

# **BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL**



## **MEETING OF BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL**

**Ref: BTC08/1819**

**MONDAY 18th March 2019**

**at**

**THE GARTH,  
LAUNTON ROAD,  
BICESTER  
OX26 6PS**

**Circulation:**

**Town Mayor: Councillor Sean Gaul**

### **Members**

**Cllr David Anderson  
Cllr Nick Cotter  
Cllr Sean Gaul  
Cllr Dave Magee  
Cllr Melanie Magee  
Cllr Nick Mawer  
Cllr Richard Mould  
Cllr Debbie Pickford  
Cllr Lynn Pratt  
Cllr Przemek Rybka  
Cllr Dan Sames  
Cllr Les Sibley  
Cllr Jason Slaymaker  
Cllr Lawrie Stratford  
Cllr Rose Stratford**

### **Other Circulation**

**Cllr Tom Wallis - CDC  
Cllr Michael Waine - OCC  
Cllr Lucinda Wing - CDC  
Cllr John Broad - CDC**

**Bicester Advertiser  
Bicester Review  
Oxford Mail  
Bicester Library  
BTC Copy**



Council Offices,  
The Garth,  
Launton Road,  
Bicester  
Oxon, OX26 6PS

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Email: [enquiries@bicester.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@bicester.gov.uk)

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Sir/Madam

All members of Bicester Town Council are summoned to attend a meeting of the Council on **Monday 18th March 2019 at The Garth, Launton Road, Bicester OX26 6PS** to commence at **7.00 pm** for the transaction of the following business.

**Samantha Shippen**  
Chief Officer

*Members of the public and press are welcome to attend in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960*

Copy Attached	Agenda item No	<b>AGENDA</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>
	<b>2</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>  Councillors are reminded to declare any interests on any item on this agenda in accordance with Bicester Town Council's Code of Conduct.
	<b>3</b>	<b>PUBLIC SESSION</b>  In accordance with Standing Orders 1 d-f, members of the public may make representations, ask questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda. Time allocated shall not exceed 10 minutes. No member of the public shall speak for more than 2 minutes.
✓	<b>4</b>	<b>MINUTES OF THE BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS</b>  To confirm the minutes and <b>RESOLUTIONS</b> of the following Town Council meetings:  <b>BTC06/18/19 - 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019</b> <b>BTC07/1819 - 11<sup>th</sup> February 2019</b>

Copy Attached	Agenda item No	<b>AGENDA</b>
	<b>5</b>	<p><b>REPRESENTATIVE FROM THAMES VALLEY POLICE</b></p> <p>A representative from Thames Valley Police will give an update on local police matters.</p>
✓	<b>6</b>	<p><b>MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING</b></p> <p>To confirm the minutes and <b>RESOLUTIONS</b> contained in the minutes of the following Environment Committee meeting:</p> <p><b>ENV05/1819 5 February 2019</b></p>
✓	<b>6</b>	<p><b>MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS</b></p> <p>To confirm the minutes and <b>RESOLUTIONS</b> contained in the minutes of the following Planning Committee meetings:</p> <p><b>PL09/1819 14 January 2019</b>  <b>PL10/1819 11 February 2019</b></p>
✓	<b>7</b>	<p><b>MINUTES OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE MEETINGS</b></p> <p>To confirm the minutes and <b>RESOLUTIONS</b> contained in the minutes of the following Policy Committee meetings:</p> <p><b>POL04/1819 26 November 2018 (Omitted from previous minute book)</b>  <b>POL05/1819 28 January 2019</b>  <b>POL06/1819 5 March 2019</b></p>
✓	<b>8</b>	<p><b>QUESTIONS ON WORKING PARTIES &amp; OTHER GROUPS</b></p> <p>Members are asked to raise any questions they may have regarding the minutes of Working Parties and Other Groups contained in the Minute Book.</p>
✓	<b>9</b>	<p><b>REPORT FROM OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY/ CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCILLORS</b></p> <p>A report may be delivered to Bicester Town Council from Oxfordshire County and Cherwell District Councillors.</p>
✓	<b>10</b>	<p><b>REPORT OF THE TOWN MAYOR</b></p> <p>Council is asked to note the report of the Town Mayor.</p>
✓	<b>11</b>	<p><b>DRAFT CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2019/2020.</b></p> <p>To consider the draft calendar of meetings.</p>

