

Bicester Town Council



Policy Committee Meeting

Ref: POL01/2223

Monday 23rd May 2022

at 19:00hrs

**The Chamber Room, Bicester Town Council, The
Garth, Launton Road, Bicester, Oxon OX26 6PS**

Members:

Cllr Donna Ford – **Chairman**, Cllr Nicholas Mawer – **Vice-Chairman**
Cllr Richard Mould, Cllr Lynn Pratt, Cllr Nick Cotter, Cllr Dan Hallett, Cllr Dan Sames,
Cllr Les Sibley, Cllr Jason Slaymaker and Cllr James Metcalf

Other Circulation, Substitute Members:

Cllr Alex Thrupp, Cllr Fraser Webster, Cllr Harry Knight, Cllr Zoe McLernon and Cllr
Sandy Dallimore

Other Circulation:

Callum Miller (OCC), Cllr Michael Waine (OCC), Christopher Pruden (CDC)



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17 May 2022

To all Members of the Policy Committee

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **Policy Committee** at **The Chamber Room, Bicester Town Council, The Garth, Launton Road, Bicester, Oxon OX26 6PS** on **Monday 23rd May 2022** to commence at **19:00hrs** for the transaction of the following business.

Phil Evans
Town Clerk

Agenda

All Council Meetings are open to the public and press, unless otherwise stated.

1. Apologies for Absence

To consider apologies and reasons for absence. Committee members who are unable to attend the meeting should notify Bicester Town Council (enquiries@bicester.gov.uk) prior to the meeting, stating the reason for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillors are reminded to declare any interests on any item on this Agenda in accordance with Bicester Town Council's Code of Conduct.

3. Minutes of Policy Committee

RESOLVED to confirm the minutes of the Policy Committee meeting:

(Pages 4 -
5)

Tuesday 5th April 2022

4. Public Session

In accordance with Standing Order 1 d-f, members of the public may make representations, ask questions and give evidence in respect of any items of business included in the agenda. Time allocated shall not exceed 10

minutes. No member shall speak for more than 2 minutes.

- 5. Major Town Initiatives** (Pages 6 - 10)
RESOLVED that Committee **NOTED** the minutes from:

Bicester Vision CIC Executive Board Meeting - Thursday 7th April 2022

- 6. Bicester Festival Grant** (Page 11)
 Committee is recommended to **APPROVE** the remaining Bicester Festival grant.

- 7. Policies for Review** (Page 12)
 Committee is recommended to **APPROVE** the policies and procedures being reviewed.

7.1 Virtual Meeting Procedures (GP19) (Pages 13 - 15)

7.2 Blue Plaque Policy (GP19A) (Pages 16 - 17)

7.3 Safe Guarding Policy (GP21) (Pages 18 - 28)

7.4 Vexatious Complaints Procedure (GP23) (Pages 29 - 35)

7.5 Document Retention Policy (GP25) (Pages 36 - 45)

- 8. Freedom of Information Activity Report** (Pages 46 - 47)
 Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to **NOTE** the Freedom of Information Activity Report.

- 9. Forward Plan** (Page 48)
 Committee members are asked to **NOTE** the forward Plan.

- 10. Date of Next Meeting**
Monday 15th August 2022 – 7pm – The Garth.

Close of meeting:

Minutes of the Policy Committee

A meeting of the **Policy Committee** was held on **Tuesday 5th April 2022** at **19:30 hrs** at the **The Chamber Room, Bicester Town Council, The Garth, Launton Road, Bicester, Oxon OX26 6PS**.

Present:

Cllr Richard Mould (Chairman)
Cllr Lynn Pratt (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Dan Hallett
Cllr Nicholas Mawer
Cllr Dan Sames
Cllr Les Sibley
Cllr Jason Slaymaker
Cllr James Metcalf (Substitute)
Cllr Sandy Dallimore (Substitute)

In Attendance:

Phil Evans – Town Clerk
Julie Trinder – Administration Officer

583/ Apologies for Absence

2122 RESOLVED that apologies were received from Cllr Alex Thrupp and Cllr Zoe McLernon.

Cllr Sandy Dallimore substituted for Cllr Zoe McLernon.

584/ Declarations of Interest

2122 RESOLVED that no declarations of interest were received.

585/ Minutes of Policy Committee

2122 RESOLVED to confirm the minutes of the Policy Committee meeting **POL05/2122** held on **Tuesday 15th February 2022**.

586/ Public Session

2122 RESOLVED that no members of the public were present.

587/ Major Town Initiatives

2122 RESOLVED that Committee **NOTED** the minutes from:

Bicester Vision CIC Meeting: 3rd March 2022

588/ Freedom of Information Activity Report

2122 RESOLVED that Committee **NOTED** the Freedom of Information Activity Report.

589/ Public Space Protection Order (PSPO)

2122 RESOLVED that Committee **SUPPORTED** the introduction of a PSPO in the areas outlined. Chairman of Policy to take back to Richard Webb, Cherwell District Council to request inclusion of not barring the consumption of alcohol in Garth Park.

590/ Financial Regulations February 2022 (GP8)

2122 RESOLVED that Committee **REVIEWED** the Financial Regulations 2022 Policy and requested that amendments are made and referred back to Finance Committee and

Minutes: POL06/2122: Policy Committee Meeting
Tuesday 5th April 2022

Page 1 of 2

Signed

Dated

Bicester Town Council meeting.

591/ Sponsorship Policy (GP13)

2122 RESOLVED that Committee **REVIEWED** and adopted version 2 amendments.

592/ Partnership and Outside Bodies Policy (GP14)

2122 RESOLVED that Committee **REVIEWED** and adopted version 2 amendments.

593/ Data Protection Policy (GP16)

2122 RESOLVED that Committee **REVIEWED** and adopted version 2 amendments. Bicester Town Council to check if Data Protection Officer is needed.

594/ Play Area Adoption Policy (GP17)

2122 RESOLVED that Committee **REVIEWED** the policy and asked for the terminology to be amended and bring back for further review at a later date.

595/ Forward Plan

2122 RESOLVED that Committee **NOTED** and **COMMENTED** on the forward plan.

596/ Date of Next Meeting

2122 23rd May 2022 – *to be confirmed.*

Meeting closed: 08:10pm

BICESTER VISION

Meeting	BICESTER VISION CIC EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING	
Directors/Members Present	Lt Col (Retd) Lyndon Robinson (Chair) (LR) James Hill (Adalta Real) (JH) Graeme Laws (Business Manager) (Director only) (GL) Miranda Markham (Value Retail/Bicester Village) (MM) James Metcalf (Metcalf Security Group Ltd) (JM) Cllr Richard Mould (Bicester Town Council) (RM) Cllr Lynn Pratt (Cherwell District Council) (LP)	
Observers Present	Jonty Ashworth (Bicester Motion) (JA) Richard Byard (OxLEP) (RB) Peter Cox (Grange Mews/Bicester Chamber) (Part meeting) (PC) Robert Jolley (Chiltern District Council) (RJ) Amrik Manku (Oxfordshire County Council) (Part meeting) (AM)	
Apologies	Lt Col Alex Atherton (Bicester Garrison), Sarah-Jane Curtis (Bicester Motion) (SJC), Cllr Duncan Enright (Oxfordshire County Council), Shaun Jardine (Big Yellow Penguin/Mediation Zone), William Knighton (Chiltern Railway), Graham Perryman (Bicester Chamber), Paul Reeve (Bullingdon Prison), Phil Shadbolt (Zeta), Steve Thornton (Brita UK), Cllr Michael Waite (Oxfordshire County Council)	
In attendance	Sarah Fraser	(SF)
Date of meeting	Thursday 7 April 2022	
Venue	Via Zoom	
Circulation	All Supporters	
Dates of next meetings	Full Partnership/AGM – Thursday, 12 May 2022, 12-2pm, at British Bakels Executive Board – Thursday 9 June 2022, 10am-12pm , via Zoom	

MINUTES

ACTION

1 CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

LR welcomed all those on the call and offered two brief updates on discussions with potential new Bicester Vision CIC supporters and continuing progress with the Cherwell District Council Grant Agreement, covering financial support for Bicester Vision CIC for the financial years 20/21, 21/22, and 22/23 (the first year having been paid).

