

Bicester Town Council



Bicester Town Council Meeting

Ref: BTC07/2324

Monday 11th March 2024

at 19:00hrs

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

Members:

Cllr Harry Knight – **Chairman**, Cllr Damien Maguire – **Vice-Chairman**
Cllr Tom Beckett, Cllr Nick Cotter, Cllr Donna Ford, Cllr Dan Hallett,
Cllr Sam Holland, Cllr Rachel Mallows, Cllr Nicholas Mawer, Cllr Christopher Pruden,
Cllr Alisa Russell, Cllr Les Sibley, Cllr Jim Webb and Cllr Paul Wheatley

Other Circulation, Substitute Members:

Cllr John Broad, Cllr Sandy Dallimore, Cllr Simon Lytton, Cllr Calum Miller,
Cllr Lynn Pratt, Cllr Dan Sames and Cllr Michael Waine



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05 March 2024

To all Members of the Bicester Town Council

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **Bicester Town Council** at **The Council Chamber, Bicester Town Council, The Garth, Launton Road, Bicester, Oxon OX26 6PS** on **Monday 11th March 2024** 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. Public Session

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 shall speak for more than 2minutes.

4. Bicester Foodbank Presentation

A presentation from the Bicester Food Bank will be given.

- 5. Minutes of the Town Council Meeting** (Pages 5 - 7)
To confirm the minutes and **RESOLUTIONS** contained in the minutes of the following Town Council meeting:

BTC05/2324 – 15th January 2024
- 6. Minutes of the Environment Committee Meeting** (Pages 8 - 14)
To confirm the minutes and **RESOLUTIONS** contained in the minutes of the following Environment Committee meetings:

ENV02/2324 – 18th July 2023
ENV03/2324 – 21st November 2023
- 7. Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting** (Pages 15 - 16)
To confirm the minutes and **RESOLUTIONS** contained in the minutes of the following Finance Committee meeting:

FIN03/2324 – 10th October 2023
- 8. Minutes of the Planning Committee Meetings** (Pages 17 - 28)
To confirm the minutes and **RESOLUTIONS** contained in the minutes of the following Planning Committee meetings:

PL07/2324 – 7th November 2023
PL09/2324 – 9th January 2024
PL10/2324 – 6th February 2024
- 9. Minutes of the Policy Committee Meeting** (Pages 29 - 31)
To confirm the minutes and **RESOLUTIONS** contained in the minutes of the following Policy Committee meeting:

POL04/2324 – 29th January 2024
- 10. Minutes of Work Parties** (Pages 32 - 43)
To confirm the minutes and **RESOLUTIONS** contained in the minutes of the following Working Party Groups:

AWP01/2324 – 14th June 2023
AWP02/2324 – 9th August 2023
BTAG04/2324 – 30th November 2023
CSWG03/2324 – 26th October 2023
EWP03/2324 – 13th September 2023
- 11. Mayors Report** (Page 44)
Council are asked to **NOTE** the attached Mayors Report.
- 12. Reports from Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Councillors servicing Bicester Wards**
To **NOTE** the verbal reports from Oxfordshire County and Cherwell District Councillors serving Bicester Wards

- 13. Southwold Play Area Report** (Page 45)

Council is asked to **APPROVE** the proposed expenditure of £90,000 on the Southwold Play Area and the spend is to come from earmarked reserves for Play Areas / Open Space Investment.
- 14. Review of Financial Regulations** (Pages 46 - 47)

Council is asked to **NOTE** this report and the amendments to Financial Regulations that have been approved and passed onto Full Council.
- 15. Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Control** (Pages 48 - 51)

Council is recommended to **APPROVE** the content of the report that has been passed on from the finance committee.
- 16. Standing Orders** (Pages 52 - 72)

Council is recommended to **APPROVE** the standing orders review for 2024/2025.
- 17. RFO Appointment** (Page 73)

Council is recommended to retrospectively **APPROVE** the appointment of the new responsible finance officer.
- 18. Councillor Committee Re-assignment** (Page 74)