Copy Attached	Agenda item No	<b>AGENDA</b>
✓	12	<p><b>ANNUAL TOWN MEETING DATE</b></p> <p>Council is asked to consider the attached report.</p>
✓	13	<p><b>FEOFFEE NOMINATIVE TRUSTEE</b></p> <p>To approve the appointment of Mrs Diana Edwards as nominative trustee to FEOFFEE.</p>
✓	14	<p><b>REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROL</b></p> <p>Council is asked to consider the attached report.</p>
✓	15	<p><b>RISK MANAGEMENT SCHEDULE</b></p> <p>Council is asked to consider the attached report.</p>
	16	<p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING: To be confirmed.</b></p>

**Mayors Report – 12<sup>th</sup> January – 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

**The Mayor and his Consort have attended the following functions in a Mayoral Capacity:**

8 <sup>th</sup> February	VOWH Charity Dinner
1 <sup>st</sup> March	Witney Town Council Annual Civic Reception
9 <sup>th</sup> March	Lord Mayor's Charity Dinner

**The Mayor has attended the following functions on his own:**

2 <sup>nd</sup> February	National Prayer Lunch, RAF Croughton
28 <sup>th</sup> February	The Cooper School Talk to Year 9's
28 <sup>th</sup> February	Meeting at Forget me Not



## CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2019/20

	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3	Cycle 4 (Budget)	Cycle 5	Cycle 6
<b>Council</b>	Annual Meeting 13 May  20 May	24 June (Incl Annual Governance & Accounts)	3 Sept	18 Nov	21 Jan (T) (incl budget)	9 March
<b>Planning</b>	15 May (W) 18 June (T)	15 July 12 August	16 Sept 14 Oct	11 Nov 9 Dec 13 Jan	17 Feb 16 March	20 April 7.30pm
<b>Policy Committee</b>	28 May (T)	8 July	9 Sept	25 Nov	27 Jan	23 March
<b>Environment Committee</b>	4 June (T)	29 July	30 Sept	3 Dec (T)	4 Feb (T)	30 March
<b>Finance Committee</b>	10 June (Year End)	2 July (T)	8 Oct (T)	17 Dec (T)	10 Feb	7 April (Incl Grant Aid) 7.30pm
<b>Traffic Advisory @ 2.00pm</b>	23 May	18 July	5 Sept	7 Nov	9 Jan	19 March
<b>Personnel Sub-Committee @ 6pm</b>		24 June	9 Sept	9 Dec		9 March
<b>Events Working Group @ 10am</b>	16 May	11 July	12 Sept	14 Nov	16 Jan	12 March

1. All meetings commence at 7.00pm unless otherwise stated
2. In 2020 the Annual Town Meeting will take place on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March
3. In 2020 the Annual Meeting of the Council will take place on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May
4. Changes to meeting dates may occasionally occur, the Chief Officer has the authority to rearrange meeting dates if required.
5. Working Party, Task and Finish Groups and Sub-committee meetings will be convened as required

**BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL**

**Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

**Annual Town Meeting Date**

Chairman: Councillor Sean Gaul  
[sean.gaiul@bicester.gov.uk](mailto:sean.gaiul@bicester.gov.uk)

Contact Officer: Samantha Shippen – Chief Officer  
☎ 01869 252915 [samantha.shippen@bicester.gov.uk](mailto:samantha.shippen@bicester.gov.uk)

Ward Affected: All

**1. Background**

- 1.1 The Chairman (Mayor) of the Town Council is required to call an annual meeting of electors (Annual Town Meeting) between 1 March and 1 June each year.
- 1.2 The meeting was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 3 April 2019. However this date falls within the “purdah” period prior to the elections on 2 May during which the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity should be applied as being a period of heightened sensitivity.
- 1.4 It is therefore recommended that a date after the elections be chosen for the meeting.
- 1.5 Council should agree the date which may then be published.

**2. Recommendation**

**The Council is recommended to AGREE the date for the Annual Town Meeting to be held between 7<sup>th</sup> May and 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019.**

Dear Sam,

AGENDA ITEM 13.

**Appointments to Outside Bodies - Feoffee.**

The Bicester Charities (referred to as Feoffee) has a vacancy for a Nominative Trustee to be appointed by the Town Council to serve alongside other Trustees appointed by the body of trustees itself.

The present Nominative Trustees are: Mrs. Denise Spencer, Cllr. Lynn Pratt, Cllr. Debbie Pickford and Cllr. Richard Mould. The Trustees, with the Council's agreement, would like to appoint Mrs. Diana Edwards a former Councillor and past Mayor.

We look forward to hearing that you agree this appointment.

Best Wishes,  
Pauline Liddington.  
Secretary to the Bicester Charities.



**BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL**

**Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

**REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROL**

Chairman: Councillor Sean Gaul  
[sean.gaiul@bicester.gov.uk](mailto:sean.gaiul@bicester.gov.uk)

Contact Officer: Samantha Shippen – Chief Officer  
☎ 01869 252915 [samantha.shippen@bicester.gov.uk](mailto:samantha.shippen@bicester.gov.uk)

Ward Affected: All

**1. Introduction /Background**

- 1.1 The Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015 regulation 6 requires smaller authorities, which includes Town councils, to conduct a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control.
- 1.2 The Council is required to be in a position to make a positive response to the statement “We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness” in the Annual Governance Statement in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) which forms part of the audit.
- 1.3 Governance & Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England is the guide to “proper practices” and states that in order to warrant a positive response to the statement the council requires a number of processes to be in place and effective.
- 1.4 The processes contained therein have been reviewed and comments in italics below in the report.

**2. Processes.**

- 2.1 **Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.** The authority needs to have in place standing orders and financial regulations governing how it operates. Financial regulations need to incorporate provisions for securing competition and regulating the manner in which tenders are invited. These need to be regularly reviewed, fit for purpose, and adhered to.  
*As far as possible, a fully priced official order should be sent to suppliers in advance of delivery of goods.*  
*Financial Regulations were reviewed in 2017, these will be reviewed by the Finance Committee in April 2019; Standing Orders were reviewed in May 2018 and are scheduled for review in 2019.*  
*Purchase Orders are use where appropriate, these are monitored for completion.*
- 2.2 **Safe and Efficient Arrangements to Safeguard Public Money.** Practical and resilient arrangements need to exist covering how the authority orders goods and services, incurs liabilities, manages debtors, makes payments and handles receipts.
  - 2.2.1 Authorities need to have in place safe and efficient arrangements to safeguard public money. *Arrangements are covered by Financial Regulations and monitored by the Chief Officer, external accounts consultant, Internal Auditor.*
  - 2.2.2 Authorities need to review regularly the effectiveness of their arrangements to protect money. Every authority needs to arrange for the proper administration of

its financial affairs and ensure that one of its officers (the RFO) has formal responsibility for those affairs. *Covered by Financial Regulations.*

- 2.2.3 Authorities need to ensure controls over money are embedded in Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. *Adequately covered and reviewed by Internal Auditor.*
- 2.2.4 Authorities need to approve the setting up of, and any changes to, accounts with banks or other financial institutions. Authorities also need to approve any decisions to enter into 'pooling' or 'sweep' arrangements whereby the bank periodically aggregates the authority's various balances via automatic transfers. *Banking arrangements have been reviewed and reported, changes will be required following the elections in May 2019; no sweep arrangements exist.*
- 2.2.5 If held, corporate credit card accounts need to have defined limits and be cleared monthly by direct debit from the main bank account. *Chief Officer has a credit card with limit of £4,000 it is cleared monthly by approved BACS payment **not** direct debit. **Council should review the setting up of a direct debit.***
- 2.2.6 The authority needs to approve every bank mandate, the list of authorised signatures for each account, the limits of authority for each account signature and any amendments to mandates. *All mandates approved review required after elections in 2019.*
- 2.2.7 Risk assessment and internal controls need to focus on the safety of the authority's assets, particularly money. Those with direct responsibility for money need to undertake appropriate training from time to time. *Review completed in 2018/19 and new internal procedures implemented with staff.*
- 2.2.8 **Accounts for Payment -**  
The payments process should always be carried out in accordance with the authority's Financial Regulations; payments should be reported. Specific controls should exist for payments by electronic means; outstanding payments to suppliers should be checked each year to assist with the preparation. *Payments are checked and processed in accordance with Financial Regulations and reported to the Finance Committee which acts on behalf of the council; accruals are processed at year end.*
- 2.2.9 **Receipts -** Cash and cheques should be entered into the cash book and banked promptly and intact; VAT should be accounted for; Fidelity Insurance should be checked; petty cash should be kept to a minimum, recoded fully including VAT and regular reconciliation carried out. *Banking is done at least weekly; Fidelity Insurance is adequate; petty cash is reconciled and a split of duties within the administration team.*
- 2.2.10 **Debt Collection –** Debt monitoring arrangements should be in place covering all activities which involve receipt of payments; irrecoverable debts should be written off after full consideration of possibilities for collection have been taken. *Debts are reviewed monthly by the Chief Officer after adequate procedures by the Administration Officers; Debt write off is currently by Council – **consideration should be given to delegation in respect of limited amounts a policy will be required.***
- 2.3 **Employment.** The remuneration payable to all employees needs to be approved in advance by the authority. In addition to having robust payroll arrangements which cover the accuracy and legitimacy of payments of salaries and wages, and associated liabilities, the authority needs to ensure that it has complied with its duties under employment legislation and has met its pension obligations. *Review undertaken by Personnel Sub Committee, external processing of salaries in place, external HR*