The Grant Agreement now sits with Cherwell's Leader, Corporate Director and Section 151 Officer who will agree whether the remaining amounts for 2021/22 and 2022/23 will be settled.

2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2022 were agreed as an accurate record.

2.1 Matters arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)

- 2.1.1 ➤ **Bullington Prison initiative:** Work continues to establish a Community Connections Worker within the prison to build links into the Bicester community with the aim of reducing reoffending. A position on the Bicester Vision CIC Board as an observer has been offered to help build these links. The initiative has now sourced an external repository for the funding being secured to support this appointment (not Bicester Vision CIC).
- 2.1.2 ➤ **Bicester Motion Wilderness Quarter** – SJC to provide a presentation on the proposals for this development at the Bicester Motion site at a future meeting (likely 15 September 2022).

SJC

All other actions had been undertaken, were covered by the agenda or were ongoing.

3 **MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT UPDATE**

The Board noted the update provided on the organisation's membership, three new supporters recently being confirmed (Big Yellow Penguin, Darcica, and Brand Protect Limited) and discussions ongoing with a further five potential new supporters, a number arising as a result of the recent Partnership event at the Bicester Hotel, Golf and Spa.

The Board also noted that two existing supporters may be at risk. Further information will be provided should discussions progress.

GL

It was confirmed invoices for the new financial year will be forwarded in the coming few weeks to all supporters (with the exception of Cherwell District Council who will be governed by the Grant Agreement once finalised).

4 **BUSINESS MANAGER UPDATE**4.1 Finances

GL reminded the Board that the organisation aims to work to a balanced budget each year. 2021/22 saw a loss of £12k as a result of a deferred membership payment of £15k, which is expected in the current financial year.

The organisation will work to a balanced budget again in 2022/23, with income based on current supporter levels anticipated to be in the region of £75k with an anticipated expenditure in the region of £60k.

The Board discussed the possibility of using any underspend achieved at the end of the year to provide a small business grant or support for a charitable undertaking/worthy cause within the community. It was suggested grants could be made following receipt of bids, allowing the community to bid for what is needed on the ground, and putting in place simple criteria by which to measure the success of any grants given.

However, the continued pressure on Local Authority budgets was also recognised, the picture for 2023/24 onwards being unclear and the Board also considered whether to carry any underspend in the current year forward to offset potential reductions in Local Authority support. The Board considered the involvement of the three levels of Local Authority with Bicester Vision CIC which not only offers key financial support but, even without this, enables BV's ability to bring together public and private sector representatives to discuss Bicester's needs which is a key USP for Bicester Vision CIC.

Alongside this, it was noted OxLEP's Business Adaptation Grant, aimed at supporting small/micro businesses towards Net Zero and assisting with tech adoption, is due to launch in the next few weeks and there may be opportunities for Bicester Vision CIC not only to promote/champion this grant, but also to bid to it for financial support (output criteria and conflicts of interest allowing).

It was agreed:

- **To add a Finance update as a standing agenda item, to include:** SF
 - **Updates on Local Authorities' ability to continue to fund Bicester Vision CIC.**
 - **Likely over/underspend within Bicester Vision CIC as the year progresses and, if there is an underspend, how to utilise this.**
- **GL will build a business plan and budget based on the anticipated income/expenditure at the current point and this will be monitored throughout the year.** GL

4.2 Events

The Board discussed the recent Networking PLUS! partnership event; what had worked well and where improvements can be made, including reducing the number of speakers and allowing greater time for networking. That said, excellent feedback has been received from a number of those that attended the meeting on 3 March 2022.

The Board discussed possible topics for future Partnership meetings etc as below. GL

12/5/22 Partnership meeting/AGM to include:

- Review of Bicester Vision CIC's achievements in 2021/22
- Confirmation of Chair/Vice Chair for the coming year
- Brief introductions from all new joining members
- Update from Great Wolf on their development
- Business Adaptation Grant launch
- Bakels Tour
- Networking

Future Partnership meetings to include:

- Update on Bicester Motion Wilderness Quarter development
- East West Rail/Rail freight hub development
- Garden Town initiative (discussion at Exec Board first then full Partnership)
- CDC Economic Prosperity Strategy to 2030+
- Book publishing/literacy promoting event with Coles books

Possible future visits for Partnership and/or Exec Board to:

- Bullingdon Prison
- Arrival Ltd – electric vehicle manufacturer (Bicester Motion happy to host before/after)
- Ocado warehouse

5 **STANDING AGENDA ITEMS UPDATES**

5.1 Development

- Those present noted the significant number of development/planning applications coming forward at the moment commenting that these are in response, in part, to developers perceiving a weakness in the 5 year land supply in the area.
- Board members also noted that planning permissions exist currently for c 10k houses pending developers commencing work to build these.

5.2 Town Centre Task Group

- The Town Centre Task Group has not met in recent months but a meeting is in the process of being arranged; something that is essential for keeping members of the Task Group engaged.
- In the background, work has been undertaken by CDC officers to align "Reimagining Bicester" work with the aims of the Garden Town initiative, which will allow funding to be drawn down to support this work.

- One core strand within the town centre work was the creation of a Community Hub at an estimated cost of c£4m-£5m. A bid has been submitted to secure £1m funding as a contribution towards this cost; the outcome is awaited.
- In parallel with the above, work has continued following the success of the pop up Art Gallery utilising Welcome Back funding. The excellent relationship built with the landlord involved will now see a second pop up art space which will open in May to coincide with Art Week. Additionally, a craft emporium “Make Space” is to open in Sheep Street. There is increasing interest from local artists keen to put on events/shows in the town centre.

RJ

5.3 OxLEP update

- The LEP Review has now been concluded, setting out some high-level principles for LEPs’ future operation, tied to the devolution agenda and greater integration within local government institutions.
- OxLEP will be continuing in its current form for the moment, supported by reduced core funding (£500k reducing to £375k) in the coming year, with Growth Hub funding cut by 50%.
- LEPs are to focus on:
 - Growth Hub agenda supporting business
 - Internationalisation and supporting foreign direct investment
 - Skills agenda supported by the Careers Enterprise Company and Skills Advisory Panel
 - Monitoring the effectiveness of local growth programmes
- Despite funding cuts, OxLEP is in “pretty good shape” due to prudent financial management and continues to be able to support all the various agendas with which it has engaged to date.
- As mentioned, new grants have been established: Business Adaptation Grant, and the Visitor Economy grant, the latter supporting one of the sectors hardest hit by the pandemic. Funding totalling c£1m is available across the two grants. This is in addition to EU funding that continues until December 2022 (with a request submitted to extend this to June 2023).
- Oxfordshire continues to see chronic labour shortages and it was suggested there may be a job for Bicester Vision CIC to do to bring together sources of potential employees; including refugees coming to the area but also capitalising on the work to be done with the local prison service. GL/RB to discuss separately.

GL/RB

5.4 Local Intelligence

- **Ukraine** (slides to follow from Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership):
 - Cherwell District Council has begun the process of examining host houses for refugees coming to the area, with DBS checks required on people opening their homes.
 - £350 per month will go to each host, with £200 also due to be handed to refugees as they arrive.
 - The Council is looking at how to manage effective integration of refugees, including access to education and healthcare provision.
 - A rematching service is also being examined where the initial match is not successful.

6 **BOARD MEMBER UPDATES**

6.1 Bicester Vision CIC – Grae Laws

- Partners were asked to forward their contributions to the Bicester Vision CIC Annual Report to GL/SF as soon as available. The success of the Annual Report relies in large part to the content received from partners.

ALL

6.2 Bicester Town Council – Cllr Richard Mould

- RM confirmed he will standing down as Leader of Bicester Town Council from 9 May 2022 and will introduce the new Leader to the Bicester Vision CIC Board as soon as appointed. As such, he has also taken the decision to stand down from the Bicester Vision CIC Board after 8 years of service; the Partnership meeting on 12 May 2022 being his last meeting.