Council is asked to **NOTE** and **APPROVE** the changes on committees.
- 19. Councillor Motion** (Page 75)

Council is asked to **CONSIDER** the motion from Cllr Ford and seconded from Cllr Mallows. Should Cllr Mallows not second the motion Cllr Mawer will be asked as an alternative.
- 20. Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 13th May 2024 – 6.45pm, The Whitelands Sports Farm Centre

Close of meeting:

Minutes of the Bicester Town Council

A meeting of the **Bicester Town Council** was held on **Monday 15th January 2024** at **19:00 hrs** at the **The Council Chamber, Bicester Town Council, The Garth, Launton Road, Bicester, Oxon OX26 6PS**.

Present:

Cllr Damien Maguire (Vice-Chairman)
 Cllr Tom Beckett
 Cllr Nick Cotter
 Cllr Donna Ford
 Cllr Dan Hallett
 Cllr Sam Holland
 Cllr Rachel Mallows
 Cllr Nicholas Mawer
 Cllr Rich Oliver
 Cllr Christopher Pruden
 Cllr Alisa Russell
 Cllr Les Sibley
 Cllr Jim Webb
 Cllr Paul Wheatley
 Cllr M Waine (County Councillor)

In Attendance:

Phil Evans – Town Clerk
 Julie Trinder – Administration Officer – Civic & Democratic

1/23 Apologies for Absence

24 RESOLVED that apologies of absence were received from Cllr Harry Knight.

2/23 Declarations of Interest

24 RESOLVED that declarations of interest were received from Cllr Donna Ford and Cllr Nicholas Mawer, regarding Agenda item number 11 Grounds Maintenance Contract, as members of Cherwell District Council's Executive committee.

3/23 Public Session

24 RESOLVED that no members of the public were present.

4/23 Minutes of the Town Council Meeting

24 RESOLVED that minutes of **BTC05/2324 – 20th November 2023** to be accepted and amended to read that Cllr Alisa Russell was in attendance.

Officers to check Cllr Russell's Mod.Gov access and attendance.

5/23 Minutes of the Environment Committee Meeting

24 RESOLVED that Councillors **CONFIRMED** the minutes and resolutions of:

ENV04/2324 – 21st November 2023

Officers to check Cllr Russell's Mod.Gov access and attendance.

Minutes: BTC06/2324: Bicester Town Council Meeting
 Monday 15th January 2024

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Signed

Dated

6/23 Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting

24 **RESOLVED** that the Chairman of Finance Committee requested minutes **FIN04/2324 – 19th December 2023**, be deferred to the next Town Council Meeting to take place 11th March 2024.

Officers to check Cllr Russell's Mod.Gov access and attendance.

7/23 Minutes of the Planning Committee Meetings

24 **RESOLVED** that Councillors **CONFIRMED** the minutes and resolutions of:

PL03/2324 – 4th July 2023

PL06/2324 – 3rd October 2023

8/23 Minutes of the Policy Committee Meeting

24 **RESOLVED** that Councillors **CONFIRMED** the minutes and resolutions of :

POL03/2324 – 30th October 2023

15/2 Report from Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District
324 Councillors

RESOLVED that:

- Cllr Michael Waine reported an update on:
 - Market Square proposal to approve a request for 2-Way traffic and free parking
 - 20 mph consultation to appear in the next edition of the Garth Gazette
 - Oxfordshire County Council Highways – still received no answers from issues raised
 - Education Scrutiny Committee unhappy with fall in competence and how Oxfordshire is going
- Cllr Donna Ford provided an update and progress report on the proposals for the Bicester Market Square project. Cllr Ford to distribute report to Council.
- Cllr Nicholas Mawer reported that £1.6m of government money to be spent on bringing social housing properties back into use. Phase I of the project will house refugees.

9/23 The Mayors Report

24 **RESOLVED** that the Town Mayors report was **NOTED**.

10/2 Grounds Maintenance Contract

324 **RESOLVED** that Councillors **APPROVED** the letter of Engagement and the premium rate with a retrospective report detailing this.

