Officer time

10. **Consultation/Engagement**

Other potential interested parties have been contacted.

11. **Wards Affected**

All.

12. **Conclusions**

1. That the lights have no commercial value of any significance due to their age
2. That there is very little external interest in acquiring the lights
3. That storage for no known outcome would be unnecessarily costly
4. That disposal to the only interested party for £600 is time efficient and provides for a token cash return.

13. **Consideration Sought**

That the lights should be disposed and the offer of £600 from the only interested party is accepted.

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