- The Board offered its thanks to Richard for the significant contribution he has made, not only to the success of Bicester Vision CIC, but also to the success of the wider Bicester community.

7 3 OUTPUTS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE WEBSITE

- Bicester Vision CIC pushes for an update on progress with the town centre initiative.
- Bicester Vision CIC encourages supporters to forward content asap for the BV Annual Report.
- Bicester Vision CIC is delighted to be welcoming new supporters to the Partnership.

8 FUTURE MEETINGS

Future dates

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| ➤ Full Partnership and AGM – Thursday 12 May 2022, 12-2pm, British Bakels | P/Ship |
| ➤ Executive Board – Thursday 9 June 2022, 10am-12pm | Board |
| ➤ Executive Board – Thursday 21 July 2022, 10am-12pm | Board |
| ➤ Full Partnership – Thursday 15 September 2022, 8-10am, Bicester Garrison (tbc) | P/Ship |
| ➤ Executive Board – Thursday 6 October 2022, 10am-12pm | Board |
| ➤ Executive Board – Thursday 3 November 2022, 10am-12pm | Board |
| ➤ Full Partnership – Thursday 1 December 2022, 12-2pm, venue tbc | P/Ship |

The meeting closed at 11.55am

BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Monday 23rd May 2022

Bicester Festival Grant

Chairman: Councillor Donna Ford

Telephone: 07714 594 814

Phil Evans – Town Clerk

Telephone: 01869 252915 phil.evans@bicester.gov.uk

Ward Affected: All

1. Overview

- 1.1** OYAP are organising and running this year's Bicester Festival and applied for £2,500 Grant Aid towards the costs. Finance Committee 11th April approved the grant up to £1000 as this is the maximum in the Grant Aid policy and agreed that officers bring the remaining £1500 to the next Policy Committee for a one off variation to the policy.

2. Recommendation

Committee is recommended to **APPROVE** the remaining Bicester Festival grant of £1500.

BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Monday 23rd May 2022

Policies and Procedures for Review

Chairman: Councillor Donna Ford

Telephone: 07714 594 814

Phil Evans – Town Clerk

Telephone: 01869 252915 phil.evans@bicester.gov.uk

Ward Affected: All

1. Overview

In the meeting the following Policies and Procedures are being reviewed:

- Virtual Meeting Procedures (GP19)
- Blue Plaque Policy (GP19A)
- Safeguarding Policy (GP21)
- Vexatious Complaints Procedure (GP23)
- Documentation Retention Policy (GP25)

2. Recommendation

Committee is recommended to **APPROVE** the policies and procedures being reviewed.



BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL

Virtual Meeting Procedure GP19

Document Control				
Review date is indicative and will depend on changes in legislation, best practice or when required. Alternative formats of this document may be available upon request.				
Version Number	Date Adopted	Minute Number	Amendments	Review Date
V1	Originally adopted 22 nd June 2020			Suspended due to legislation. Review as required.
			Chief Officer title will need to be removed and replaced with Town Clerk if legislation allows for virtual meetings in the future	

Bicester Town Council
The Garth
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From 4 April 2020 until 7 May 2021 (or until such other time as the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government determines, parish and town councils have been given provision under The Coronavirus Act 2020 and the associated *The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020* ("the 2020 Regulations") to hold legal virtual meetings in order that council business can be maintained.

A variety of different platforms including Microsoft Teams, Google Hangouts or Zoom are available.

Following assessment by the Chief Officer, Bicester Town Council will use the Zoom platform in order that the meeting can be made publicly available without the need for a specific subscription e.g. Google account or Microsoft Office account. The Chief Officer will host the meeting using the town council's subscription to Zoom Pro which is being subscribed to for a year to June 2021. The Chief Officer may appoint

co-hosts as deemed appropriate, these will usually be the chairman & Vice-chairman of the meeting and other staff members.

The meetings will be formal Town Council or committee meetings and will be held using the agenda and summons which the Chief Officer has published. It will be governed by the usual Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and associated policies.

A code and link to the virtual meeting will be published on the agenda which will be published on the Town Council website (publication on the noticeboard will NOT be undertaken while Garth House is closed as the public would not be able to see it), in order that the public are able to attend, just as they would be able to attend a meeting in the Council Chamber. Members of the public will need to contact the council for the password.

Attendees will also have the ability to dial in to the meeting via telephone.

Attendees will collect in the Zoom 'waiting room' prior to the meeting. As the 'Host', the Chief Officer, or any co-host, will have the ability to mute or remove anyone deemed a nuisance at the Chairman's request.

All attendees will be set to 'mute' on entry to the meeting and only the Mayor (Committee Chairman) will remain unmuted. All other participants, if they wish to speak will be invited to unmute. The Chief Officer will have the ability to mute anyone who forgets.

All attendees will display their name in order for the public to be able to identify them, just as they would at an in-person meeting. Councillors will use the prefix "Councillor" so they may be easily identified. Staff will display their job title.

If a councillor has declared an interest in an item on the agenda, they will be placed in the waiting room for the duration of the agenda item. Once the item has been concluded, they will be re-admitted.

In order to better protect participants from malware, the 'chat', file sharing and screen sharing function may be disabled during the meeting. If necessary, the Chief Officer can display any documents required using the 'share screen' function.

As with meetings in the Council Chamber, members of the public will be given the opportunity to speak during public participation, but will not be permitted, unless invited to do so by the Mayor/Chairman, to speak at other times.

Anyone wanting to speak should "raise their hand" by waving in the Reactions section so that the Mayor (Committee Chairman) can see. Both the Deputy Mayor (or Vice Chairman) and Chief Officer will assist the Mayor/Chairman.

Members of the public must introduce themselves if they wish to speak.

Meeting participants may wish to protect their personal environment by choosing a virtual background in the Zoom Settings 'Virtual Background' or alternatively should consider what can be seen behind them while on camera.

Meeting participants shall be visibly clothed during the meeting.

Alcohol should not be consumed during the meeting in line with legal requirements for council meetings.



BLUE PLAQUE POLICY GP19A

Document Control				
Review date is indicative and will depend on changes in legislation, best practice or when required. Alternative formats of this document may be available upon request.				
Version Number	Date Adopted	Minute Number	Amendments	Review Date
V1	Originally adopted 8 th July 2019			
V2			Do you need to set up a Working Party for the Appraisal panel, to be approved by Council?	Mar 24

Bicester Town Council
The Garth
Launton Road
Bicester
OX26 6PS

1. INTRODUCTION

Bicester Town Council recognises the importance of commemorative blue plaques in helping residents and visitors identify with the history of the town and aims to promote the recognition and awareness of people who have been of lasting significance in the life of Bicester or more widely.

The Town Council encourages suggestions from members of the public for suitable plaques. A decision to install a blue plaque will be made by the Policy Committee, acting on the recommendation of an appraisal panel under the overall policy direction of the Committee.

2. ELIGIBILITY

The following eligibility criteria will guide the Policy Committee in their decisions regarding individual plaques.

1. In order to be eligible for a commemorative plaque an individual must be deceased.
2. The individual must also satisfy one or more of the following criteria:
 - a. Have been an eminent member of their profession or calling or made a significant contribution to human welfare or happiness, or
 - b. Have distinguished themselves by a significant public service, act of bravery or committed a notorious act, or



BLUE PLAQUE POLICY GP19A

- c. Have made a significant contribution to or impact on, the life or development of the town of Bicester, or
- d. Be recognizable to the well-informed passer-by or have national or international recognition.

3. LOCATION

When locating plaques, the following key principles should be adhered to.

A recommendation to locate a plaque which does not meet the principles must be accompanied by an explanation as to the reason it is deemed acceptable by the appraisal panel.

- 1 Plaques should be visible from the public highway.
- 2 Plaques should be installed on buildings rather than gates or boundary walls
- 3 The Landowner's or lessee's consent shall be obtained in advance, along with Listed Building Consent where necessary.