Cllr Paul Wheatley requested a report of the premium rates (once understood).

Donna Ford and Cllr Nicholas Mawer abstained their vote due to being members of Cherwell District Council's Executive committee.

11/2 Committee List

324 RESOLVED that Councillors requested:

- To set up a Standing Orders committee meeting with 5 Councillors to discuss and agree the format of the 2024/2025 committee list
- The potential to hold Webcast meetings. Town Clerk to take a proposal to the next Policy Committee meeting to be held on 29th January 2024
- That no meetings are held in the month of August

12/2 Delegation of Authority

324 RESOLVED that Councillors **AGREED** to no change and **NOTED** the content on the listed delegation of authority.

Challenges of Councillor understanding were raised for Town Clerk.

13/2 Budget Sign-Off

324 RESOLVED that 11 Councillors voted to **APPROVE** the budget for the following year and 3 Councillors abstained.

16/2 Date of Next Meeting

324 Monday 11th March 2024 – 7pm, The Chamber Room, Garth House

Close of meeting: 8.21pm.

Minutes of the Environment Committee

A meeting of the **Environment Committee** was held on **Tuesday 18th July 2023** at **19:00 hrs** at **The Chamber Room, The Garth, Launton Road, OX26 2PS**.

Present:

Cllr Donna Ford
Cllr Dan Hallett (Substitute)
Cllr Rachel Mallows
Cllr Nicholas Mawer
Cllr Rich Oliver
Cllr Christopher Pruden
Cllr Jim Webb (Substitute)

In Attendance:

Paul Canning, Service Manager
Jodi Clarke, Office Administrator

Public:

Ryan Onody
Ann Smith
Brian Welters

1/23 Apologies for Absence

24 RESOLVED that apologies were received from Cllr Maguire, Cllr Knight and Cllr Sibley.

Cllr Hallett Substituted for Cllr Knight.
Cllr Webb substituted for Cllr Sibley.

2/23 Appointment of Vice Chair

24 Due to Cllr Maguire sending their apologies the Environment Committee **APPROVED** Cllr Pruden to Chair the meeting in the absence of Cllr Maguire.

RESOLVED that Cllr Pruden was **APPOINTED** as Vice-Chair for the Environment Committee.

3/23 Declarations of Interest

24 RESOLVED that Cllr Webb declared that they have a possible declaration of interest on item 13 of the Agenda, Cllr Webb is a member of the Bicester Fossils Walking Football Club at Whitelands Farm Sports Grounds.

4/23 Minutes of the Environment Committee

24 RESOLVED that the Environment Committee **APPROVED** the minutes from the Environment Meeting held on:

- **30th May 2023 at 7:00pm – ENV01/2324**

5/23 Minutes of the Events Working Party

24 RESOLVED that the minutes for the events working party were not attached to the agenda and would be put forward to the next Environment Committee held on:

- **12th September 2023 at 7:00pm.**

6/23 Public Session

24 RESOLVED that several members of the public were present.

- Representative from the Biodiversity Community
- Resident from Glory Farm
- Parent from Southwold

7/23 Kompan Presentation (Southwold, Garth Park)

24 RESOLVED that a presentation was given by Tom & Ben from Kompan. The presentation included designs for Garth Park and the Southwold play area.

8/23 Presentation by Open Walls Network (Graffiti Wall)

24 19:45 – Cllr Mallows left the room.

RESOLVED that Open Walls Network did not attend the meeting. The Officer will approach them again and look for alternative companies.

19:49 – Cllr Mallows returned to the room.

9/23 Best Kept Allotment Award

24 RESOLVED that the Committee **APPROVED** the Best Kept Allotment Trophies along with the annual purchase of trophies from the **EMR Green Infrastructure**.

RESOLVED that Office Administrator would send the pricing to the members of the meeting.