*Consultant engaged via OALC to give advice, confirmation from Pensions Regulator on file.*

- 2.4 **VAT.** The authority needs to have robust arrangements in place for handling its responsibilities with regard to VAT. *VAT processes reviewed by external consultant & reclaims processed by same.*
- 2.5 **Fixed Assets and Equipment.** The authority's assets need to be secured, properly maintained and efficiently managed. Appropriate procedures need to be followed for any asset disposal and for the use of any resulting capital receipt. Risk can arise from improper asset management, improper asset useage and maintenance. *Covered by Financial Regulations, improvements to recording system continue.*
- 2.6 **Loans and Long Term Liabilities.** Authorities need to ensure that any loan or similar commitment is only entered into after the authority is satisfied that it can be afforded and that relevant approvals have been obtained. Proper arrangements need to be in place to ensure that funds are available to make repayments of capital and any associated interest and other liabilities. *Covered by Financial Regulations.*
- 2.7 **Review of effectiveness.** Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 requires the authority to conduct each financial year a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The review needs to inform the authority's preparation of its annual governance statement. *The purpose of this report is to comply for 2018/19.*

**3. Recommendation:**

The Council is recommended to:

**CONSIDER and AGREE the Council has reviewed the effectiveness of Internal Controls for 2018/19.**

**BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL**

**Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

**REVIEW OF THE RISK MANAGEMENT SCHEDULE**

Chairman: Councillor Sean Gaul  
[sean.gaiul@bicester.gov.uk](mailto:sean.gaiul@bicester.gov.uk)

Contact Officer: Samantha Shippen – Chief Officer  
☎ 01869 252915 [samantha.shippen@bicester.gov.uk](mailto:samantha.shippen@bicester.gov.uk)

Ward Affected: All

**1. Background**

- 1.1 The Chief Officer has carried out a review of the Risk Management Schedule previously approved in March 2017.
- 1.2 The revised schedule is attached for approval at Appendix 1.

**2. Recommendation:**

The Council is recommended to:

**APPROVE the Risk Management Schedule.**

**BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL**

**RISK MANAGEMENT SCHEDULE**

<b>MANAGEMENT</b>				
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Risk(s) Identified</b>	<b>SCORE</b>	<b>Management/Control of Risk</b>	<b>Review/Assess/Revise</b>
Business Continuity	Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance	L	<p>All computer files are backed up remotely either via the server or held on CITRIX. Tests have been carried out to ensure restoration is achievable.</p> <p>Paper records are more at risk, consideration should be given to risk of loss.</p> <p>Important documents should be scanned electronically and/or kept in secure storage. Deeds are held in fireproof safe.</p> <p>In the event of the Chief Officer being indisposed the Chairman of Policy to convene a Personnel Sub-Committee to allocate "Proper Officer" responsibilities contact OALC for advice/support.</p> <p>Business continuity insurance in place with Zurich.</p>	<p>Test carried out to restore files successful.</p> <p>Assess cost/benefits of scanning systems.</p> <p>Ensure procedures are followed</p> <p>Loss of Key Staff insurance to be included at renewal</p>
Meeting Location	Adequacy Health and Safety	L	<p>Meetings are held in Council Chamber which has available disabled access. If required meetings can be re-located (at a cost) to a larger venue. Health &amp; safety considered adequate.</p>	Review bi-annually
Council records - paper	Loss through theft, fire, flood or other damage	L	<p>Important documents should be scanned electronically or kept in Document safe. Deeds are held in Document Safe.</p> <p>Older minutes and historical documents to be archived with OCC archive.</p>	<p>Likelihood is low</p> <p>Review bi-annually</p> <p>Consider deposit of minutes with OCC Record Office</p>

			Document Retention & Disposal Policy was introduced in July 2018.	Review 2022
Council records – Electronic	Loss through damage, fire, flood, corruption of data	L	Regular backup to remote location.	Test restore from back up periodically
Staff	Loss of Chief Officer / Operations Manager/ other staff	M	Loss of Key Staff insurance cover to be introduced from April 2019	
	Fraud	L	Fidelity guarantee in place via insurance. Councillors carry out regular review of bank reconciliation.	Regular review
	Actions carried out	L	Regular reporting of actions completed and outstanding via forward plan & regular update meetings. Staff to be adequately trained and review carried out via appraisal process.	