4. APPRAISAL PANEL

- 1 The appraisal panel shall be made up of three town councillors and two members of Bicester history/heritage organisations, with a meeting quorum of three.
- 2 The appraisal panel shall consider any suggestions received by members of the public for the installation of a new blue plaque and shall first appraise its suitability under the eligibility criteria.
- 3 The appraisal panel may consult any individual or body it deems necessary in order to appraise the suitability of a commemorative plaque.
- 4 The appraisal panel shall undertake any research necessary including: liaising with the owner of the building to which a plaque would be affixed, considering locations for the plaque and researching the text for the plaque
- 5 The appraisal panel shall have regard to any policy direction by the Policy Committee when deciding as to whether a plaque should be installed.

5. OWNERSHIP

- 1 The Town Council shall retain ownership of all installed plaques
- 2 The Town Council shall enter into an agreement with the owner of the location where a plaque is installed
- 3 Should a plaque be removed from a building it shall be returned to the Town Council



Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults, Policy and Procedures GP21

Document Control				
Review date is indicative and will depend on changes in legislation, best practice or when required. Alternative formats of this document may be available upon request.				
Version Number	Date Adopted	Minute Number	Amendments	Review Date
V1	Originally Adopted 13 th April 2015		Reviewed 24 th Sept 2018	
V2			Chief Officer title removed and replaced with Town Clerk.	Mar 24

Bicester Town Council
The Garth
Launton Road
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OX26 6PS

Introduction

- Bicester Town Council fully accepts its role and responsibility in safeguarding children and vulnerable people. This policy is for all staff, elected members, volunteers and contractors. This Policy is vital to the Councils role as owner, provider and operator of children's play areas, open spaces and sporting facilities including any facility that the Council provides. However, any outside agency working with children and vulnerable people on Bicester Town Council provided facilities has full responsibility to ensure that the users are safeguarded.**
- Bicester Town Council (BTC) aims to work in a way that helps, as far as possible, to safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- BTC will ensure that:

- all employees involved in working in close proximity to children, young people and vulnerable adults implement good working practices to ensure a safe and healthy environment;
 - all employees are aware of welfare protection issues both in the context of organised activities and within the home and community;
 - all staff, elected members, volunteers and contractors are aware of child protection and shall know the procedure to follow if there is a protection issue.
 - All staff, elected members volunteers and contractors are in receipt of this policy.
 - All staff, elected members, volunteers and contractors are aware of and alert to the main types of abuse and the procedure in reporting any concerns. (*See Appendix 1: Categories and Signs of Abuse*).
4. BTC recognises that in providing facilities for children, young people and vulnerable adults there is a need to provide and maintain a high degree of physical and emotional wellbeing. Therefore the following procedures will be implemented:
- ensure employees are aware of the safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults policy and procedures;
 - ensure employees and members of the public can effectively report concerns about children, young people and vulnerable adults at risk;
 - operate sound recruitment and selection procedures for employees to ensure, where required, suitability for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults;
 - identify and enable appropriate welfare protection training to take place for employees who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults;
 - maintain appropriate records of training, risk assessments, referrals and escalation of concerns
 - demonstrate best practice in ensuring the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

For all levels of training the implementation of a 'refresher' programme will ensure the maintenance of levels of awareness and provide details of any change.

In addition, safer recruitment training will be provided for staff involved with recruitment of these groups.

See Appendix 2: Promoting Good Practice when working with children, young people and vulnerable adults

Responding to Disclosure, Suspicions and Allegations of Abuse

5. It is not the responsibility of BTC employees to decide whether or not abuse is taking place. False allegations of abuse do occur, although they are extremely rare. If a person says or indicates that they are being abused or information is

obtained which gives concern that a person may be being abused, immediate action should be taken.

6. BTC will inform the appropriate authority of any suspected cases of abuse reported to them.

Confidentiality

7. Confidentiality is a key issue in safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. Whilst information generally should not be shared, it must be shared with appropriate agencies to ensure that a person is not left unprotected.

Data Protection

8. Occasionally there will be a need or requirement to collect and use certain types of information on children, young people and vulnerable adults. This personal information must be dealt with properly however it is collected, recorded and used – whether on paper, in a computer, or recorded on other material - and there are safeguards to ensure this in the Data Protection Act 1998. (Personal information is data that relates to a living individual who can be identified from the data).
9. The lawful and correct treatment of personal information is very important and wherever such information is kept there is a need to comply and adhere to the principles of data protection.

Reporting Concerns

10. If you have any concerns you should write down what you have seen or heard that gives you concern, keep that document safe and confidential. Complete a reporting form and contact BTC's Town Clerk as soon as possible. (See *Appendix C*)
11. If there is an imminent risk of harm then you should phone 999; otherwise you may phone 101. A form will also need to be completed and submitted to the Town Clerk Officer as soon as possible.

Nominated Officer (Town Clerk)

12. This person is available to advise employees and elected members and are required to:
 - be familiar with protection procedures;
 - ensure there are effective internal procedures to handle concerns;
 - be the link person with relevant agencies;
 - attend appropriate training.

Suspected Abuse or Bullying by Council Employees

- 13.** If an allegation of abuse is made against a Council employee, the Council's Grievance and/or Disciplinary Procedures will be followed and appropriate action taken.
- 14.** All allegations of abuse against an employee must be reported to the Town Clerk. In cases involving employees in an allegation of sexual abuse, including the observing, handling or distributing of materials in any media that involve the sexual abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults, the matter will be immediately referred to the police by the Town Clerk.
- 15.** BTC assures all employees that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith (without malicious intent), reports his or her concerns about a colleague's practise or the possibility that a person may be being abused or bullied.

Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviour

- 16.** BTC has a duty to have a designated officer to be involved in the management and oversight of individual cases. This person has responsibility for:
 - Ensuring that BTC operates procedures for dealing with allegations in accordance to Oxfordshire Safeguarding Boards' guidance resolving inter-agency issues;
 - Liaison with the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Boards on any relevant issues.

Child Death Review Process

- 17.** All members of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Board are required to provide a senior officer contact to the Board. This person will act as a first point of contact for any deaths of children, young people and vulnerable adults that the organisation may be the first to be aware of and to ensure that there is an effective response.
- 18.** If you become aware of the death of a child, young person or vulnerable adult in the course of your professional duties you should immediately contact the Town Clerk.

Appendix 1

Categories and signs of abuse

Physical abuse

May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a person for whom they are caring.

Emotional abuse

Is the persistent emotional ill-treatment such as to cause severe adverse effects.. For example, it may involve conveying to children, young people and vulnerable adults that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed. It may involve causing children, young people and vulnerable adults to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or their exploitation or corruption. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a person to become involved in any way in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening.

Sexual Exploitation

Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities.

Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's or young person's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain.

In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources.

Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet basic physical and/or psychological needs, and is likely to result in the serious impairment of health or development.

Financial or material abuse, including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits of vulnerable adults.

The Signs of Abuse

The following factors should act as indicators in situations of potential or actual abuse:

- unexplained or suspicious marks, bruises, fractures, burns/scalds or injuries to the mouth and eyes;
- poor physical condition or delayed speech and language development in children
- a change in behaviour or appearance;
- inappropriate sexual awareness in children
- a statement by a child or person that he or she has been victimised;
- distrust of others, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected;
- difficulty making friends or socialising;
- prevention from socialising with other children, young people or adults.

It should be recognised that this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of these indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place.

Promoting Good Practice when working with children, young people and vulnerable adults

It is possible to reduce situations in which abuse can occur and help protect employees by promoting good practice. The following guidelines should be used to ensure this can be achieved:

- Always ensure that you follow safer recruitment practices always work in an open environment, avoiding private or unobserved situations;
- Treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults with equal dignity and respect
- always put the welfare of the person first;
- maintain a safe, appropriate and professional distance with children, young people and vulnerable adults
- build balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children, young people and vulnerable adults to share in the decision making process;
- make activities fun, enjoyable and promote fair play;
- ensure that if any form of manual / physical support is required, it should be provided openly and with due care;
- keep up to date with the appropriate technical skills and qualifications; ensure that if children are supervised that they are accompanied by at least two employees;
- be an excellent role model - this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children, young people and vulnerable adults give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism;
- recognise the developmental needs and capacity of children, young people and vulnerable adults;
- ensure that equipment and facilities are safe and appropriate to the age and ability of the person
- ensure that high standards are maintained at all times.