10/2 Allotment Deposit Increase

324 RESOLVED that the Committee **APPROVED** the Allotment Deposit Increase to go to the Finance Committee on:

- **10th October 2023 at 7:00pm**

11/2 Flagpoles

324 RESOLVED that the Committee **APPROVED** the following:

- **Supplier A** due to the quality and robustness of the materials provided by a local supplier.
- The installation of a 4th Flagpole.
- The funding for this project to be taken out of the **EMR BTC Premises**.

12/2 Manston Park Goal Posts

324 RESOLVED that the Committee **APPROVED** the installation of the goal posts in line with the public consultation results and the funding to be taken from the **EMR Play**

Areas/Open space Investment.

RESOLVED the Officer will look into the placement of the goals or try to move the gate into the park.

13/2 Whitelands 9 v 9 Goals

324 RESOLVED that the Committee **APPROVED** Supplier A as long as the Officer investigates which EMR funding is appropriate for this, it can then be presented to the Finance Committee on:

- **10th October 2023 at 7:00pm**

14/2 Bicester Fields Renaming

324 Cllr Ford proposed a new recommendation to change the name Bicester Fields to Langford Fields as opposed to Langford Park, Cllr Mallows seconded the proposal.

RESOLVED that the Committee **APPROVED** the renaming of Bicester Fields to Langford Fields.

15/2 Grant Funding

324 RESOLVED that the Committee **NOTED** the content in Appendix 1.

Cllr Mawer mentioned that training was taking place on Lucerne Avenue.

16/2 ROSPA Findings

324 RESOLVED that the committee **APPROVED** the following:

- The refurbishment plan in 2.1 and 2.2, covering 2024 and 2025.
- The conversion of Siskin Close, Mallards Way (Duck Pond) and Burdock Close to another use – pending public consultation.

RESOLVED that the Officer was asked to look into the following:

- Refurbishment dates.

17/2 Approved Projects

324 RESOLVED that the Committee **NOTED** the work schedule for approved projects.

RESOLVED that the Officer was asked to remove the work in progress (WIP) from projects that haven't been started.

Officer gave a verbal update on the meeting held with the woodland trust regarding the tree planting in Bure, 600 trees' are to be planted in the Bure Park Nature Reserve.

RESOLVED that the Officer would send the map to Cllr Mawer and look into the Grounds Maintenance contract prior to the trees being planted.

18/2 Electrical Rewire Garth Park

324 RESOLVED that the Committee **APPROVED** the additional spend with funds to be taken from **EMR BTC Premises**.

19/2 Forward Plan
324 RESOLVED that the Committee **REVIEWED** and **COMMENTED** on the Forward Plan.

Resolved that the Officer was asked to put the following items onto the Forward Plan:

- Gravenhill bus shelter.
- Ground Maintenance Contract
- Ward by Ward Play Areas.

Date of next Meeting: Tuesday 12 September 2023 at 19:00

CLOSE OF MEETING: 20:35 hrs

Minutes of the Environment Committee

A meeting of the **Environment Committee** was held on **Tuesday 21st November 2023** at **19:00 hrs** at the **The Chamber Room, The Garth, Launton Road, OX26 2PS**.

Present:

Cllr Damien Maguire (Chairman)

Cllr Donna Ford
Cllr Harry Knight
Cllr Rachel Mallows
Cllr Nicholas Mawer
Cllr Les Sibley

In Attendance:

Paul Canning, Service Manager
Shannon O'Connor, Events & Marketing

1/23 Apologies for Absence

24 RESOLVED that apologies have been received for Cllr Christopher Pruden and Cllr Alisa Russell

2/23 Declarations of Interest

24 RESOLVED that no declarations were received.

3/23 Public Session

24 RESOLVED that the committee received presence

- Eco environmental advocate
- Bicester Green Gym
- Linda Burn

4/23 Minutes of the Environment Committee

24 RESOLVED to confirm the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting ENV03/2324 ENV03A/2324 were **NOTED** and **APPROVED**

5/23 Minutes of the Events Working Party

24 RESOLVED to confirm the minutes of the Events Working Party meeting EWP02/2324 ENP03/2324 were **NOTED** and **APPROVED**