<b>FINANCE</b>				
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Risk(s) Identified</b>	<b>H/M/L</b>	<b>Management/Control of Risk</b>	<b>Review/Assess/Revise</b>
Precept	Adequacy	M	Sound budgeting to underlie annual precept. The Finance Committee regularly receives budget update. Existing procedure adequate information and detailed budgets in the late autumn. Backed by financial regulations. The precept is an agenda item at the January meeting. Reviewed by Internal audit	Existing procedure adequate
Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance Fidelity Guarantee	L L L L	Comprehensive review undertaken in 2018. Long term agreement to April 2019. Additional measures to test compliance. Adequate cover.	3 year agreement expires 2019
Banking	Inadequate procedures	L	Control via split staff duties, review by internal audit and internal controls	Review via Financial Regulations
Cash	Loss via theft or dishonesty	L	Income receipted and banked in accordance with financial regulations. petty cash held in accordance with Financial Regulations.	Existing procedures adequate Review via Financial Regulations
Financial controls and records	Inadequate checks	L	Reconciliation checked by councillors and reported to Finance Committee. signatories on transactions following sign off on control sheets. Internal and external audit. All payments must be minuted.	Existing procedures adequate Review via Financial Regulations and internal controls annually
Salary	Incorrect payment or process	L	processing by external provider, rates reviewed annually by Personnel Sub-Committee.	
VAT	Reclaim not processed	L	External contractor processes quarterly.	
Annual Return	Not submitted in time	L	Council aware of timing process by 30 <sup>th</sup> June, Annual return completed and signed by the council, submitted to the internal auditor for section completion. Checked and sent on to the external auditor	Existing procedures adequate

<b>PROCEDURAL</b>					
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Risk(s) Identified</b>	<b>H/M/L</b>	<b>Management/Control of Risk</b>	<b>Review/Assess/Revise</b>	
Freedom of Information	Non-compliance with Act	L	publication scheme for Local Councils reviewed in 2018. Limited number of requests for information.	review documented procedure for dealing with requests.	
Data Protection	Non-compliance with Act	L M	Registration with IOC GDPR procedures introduced in 2018 Limited requests	Monitor and report impact of requests made	



<b>LIABILITY</b>				
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Risk(s) Identified</b>	<b>H/M/L</b>	<b>Management/Control of Risk</b>	<b>Review/Assess/Revise</b>
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments  Committees exceeding delegated authority Working Groups taking decisions	L  L L	All activities and payments made within the powers of the council, resolved and clearly minuted. GPC to be reaffirmed in 2019 Established Clear terms of reference, minutes to Council for approval, terms to be reviewed in 2019 Clear referencing, councillor training.	Ongoing review  Annual review Annual Review
Minutes, Agendas and standing documents	Accuracy and legality  Non Compliance with Statutory requirements	L  L	Minutes and agendas are produced in the prescribed method and adhere to legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed off at the next meeting. Minutes and agendas are displayed according to legal requirements. Business conducted at the council is managed by the mayor/chairman with advice from a trained Chief Officer Standing Orders & Financial Regulations based on NALC models	Review on regular basis  Chairman training when required Annual review
Public liability	Risk to third party property or individuals	M	Insurance is in place, risk assessments of individual events to be undertaken	
Employers Liability	Non Compliance with legal requirement	L	Insurance in place. Ensure adequate training & procedures for councillors and staff	
Legal Liability	Legality of activities	L	Chief Officer adequately trained and has access to advice via OALC and SLCC membership	Maintain membership of OALC/NALC and SLCC

## COUNCILLOR PROPRIETY

Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H/M/L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Code of Conduct	Non compliance	M	Adopted code 2012, Councillors given copy upon election. Chief Officer willing to give informal advice. Consider training for councillors.	<b>Councillor training by Monitoring Officer after election</b>
Members Interests	Conflict of interest Failure to register interests	M L	Agenda item on every meeting Councillors aware of duty and reminded regularly about requirements. Chief Officer willing to give informal advice.	Existing procedures adequate Annual review

<b>ASSETS</b>				
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Risk(s) Identified</b>	<b>H/M/L</b>	<b>Management/Control of Risk</b>	<b>Review/Assess/Revise</b>
Asset Register	Assets not recorded	L	An asset register is established Insurance is held at the appropriate level for all items. Regular checks are made on equipment by staff	Document checks in a more thorough way
Maintenance of assets	Poor maintenance leads to loss or injury Poor performance of assets or amenities. Loss of income or performance Risk to third parties	M	Improve maintenance schedule and recording Provide adequate budget Review insurance	Review and document
<b>Draft prepared March 2019</b>				
<b>Approved: 18<sup>th</sup> March 2019</b>				
<b>Review: March 2020</b>				