Practice to be avoided

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of a senior officer, guardian or carer or the child's parent, for example:

- spending excessive amounts of time alone with children, young people and vulnerable adults away from others oversight;
- taking unaccompanied children, young people or vulnerable adults on car journeys, however short, on your own
- taking children, young people and vulnerable adults to your home.

Employees should never:

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay;

- allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching;
- allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- make sexually suggestive comments to a person, even in fun;
- allow allegations made by a person to go unrecorded or not acted upon;
- do things of a personal nature for children, young people and vulnerable adults that they can do for themselves;
- invite or allow children, young people and vulnerable adults to stay at their home;
- constantly shout at and/or taunt a person.

DRAFT

Appendix C

Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form

Guidance Notes: in all cases of a safeguarding incident or concern, this form should be completed and submitted as soon as possible after the incident. At the time of the incident, a handwritten note may be made by the employee to include date, time, signature and printed name. But this information must be transferred onto this form and submitted to the Town Clerk, ideally within 24 hours of the incident.

Is this report for information only, or does it require action? Please tick

Information only		Requires action	
------------------	--	-----------------	--

Person reporting the incident or concern

Name	
Job Title (if internal)	
Address (if external)	
Contact number	
Relationship	
Method of referral (Phone/in person)	

Time and date of record being made	Time	Date

Is the person a (please tick):

Child	Young Person	Vulnerable Adult	Other (please state)

Perceived gender	
Name of child/vulnerable adult if known	

Details of the individuals to whom the concern relates eg:

- Family details
- Address
- Age(s)
- Are there any other children in the house (give details)
- Details of other occupants (if Known)

Time and date of the incident

Time

Date

Describe the incident or reason for the concern. Please give a factual account and specify the location where the incident took place. Include the person's own words where possible. Please add any other useful information.

Please specify the action taken by you and others so far (as applicable)

Please specify any other agencies informed, including names, dates and times of anyone spoken to.

Declaration and Signature

I confirm that I have completed this form giving factual information and it is a record of what I saw and /or heard.

Signature

Print name

Date

Privacy Statement

The information collected on this form is strictly private and confidential and should only be shared on a need to know basis.



VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS POLICY GP23

Document Control				
Review date is indicative and will depend on changes in legislation, best practice or when required. Alternative formats of this document may be available upon request.				
Version Number	Date Adopted	Minute Number	Amendments	Review Date
V1	Originally Adopted 24 th Aug 2020			
V2			Chief Officer title removed and replaced with Town Clerk.	Mar 24

Bicester Town Council
The Garth
Launton Road
Bicester
OX26 6PS

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This is a policy for dealing with abusive, persistent or vexatious complaints and complainants.
- 1.2 This policy identifies situations where a complainant, either individually or as part of a group, or a group of complainants, might be considered to be habitual or vexatious.
The following clauses form the Council policy for ways of responding to these situations.
- 1.3 In this policy the term habitual means 'done repeatedly or as a habit'. The term vexatious is recognised in law and means 'denoting an action or the bringer of an action that is brought without sufficient grounds for winning, purely to cause annoyance to the defendant'.
This policy intends to assist in identifying and managing persons who seek to be disruptive to the Council through pursuing an unreasonable course of conduct.
- 1.4 The term complaint in this policy includes requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018 and reference to



VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS POLICY

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the Complaints Procedure is, where relevant, to be interpreted as meaning a request under those Acts.

- 1.5 Habitual or vexatious complaints can be a problem for Council staff and members. The difficulty in handling such complainants is that they are time consuming and wasteful of resources in terms of Officer and Member time. While the Council endeavours to respond with patience and sympathy to the needs of all complainants there are times when there is nothing further which can reasonably be done to assist or to rectify a real or perceived problem.
- 1.6 Raising of legitimate queries or criticisms of a complaints procedure as it progresses, for example if agreed timescales are not met, should not in itself lead to someone being regarded as a vexatious or an unreasonably persistent complainant. Similarly, the fact that a complainant is unhappy with the outcome of a complaint and seeks to challenge it once, or more than once, should not necessarily cause him or her to be labelled vexatious or unreasonably persistent.
- 1.7 The aim of this policy is to contribute to the overall aim of dealing with all complainants in ways which are demonstrably consistent, fair and reasonable.

2. HABITUAL OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINANTS

- 2.1 For the purpose of this policy the following definitions of habitual or vexatious complainants will be used: The repeated and/or obsessive pursuit of:
 - (a) unreasonable complaints and/or unrealistic outcomes; and/or
 - (b) reasonable complaints in an unreasonable manner.
- 2.2 Prior to considering its implementation the Council will send a summary of this policy to the complainant to give them prior notification of its possible implementation.
- 2.3 Where complaints continue and have been identified as habitual or vexatious in accordance with the criteria set out in Section 3, the officers and nominated councillors will seek agreement to treat the complainant as a habitual or vexatious complainant for the appropriate course of action to be taken. Section 4 details the options available for dealing with habitual or vexatious complaints.
- 2.4 The Town Clerk on behalf of the Town Council will notify complainants, in writing, of the reasons why their complaint has been treated as habitual or vexatious and the action that will be taken.
- 2.5 The status of the complainant will be kept under review. If a complainant subsequently demonstrates a more reasonable approach, their status will be reviewed.



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3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 Bicester Town Council defines unreasonably persistent and vexatious complainants as those complainants who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the Council, hinder the Council's consideration of their or other people's complaints.
- 3.2 The description 'unreasonably persistent' and 'vexatious' may apply separately or jointly to a particular complainant. Examples include the way in which, or frequency with which, complainants raise their complaints with staff or councillors or how complainants respond when informed of the Council's decision about the complaint.
- 3.3 Features of an unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious complainant include the following (the list is not exhaustive, nor does one single feature on its own necessarily imply that the person will be considered as being in this category): An unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious complainant may:
- (a) Have insufficient or no grounds for their complaint and be making the complaint only to annoy (or for reasons that he or she does not admit or make obvious).
 - (b) Refuse to specify the grounds of a complaint despite offers of assistance.
 - (c) Refuse to co-operate with the complaints investigation process while still wishing their complaint to be resolved.
 - (d) Refuse to accept that issues are not within the remit of the complaints policy and procedure despite having been provided with information about the scope of the policy and procedure.
 - (e) Refuse to accept that issues are not within the power of the Council to investigate, change or influence.
 - (f) Insist on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice (e.g. insisting that there must not be any written record of the complaint).
 - (g) Make what appear to be groundless complaints about the staff dealing with the complaints and seek to have them dismissed or replaced.
 - (h) Make an unreasonable number of contacts with the Council, by any means in relation to a specific complaint or complaints.
 - (i) Make persistent and unreasonable demands or expectations of staff or councillors and/or the complaints process after the unreasonableness has been explained to the complainant (an example of this could be a



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complainant who insists on immediate responses to questions, frequent and/or complex letters, telephone calls or e-mails).

(j) Harass or verbally abuse or otherwise seek to intimidate staff or councillors dealing with their complaint, in relation to their complaint by use of foul or inappropriate language or by the use of offensive and racist language or publish their complaints in other forms of media.

(k) Raise subsidiary or new issues whilst a complaint is being addressed that were not part of the complaint at the start of the complaint process.

(l) Introduce trivial or irrelevant new information whilst the complaint is being investigated and expect this to be taken into account and commented on.

(m) Change the substance or basis of the complaint without reasonable justification whilst the complaint is being addressed.

(n) Deny statements he or she made at an earlier stage in the complaint process.

(o) Are known to have electronically recorded meetings and conversations without the prior knowledge and consent of the other person(s) involved.