6/23 Community Football Working Group Minutes

24 RESOLVED that committee **NOTED** community sport working group

Committee requested the agenda headings align with minute titles 'Community Sports Working Group'

7/23 Budget

24 RESOLVED that the budget proposal for 2023/2024 is referred back to Town Clerk to:

- Check rates with CDC regarding Whiteland's
- Confirm the split between Whiteland's café and Whiteland's sports centre
- Meter readings need to be placed onto Finance/budget agendas

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Tuesday 21st November 2023

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Signed

Dated

- Breakdown of one off payments to be visible – capital budget / revenue budget

Service manager to gather quotes for a new ride on mower

Cllr Mallows suggested a conversation around solar panels

8/23 Refund

24 RESOLVED that committee **APPROVED** the refund request for Glory Farm on 3 bookings during September 2023 and October 2023.

9/23 Sports Facilities

24 RESOLVED that committee support the recommendation.

- Officers to look into section 106 clause around pitches
- Whiteland's cricket pitch to be looked at with CDC agreement
- Officers to advertise the cricket pitch as a mixed sports facility.

10/2 Fun Fair 2024

324 RESOLVED that committee **APPROVE** the requests of locations and dates set out in the report.

11/2 Southwold Play Area Location

324 RESOLVED that committee **APPROVE** option 3 under the basis that the footprint of the park is increased.

12/2 Whitelands Function Room Partition

324 RESOLVED that officers must re-submit report with a clear plan and understand the below

- Terms of the lease
- Clarity on who asked for the partition

13/2 Garth Park Splash Pad

324 RESOLVED that committee **NOTED** the report.

Public consultation to start on social media in FEB 2024.

14/2 Approved Projects

324 RESOLVED that committee **NOTED** the work schedule for approved projects

Officers to include tiny forests to schedule

15/2 Section 6 Motion

324 RESOLVED that committee referred item back to officers for the following investigations

- Garth Court residents – they need to be consulted
- Staff costings matrix for opening and closing times
- How many complaints collated

- Staff safety

16/2 Forward Plan
324 RESOLVED that committee **NOTED** the report

2024 Events budget to be added.

Date of next Meeting: Wednesday 6 December 2023 at 19:00

CLOSE OF MEETING: 20:37 hrs

Minutes of the Finance Committee

A meeting of the **Finance Committee** was held on **Tuesday 10th October 2023** at **19:00 hrs** at the **Council Chamber, Garth House, Launton Rd, OX26 6PS**.

Present:

Cllr Paul Wheatley (Chairman)
Cllr Tom Beckett (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Donna Ford
Cllr Dan Hallett
Cllr Sam Holland
Cllr Harry Knight
Cllr Alicia Russell

In Attendance:

Louise Steele – Locum RFO

48/2324 Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED that apologies be received from Cllr Les Sibley

49/2324 Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED that no declarations were received.

50/2324 Minutes of the Finance Committee

The minutes of the extraordinary Finance Committee meeting **FIN02A/2324** held on Tuesday 8th August 2023 had not been circulated with the agenda and were deferred for approval at the next meeting taking place on Wednesday 20th December 2023.

51/2324 Public Session

The Committee received no representations there being no members of the public present.

52/2324 Finance Report

RESOLVED that Committee **RECEIVED & NOTED** the Income, Expenditure and Variances Report to Month 5 (the end of August 2023).

Questions were asked in relation to the following:

- A request for a detailed breakdown on Events expenditure
- Check on the invoicing re Cost Centre 401
- Detail on income described as “Whitelands room hire”
- A credit for dog bin emptying

The Locum RFO undertook to answer those questions in due course.

53/2324 Bank Balances

RESOLVED that Committee received the consolidated bank reconciliation for the period ending 31 August 2023 and **APPROVED** the bank balances and nominated Cllr Wheatley to sign the bank reconciliation.

54/2324 Payments

RESOLVED that the Committee **APPROVED** the schedule of payments totalling £576,374.45 made since those reported to Finance Committee on 6th June 2023.

55/2324 Aged Debtors

RESOLVED that Committee **NOTED** the Aged Creditors as at 31st August 2023.

56/2324 Aged Creditors

RESOLVED that Committee **NOTED** the Aged Debtors as of 31st August 2023.

57/2324 Independence & Competence of the internal Auditor

RESOLVED to make the following recommendations to Full Council, that:

- Annually, the agenda for the first meeting of Council following Mayor Making includes the appointment of the Internal Auditor as a standing item;
- In advance of each of the above meetings the Finance Committee considers the independence and competence of the putative internal auditor;
- The ongoing appointment of Mulberry & Co as the Council's internal auditor for the financial year 2023/24 be confirmed; and
- Mulberry & Co also be appointed for the financial years 2024/25 and 2025/26 in order to take advantage of a three-year fixed fee offer.

58/2324 Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Control

RESOLVED that Committee **APPROVED** the action plan to address weaknesses identified in the systems of internal control.

59/2324 Forward Plan

RESOLVED that Committee **NOTED** the forward plan and that the items listed on it were complete. It was **AGREED** that this item would become an Action Plan (populated in the first instance with actions agreed at minute no 58/2324 above). The Committee also noted that the following items had been omitted from the agenda and asked that these items go to the next meeting of Full Council – Utility Usage (minute 32/2324 refers); Best Kept Allotment (minute 35/2324 refers) and Manston Park Goal Posts (minute 37/2324 refers).

60/2324 Exclusion of the Press & Public

RESOLVED that in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) act 1960, the public & press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the item below in the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the general interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business.

61/2324 Bicester Town Council Feasibility Report

RESOLVED that Committee **APPROVED** the spend of £4,000 from EMR BTC Premises.

62/2324 Date of Next Meeting

- Wednesday 20th December 2023 – 7pm, The Chamber Room, Garth House.

Minutes of the Planning Committee

A meeting of the **Planning Committee** was held on **Tuesday 7th November 2023** at **19:00 hrs** at the **The Chamber Room, Bicester Town Council, The Garth, Launton Road, Bicester, Oxon OX26 6PS**.

Present:

Cllr Nicholas Mawer – Acting Chairman
Cllr Donna Ford
Cllr Sam Holland
Cllr Rachel Mallows
Cllr Nicholas Mawer
Cllr Christopher Pruden
Cllr Les Sibley
Cllr Paul Wheatley

In Attendance:

Paul Canning – Service Manager
Julie Trinder – Administration Officer – Civic & Democratic

94/2 Apologies for Absence

324 RESOLVED that apologies for absence were received from Cllr Nick Cotter, Cllr Damien Maguire, Cllr Tom Beckett, Cllr Dan Hallett and Cllr Jim Webb.

Due to the absence of Cllr Nick Cotter and Cllr Damien Maguire, Cllr Nicholas Mawer was voted as Chairman for this meeting.

95/2 Councillors are reminded to declare any interests on any item on this agenda in accordance with Bicester Town Council's Code of Conduct.
324 RESOLVED that no declarations of interest were made.

96/2 Declarations of Interest for District & County Councillors

324 RESOLVED that declarations of interest were received from Cllr Donna Ford, Cllr Christopher Purden, Cllr Nicholas Mawer and Cllr Les Sibley as Cherwell District Councillors and Cllr Donna Ford and Cllr Les Sibley as Oxfordshire County Council on the Planning Committee will make their comment's and decisions based upon information available at the time of the meeting. It is accepted that District and County Councillors may come to different decisions in the light of more information being made available at District or County Planning meetings.