(p) Adopts a 'scattergun' approach, for instance, pursuing a complaint or complaints not only with the Council, but at the same time with, for example, a Member of Parliament, other Councils, elected Councillors of this and other Councils, the Council's Independent Auditor, the Police, other public bodies or solicitors.

(q) Refuse to accept the outcome of the complaint process after its conclusion, repeatedly arguing the point, complaining about the outcome, and/or denying that an adequate response has been given.

(r) Make the same complaint repeatedly, perhaps with minor differences, after the complaints procedure has been concluded and insist that the minor differences make these 'new' complaints which should be put through the full complaints procedure.

(s) Persistently approach the Council through different routes or other persons about the same issue.

(t) Persist in seeking an outcome which Council has explained is unrealistic for legal or policy (or other valid) reasons.

(u) Refuse to accept documented evidence as factual.

(v) Complain about or challenge an issue based on an historic and/or an irreversible decision or incident.



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(w) Combine some or all of these features.

4. IMPOSING RESTRICTIONS

- 4.1 The Town Council will ensure that the complaint is being, or has been, investigated properly according to the adopted complaints procedure.
- 4.2 In the first instance the Town Clerk will consult with the Chairman of the Policy Committee prior to issuing a warning to the complainant. The Town Clerk will contact the complainant in writing, which may be by e-mail, to explain why this behaviour is causing concern and ask them to change this behaviour and outline the actions that the Council may take if they do not comply.
- 4.3 If the disruptive behaviour continues, the Town Clerk will issue a reminder letter to the complainant advising them that the way in which they will be allowed to contact the Town Council in future will be restricted. The Town Clerk will make this decision in consultation with the Chairman of the Policy Committee and inform the complainant in writing of what procedures have been put in place and for what period.
- 4.4 Any restriction that is imposed on the complainant's contact with the Council will be appropriate and proportionate and the complainant will be advised of the period of time over which that the restriction will be in place. In most cases restrictions will apply for between three to six months, but in exceptional cases this may be extended. In such cases the restrictions would be reviewed on a quarterly basis, or at the next Full Council Meeting.
- 4.5 Restrictions will be tailored to deal with the individual circumstances of the complainant and may include:
 - (a) Banning the complainant from making contact by telephone except through a third party e.g. a solicitor, a councillor or a friend acting on their behalf.
 - (b) Banning the complainant from sending emails to individuals and/or all Council officers and insisting they only correspond by postal letter.
 - (c) Requiring contact to take place with one named member of staff only.
 - (d) Restricting telephone calls to specified days and/or times and/or duration.
 - (e) Requiring any personal contact to take place in the presence of an appropriate witness.
 - (f) Letting the complainant know that the Town Council will not reply to or acknowledge any further contact from them on the specific topic of that



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complaint (in this case, a designated member of staff will be identified who will read future correspondence).

4.6 When the decision has been taken to apply this policy to a complainant, the Town Clerk will contact the complainant in writing to explain:

- why the decision has been taken
- what action has been taken
- the duration of that action.

The Town Clerk will enclose a copy of this policy in the letter to the complainant.

4.7 Where a complainant continues to behave in a way that is unacceptable, the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Policy Committee, may decide to refuse all contact with the complainant and stop any investigation into his or her complaint.

4.8 Where the behaviour is so extreme or it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of staff, other options will be considered, e.g. the reporting of the matter to the police or taking legal action. In such cases, the complainant may not be given prior warning of that action.

5. NEW COMPLAINTS FROM COMPLAINANTS WHO ARE TREATED AS ABUSIVE, VEXATIOUS OR PERSISTENT

5.1 New complaints from people who have come under this policy will be treated on their merits. The Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman of the Policy Committee will decide whether any restrictions that have been applied before are still appropriate and necessary in relation to the new complaint. A blanket policy is not supported, nor ignoring genuine service requests or complaints where they are founded.

5.2 The fact that a complainant is judged to be unreasonably persistent or vexatious, and any restrictions imposed on Council's contact with him or her, will be recorded and notified to those who need to know within the Council.

6. REVIEW

6.1 The status of a complainant judged to be unreasonably persistent or vexatious will be reviewed by the Town Clerk and the Chairman of the Policy Committee after three months and at the end of every subsequent three months within the period during which the policy is to apply, or by the next Full Council Meeting.

6.2 The complainant will be informed of the result of this review if the decision to apply this policy has been changed or extended.



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7. RECORD KEEPING

7.1 The Town Clerk will retain adequate records of the details of the case and the action that has been taken. Records will be kept of:

- the name and address of each member of the public who is treated as abusive, vexatious or persistent, or any other person who so aids the complainant;
- when the restrictions came into force and end;
- what the restrictions are;
- when the person and the Council were advised.

7.2 Full Council will be provided with a report giving information about members of the public who have been treated as vexatious/persistent as per this policy.



DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY GP25

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V1	Originally Adopted 9 th July 2018			
V2			Check retention terms Chief Officer title removed and replaced with Town Clerk	Mar 24

Bicester Town Council
The Garth
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INTRODUCTION

A record is any information held by the Council and relating to any topic, area of work, decision reached, action taken or individual and regardless of the medium in which it is held whether in paper or electronic format.

The Council recognises that:

- Records are a corporate resource and a valuable asset
- Information should be confidentially stored and destroyed

RESPONSIBILITY

The Town Clerk is responsible for implementing and monitoring compliance with this Policy, but all staff are responsible for ensuring compliance.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Council's policy is to:

- Information (hard copy and electronic) will be retained for at least the period specified in the below schedule
- All information must be reviewed before destruction to determine whether there are special factors that mean destruction should be delayed, such as potential litigation, complaints or grievances.
- Hard copy and electronically held documents and information must be deleted at the end of the retention period.

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- Hard copy documents and information must be disposed of in accordance with the below Record Disposal

RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS FOR LEGAL PURPOSES

Most legal proceedings are governed by 'the Limitation Acts'. The Acts (notably the Limitation Act 1980) state that legal claims may not be commenced after a specified period. The specified period varies, depending on the type of claim in question. The table below sets out the limitation periods for the different categories of claim. The reference to 'category' in the table refers to claims brought in respect of that category.

Category	Limitation Period
Negligence (and other 'Torts')	6 years
Defamation	1 year
Contract	6 years
Leases	12 years
Sums recoverable by statute	6 years
Personal Injury	3 years
To Recover Land	12 years
Rent	6 years
Breach of Trust	None

Cognisance must be taken on the duty of the Council and in particular its Proper Officer to retain certain information, for certain purposes and for certain periods of time.



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RECORD MAINTENANCE

Given the limited space to keep such documents it is necessary to review the Council's Policy on retention of its records and documents. Set out below are the time periods that different types of business and employment records must be retained for. The retention periods are based on business needs and legal requirements. ***In the absence of such guidance, it shall be the responsibility of the Town Clerk to determine a suitable retention period.***

DOCUMENT	MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD	REASON
COUNCIL MANAGEMENT		
Minutes	Indefinitely	Archive
Agendas & meeting documentation	12 Years	Statute of Limitations
Council Attendance Register	Throughout the 4 year term of office	Management
Declarations of Acceptance of Office	Indefinitely	Management, Archive
Register of Members Interest	6 Years or as long as the Councillor remains in office (whichever is the greater)	Audit, Tax, VAT
Council Standing Orders, Policies & Procedures	Whilst the documents remain in force	Management
Council Newsletters, Precept Sheets & Annual Reports	Indefinitely	Management, Archive
Personnel Information	6 Years after individual ceases to be an employee	Statute of Limitations
Assets	12 years	Management
Title Deeds	Indefinitely	Management
S106 Agreements	Indefinitely	Management
Freedom of Information	10 years	Management
Pension	12 years after cessation of benefit payable	Audit, Management
Events	12 years	Management
Accident Reports	Indefinitely	Management
Vehicle Log Books	Life of Vehicle	Management
Twinning Agreements	Indefinitely	Management
COUNCIL FINANCES		
Cash Book Accounts, Sales & Purchase Ledgers	Indefinitely	Management
Title Deeds, Leases, Agreements & Contracts	Indefinitely	Audit, Management
Investments	Indefinitely	Audit, Management
Audited Accounts	Indefinitely	Audit, Management
Precept Requests	Indefinitely	Audit, Management
Quotations & Tenders	12 years	Statute of Limitations
Wages Books	12 years	Superannuation