97/2 Minutes of the Planning Meeting

324 RESOLVED that **MINUTES** and **RESOLUTIONS** of the Planning Committee meeting **PL06/2324 – 3rd October 2023** will be signed at a later meeting due to amendments that need to be made:

- Cllr Tom Beckett declared an interest as a Cherwell District Councillor
- Cllr Sam Holland sent his apologies
- Cllr Rachel Mallows did not declare an interest as was recorded

98/2 Public Session

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Tuesday 7th November 2023

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Signed

Dated

- 324** Members of the public addressed the meeting with their concerns regarding the proposed plans to transform Bicester Market Square and requested that car access to the Market Square is kept and that there is adequate parking for disabled shoppers.

Cllr Donna Ford provided a verbal update regarding the Bicester Market Square.

99/2 Cherwell Local Plan Review

- 324** Paul Fong and Matthew Roberts of JBP Associates Ltd, gave a presentation regarding their alternative strategy to the Cherwell Local Plan Review.

100/ Updates on large developments and associated issues

2324

101/ North West Bicester

- 2324** No report given.

102/ Graven Hill

- 2324** No report given.

103/ Other Business Strategic Sites

- 2324** No report given.

104/ Planning applications from Cherwell District Council

- 2324** **23/02430/CDISC – C/O Roundabout at Junction with Banbury Rd Southwold Lane**
RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no comment on this planning application.

23/02486/F – Larkrise 1C Rowan Road Bicester OX26 2HN

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no objections to this planning application.

23/02565/F – 1 Crown Walk Bicester OX26 6HY

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council would prefer not to have another betting shop in the town centre, but has no objection to this planning application.

23/02645/F – 20 Wensum Crescent Bicester OX26 2GL

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no objections to this planning application.

23/02647/F – 41 Lancaster Close Bicester OX26 4TT

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no objection to this planning application.

23/02715/REM – Land North of Bicester Garden Centre Oxford Road

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no objection to this planning application however, a missed opportunity for the applicant to install a solar roof on this property.

23/02738/F – 35 Churchill Road Bicester OX26 4TR

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no objection to this planning application.

23/02743/ADV – Waylands Kia Bicester Joblings Garage Launton Road OX26 6PZ

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no objection to this planning application.

23/02758/F – 8 Friend Way Ambrosden OX25 2AY

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no objection to this planning application.

23/02771/F – 5 Swift Close Bicester OX26 6YN

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no objection to this planning application, however, they do have concerns with the loss of car parking space adding pressure to on street parking in this area.

23/02890/F – Tysul House 3 Church Street OX26 6BA

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no objection to this planning application.

23/02443/F – 28 York Close Bicester OX26 4XE

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council object to this planning application due to:

Over development of the site

Residents concern for safety of children crossing the road in this area.

23/02687/F – 53 Buckingham Road Bicester OX26 3EY

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council object to this planning application due to:

- The proposed structural works are not sound
- Concern with overdevelopment of the site
- Concern that the planning application is for a HMO
- Not in keeping with street scene
- To close to pedestrian crossing, concern with close proximity to road crossing impinging on neighbours property.

23/02704/F – 28 Baliol Road Bicester OX26 4HP

RESOLVED: that Bicester Town Council object to this planning application due to the change of use and concerns over reduction of visibility due to relocation of fence to the front of the garden.

23/02806/F – 32 Kings End Bicester OX26

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council object to this planning application due to:

Overdevelopment of site

Access from rear onto Fox Lane is a concern

Traffic movement and pedestrian access in the area a concern.

23/02853/F – 77 Kempton Road Bicester OX26 1AD

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council object to this planning application due to the provision of roof light dormers might overlook neighbouring properties resulting in affecting neighbours privacy.

23/02722/TPO – 31 Hunt Close Bicester OX26 6HX

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council will leave this to the Arboriculture officer.

23/02685/F – 73 Kingsclere Road Bicester OX26 2JL

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council object to this planning application due to

- Concerns for the overload of HMO's in the residential area.
- The position of the proposed development will be built on a busy area used by pedestrians and cyclists en route to the town centre.
- There is not enough proposed car parking provision, object to part-demolition of family home, over development of existing site and not keeping in with the current scene.

- It was also suggested that a request for a party wall agreement.