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Receipt Books	6 Years	VAT
Paid Invoices	6 Years	VAT
VAT Records	6 Years	VAT
Petty Cash Records	6 Years	Tax, VAT, Statute of Limitations
Members Allowance Register	6 Years	Tax, Audit, Management, Statute of Limitations
Scales of Fees & Charges	5 Years	Management
Bank Statements	Last completed audit year	Audit
Bank Paying-in Books	Last completed audit year	Audit
Cheque Book Stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit
Timesheets	Last completed audit year	Audit
Insurance Policies	While Valid	Management
Certificates for insurance against liability for employees	40 years from date in which insurance commenced or was renewed	The Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI2753), Management
Insurance Policies, Insurance Claims & Health & Safety Records	3 Years after the policy lapses	Management
Budget	6 years	Audit, Management
Grants	6 years	Audit, Management
HMRC	6 years	Audit, Management
Internal Audit	Retain current, plus previous year	Audit, Management
ALLOTMENTS		
Allotments Plan	Indefinitely	Audit, Management
Allotment Register	Indefinitely	Audit, Management
Allotment Tenancy Agreements	Throughout the period of tenancy & 6 Years following	Audit, Management, Statute of Limitations
Allotment Tenancy Correspondence	Throughout the period of tenancy	Audit, Management
RISK ASSESSMENTS		
Weekly Inspection Logs	12 Years	Statute of Limitations
Annual Inspection Logs	12 Years	Statute of Limitations
Risk Assessments	12 Years	Statute of Limitations
PLANNING & CONSERVATION		
Planning Register	Indefinitely	Management
Planning Applications, related correspondence & Notices of Decision (General)	6 months	Management
Planning Applications, related	5 Years	Management

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correspondence & Notices of Decision (Strategic/Historical)		
Tree Pruning/Felling Applications	6 Year	Management
Tree Preservation Orders	Indefinitely	Management
Road Traffic Orders	Whilst the order remains in force or 1 Year which ever is the greater	Management
Planning Policy Guidance/Statements, Regional Plans, Structure Plans, Local Plans, Community Plans & similar documents	Whilst the documents remain in force	Management
Definitive Maps, Planning Maps, Public Rights of Way Maps, Conservation Area Maps & similar documents	Indefinitely	Management, Archive
Listed Building Register	Indefinitely	Archive
PUBLICATIONS		
Journals & Periodicals	3 Years (or retained as long as is useful & relevant)	Management
Catalogues	1 Year	Management
CIVIC/MAYORAL ACTIVITIES		
Civic Diaries/Events List	Indefinitely	Audit, Tax, Vat, Management, Archive
Civic Correspondence	6 Years	Audit, Tax, Vat, Management, Archive
Mayoral List	Indefinitely	Management, Archive
Mayoral Photographs	Indefinitely	Management, Archive
Civic Awards	6 Years	Management
Freedom of Bicester (incl Liberty)	Indefinitely	Management
GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE		
General Correspondence (on non-historic importance)	Destroyed annually if no longer of use or value	Management
General Correspondence (historic importance)	Offered to the County Archivist if no longer of use or value	Archive
EMPLOYMENT RECORDS		
Rejected job applicant records, including: contact details application letters or forms	6 months after applicant is notified of rejection Application forms should give	ICO Employment Practices Code para 1.7 Equality Act 2010, s 123

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CVs references certificates of good conduct interview notes assessment and psychological test results	applicants the opportunity to object to their details being retained	
Application records of successful candidates, including: application letters or forms copies of academic and other training received references correspondence concerning employment CVs interview notes and evaluation forms assessment and results	6 years after employment ceases	Limitation Act 1980 (LA 1980), s 5
Criminal records information: criminal records requirement assessments for a particular post criminal records information forms the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check forms DBS certificates	Criminal records requirement assessments for a particular post—12 months after the assessment was last used All other information in this category—as soon as practicable after the check has been completed and the outcome recorded (ie whether satisfactory or not) unless, in exceptional circumstances, the Town Clerk assesses that it is clearly relevant to the ongoing employment relationship	DBS guidance for employers: Duration of criminal record check validity ICO Employment Practices Code Nov 2011, part 1.7.4
Employment contracts, including: personnel and training records written particulars of employment changes to terms and conditions	6 years after employment ceases, unless document executed as a deed, in which case 12 years after employment ceases	LA 1980, ss 5, 8
Copies of identification documents (eg passports)	Not less than 2 years from date of termination of employment	Immigration (Restrictions on Employment) Order SI 2007/3290, Art 6(1)(b)
Identification documents of	Not less than 2 years from date of	Immigration

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foreign nationals (including right to work)	termination of employment	(Restrictions on Employment) Order SI 2007/3290, art 6(1)(b)
Records concerning a temporary worker	6 years after employment ceases	LA 1980, s 5
Employee performance records, including: probationary period reviews review meeting and assessment interviews appraisals and evaluations promotions and demotions	6 years after employment ceases	LA 1980, s 5
Records relating to and/or showing compliance with Working Time Regulations 1998 including: registration of work and rest periods working time opt-out forms	2 years from the date on which the record was made	Working Time Regulations 1998, SI 1998/1833, reg 9
Redundancy records	6 years from date of redundancy	LA 1980, s 5
Annual leave records	6 years after the end of each tax year	LA 1980, s 5
Parental leave records	6 years after the end of each tax year	LA 1980, s 5
Sickness records	6 years after the end of each tax year	LA 1980, s 5
Records of return to work meetings following sickness, maternity etc	6 years the end of each tax year	LA 1980, s 5
PAYROLL AND SALARY RECORDS		
Records for the purposes of tax returns including wage or salary records, records of overtime, bonuses and expenses	6 years	Taxes Management Act, 1970 s 12B Finance Act 1998, Schedule 18, para 21
Pay As You Earn (PAYE) records, including: wage sheets deductions working sheets calculations of the PAYE income of employees and relevant payments	3 years	Income Tax (Pay As You Earn) Regulations 2003, SI 2003/2682, reg 97
Income tax and NI returns, income tax records and correspondence with HMRC	3 years after the end of the financial year to which they relate	Income Tax (Employments) Regulations 1993, SI

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		1993/744, reg 55
Records demonstrating compliance with national minimum wage requirements	3 years beginning with the day upon which the pay reference period immediately following that to which they relate ends	National Minimum Wage Regulations 2015, SI 2015/621, reg 59
Details of benefits in kind, income tax records (P45, P60, P58, P48 etc), annual return of taxable pay and tax paid	6 years (but general time limit under the TMA 1970 is reducing to four years from 1 April 2012)	Taxes Management Act 1970
Employee income tax and national insurance returns and associated HMRC correspondence	3 years from end of tax year to which they relate	Income Tax (Pay as You Earn) Regulations 2003, SI 2003/2682, reg 97
Statutory sick pay (SSP) records	3 years after the end of the tax year to which they relate	The requirement to maintain SSP records for 3 years after the end of the tax year to which they relate was revoked in 2014, but an employer may still be required by HMRC to produce such records as are in his possession or power which contain, or may contain, information relevant to satisfy HMRC that statutory sick pay has been and is being paid. The Statutory Sick Pay (General) Regulations 1982, SI 1982/894, reg 13(A)
Wage or salary records (including overtime, bonuses and expenses)	6 years	Taxes Management Act 1970, s 43
Records relating to hours worked and payments made to workers	3 years	National Wage Act 1998, s 9 The National Wage Regulations 1999, reg 38
Statutory maternity, paternity and shared parental pay records, calculations, certificates or other evidence	3 years after the end of the tax year in which the period of statutory pay ends	Statutory Maternity Pay (General) Regulations 1986, SI 1986/1960, reg 26

DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY GP25

HEALTH AND SAFETY RECORDS		
Records of reportable injuries, diseases or dangerous occurrences reportable incidents reportable diagnoses injury arising out of accident at work (including accident book)	3 years from date of the entry	The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR 2013), SI 2013/1471, reg 12
Lists or register of employees who have been exposed to asbestos dust, including health records of each employee	40 years from the date of the last entry made in the record	Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012, SI 2012/63, reg 22(1)
Medical records and details of biological tests under the Control of Lead at Work Regulations	40 years from the date of the last entry made in the record	The Control of Lead at Work Regulations 2002 (CLAW 2002), SI 2002/2676, reg 10
Medical records as specified by the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH)	40 years from the date of the last entry made in the record	The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH 2002), SI 2002/2677, reg 11
Records of monitoring of exposures to hazardous substances (where exposure monitoring is required under COSHH)	Where the record is representative of the personal exposures of identifiable employee—40 years from the date of the last entry made in the record Otherwise, five years from the date of the last entry made in the record	COSHH 2002, reg 10(5)
Records of tests and examinations of control systems and protective equipment under COSHH	Five years from the date on which the record was made	COSHH 2002, reg 9
YOUTH		
Young Peoples Membership Form	1 term post attendance	Safeguarding
Parental Consent Form	3 year post attendance	Safeguarding
Photographs & Videos	3 year post attendance	Advertising, reports & records
Reports & Claims	7 years post 18 th Birthday	Health & Safety



DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY GP25

RECORD DISPOSAL

The minimum volume of records consistent with effective and efficient operations should be retained. Unnecessary and duplicated records should be eliminated so saving storage costs as well as cost in terms of staff, time and equipment. Holding fewer records frees up both physical and computerised filing systems and makes valuable information easier to find. Greater use could be made of the Council's powers under S229 Local Government Act 1972 which allows for any requirement posed by statute on a Local Authority to keep a document is satisfied by keeping a photographic copy; interpreting this legislation in a modern day context, paper records could be scanned and electronically archived and the original disposed of.

Records designated as no longer required must be securely disposed of to preserve confidentiality.

Any records designated as no-longer required but considered to have historical significance shall be the subject of consultation with the County Archivist and could be kept in an archival institution if expert guidance considers such action appropriate.

Under the FOI, it is a criminal offence to tamper with any file once a FOI request has been made. If any documents which would require disposal under the above guidelines is the subject of an FOI request, disposal must be delayed even if the request has been refused, until the information has been disclosed and all appeal times/procedures have been exhausted.

BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Monday 23rd May 2022

Freedom of Information Activity Report

Chairman: Councillor Donna Ford

Telephone: 07906 810920

Phil Evans – Town Clerk

Telephone: 01869 252915 phil.evans@bicester.gov.uk

Ward Affected: All

1. Activity Since Last Policy Committee Meeting

Ref Number	Request	Position
FOI 027	what is the expected timescale for the planned work on the parcel of land formerly used as Play Area 13 on Saffron Close in Bure Park?	Summary information provided. Closed.

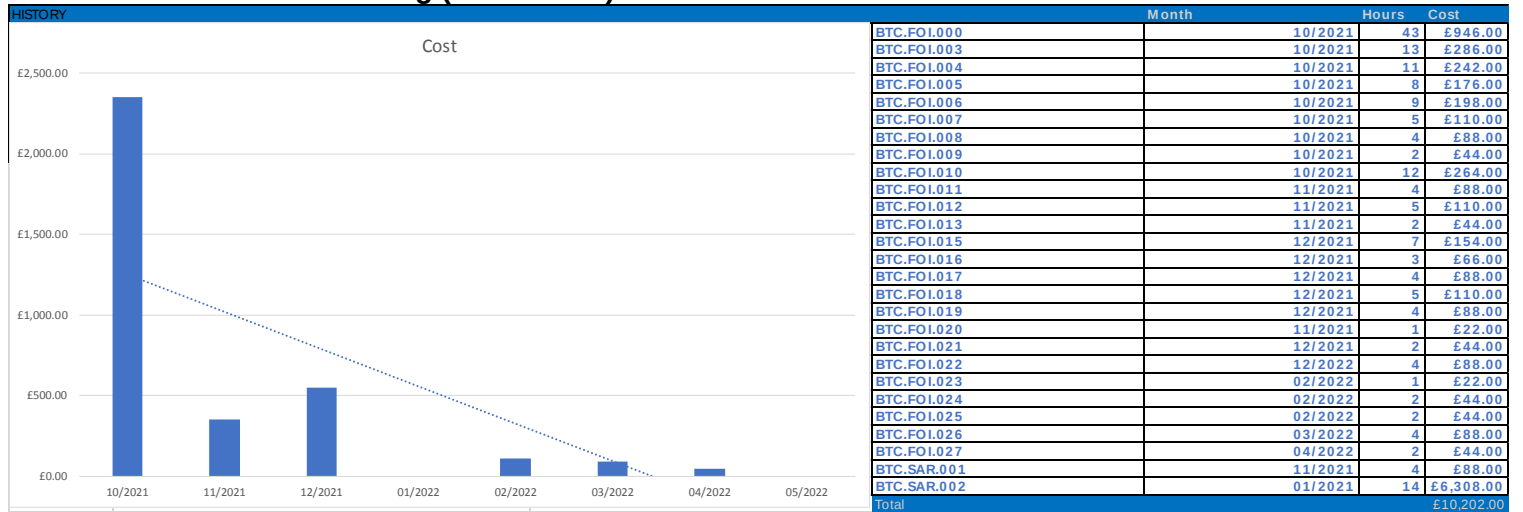
2. Pending Response

No pending responses.

3. Under Appeal

BTC Reference Number	Request	Response	Current Status	Last Action	Staff Hours	APPROX Cost
BTC.FOI.001	Please supply me with copies of all of the minutes of the Personnel Sub Committee Meetings for the past 5 years. As you know these are a public document and must be so under the Local Government Act 1972 to make lawful decisions. I look forward to your compliance as soon as you are able.	Bicester town council consider the information request minutes exempt, as the duty in section 1 (1) (a) of the freedom of Information Act 2000 does not apply. By Virtue of the following Section 40 (5) (a) (b) Personal information.	Request will be declined under section 40(5)(a)(b) Personal -This has been challenged with Commissioner	The Council is in discussion with the ICO on the basis of a response to the information request. As of 12.05.22 BTC awaits the ICO's response.	6.5	£143.00
BTC.FOI.002	Please supply me with copies of all of the agendas of the Personnel sub Committee Meetings for the past 5 years. As you know these are a public document and must be so under the Local Government Act 1972 to make lawful decisions. I look forward to your compliance as soon as you are able.	Bicester town council consider the information request agendas exempt, as the duty in section 1 (1) (a) of the freedom of Information Act 2000 does not apply. By Virtue of the following Section 40 (5) (a) (b) Personal information.	Request will be declined under section 40(5)(a)(b) Personal -This has been challenged with Commissioner	The Council is in discussion with the ICO on the basis of a response to the information request. As of 12.05.22 BTC awaits the ICO's response.	6.5	£143.00
BTC.FOI.014	Please provide an electronic copy of all recorded information you hold relating to a decision of the First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights) under reference EA/2021/0115P. This decision, dated 24 September 2021, contained some strong criticisms of your council.	This information is readily available Bicester Search ICO	-This has been challenged with Commissioner as incomplete BTC await Answer		1	£22.00

4. Cost Tracking (Closed FOI)



5. Recommendation

Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to **NOTE** the Freedom of Information Activity Report.

BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL POLICY COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

Monday 23rd May 2022

Date/ Item/ Comment

1. Pending: Closure policy for cemetery
2. Pending: Retention of assets policy
3. Pending: Future management of 'new' open space play areas
4. April 2021: New burial ground and memorial policy
5. On-going: Working on town centre group
6. Pending: Review Equality policy (GP15)
7. Pending: Flag Policy
8. Pending: 20mph speed limits