23/02668/F – Bicester Park Unit 1 Charbridge Lane OX26 4SS

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no objection to this planning application and welcome it to Bicester.

23/02748/ADV – Unit 2 Trinity House West Graven Hill Road Ambrosden OX25 2DR

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council welcome this planning application.

23/02800/F – Heyfordian Travel Murdock Road Bicester OX26 4PP

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council welcome this planning application.

105/ Amended plans

2324 RESOLVED that committee **NOTED** the attached amended plan.

106/ Refused Plans

2324 RESOLVED that committee **NOTED** the refused plans.

107/ Notification of planning decisions from Cherwell District Council

2324 RESOLVED that committee **NOTED** the planning decisions.

108/ Forward Plan

2324 RESOLVED that committee **REVIEWED** and **COMMENTED** on the forward plan.

Date of next Meeting: Tuesday 9 January 2024 at 19:00

Meeting closed: 8.52pm.

Minutes of the Planning Committee

A meeting of the **Planning Committee** was held on **Tuesday 9th January 2024** at **19:00 hrs** at the **The Chamber Room, Bicester Town Council, The Garth, Launton Road, Bicester, Oxon OX26 6PS**.

Present:

Cllr Nick Cotter (Chairman)
Cllr Donna Ford
Cllr Dan Hallett
Cllr Rachel Mallows
Cllr Nicholas Mawer
Cllr Christopher Pruden
Cllr Les Sibley
Cllr Jim Webb
Cllr Paul Wheatley

In Attendance:

Paul Canning – Service Manager
Maria Galic – Administration Officer – Civic & Democratic

110/ Apologies for Absence

2324 RESOLVED that apologies for absence were received from Cllr Tom Beckett, Cllr Sam Holland and Cllr Damien Maguire.

111/ Declarations of Interest

2324 RESOLVED that declarations were received from the following Councillors:

- Cllr Nick Mawer – Due to being a member of CDC Social Housing Committee
- Cllr Jim Webb – Due to knowing the applicant for 44 Shearwater Drive
- Cllr Nick Cotter – Due to knowing the applicant for 44 Shearwater Drive

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

2324 RESOLVED that declarations were received from the following Councillors:

- Cllr Donna Ford – as a Councillor for Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council
- Cllr Christopher Pruden - as a Councillor for Cherwell District Council
- Cllr Les Sibley - as a Councillor for Cherwell District Council
- Cllr Nick Cotter - as a Councillor for Cherwell District Council

113/ Declarations of Interest for District & County Councillors

2324 Declarations of Interest for District & County Councillors

RESOLVED that declarations of interest were received from Cllr Donna Ford, Cllr Christopher Purden, Cllr Nicholas Mawer and Cllr Les Sibley as Cherwell District Councillors and Cllr Donna Ford and Cllr Les Sibley as Oxfordshire County Council on the Planning Committee will make their comment's and decisions based upon information

Minutes: PL09/2324: Planning Committee Meeting
Tuesday 9th January 2024

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Signed

Dated

available at the time of the meeting. It is accepted that District and County Councillors may come to different decisions in the light of more information being made available at District or County Planning meetings.

114/ Minutes of the Planning Meeting

2324 To confirm the **MINUTES** and **RESOLUTIONS** of the following Planning meeting:

- **PL06/2324 – 3rd October 2023**

UNRESOLVED that minutes from the following meeting were **REJECTED** due to requiring the following amendments being made:

- **PL07/2324 – 7th November 2023**

There were no declarations of interest. During the Public Session Cllr Donna Ford provided a verbal update regarding the Bicester Market Square. Cllr Paul Wheatley showing as present but had sent apologies.

RESOLVED that no declarations of interest were received rather than apologies for absence.

115/ Public Session

2324 In accordance with Standing Order 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 shall speak for more than 2 minutes.

116/ Updates on large developments and associated issues

2324

117/ North West Bicester

2324 No report given

118/ Graven Hill

2324 No report given

119/ Other Business Strategic Sites

2324 Committee **CONSIDERED** and **COMMENTED** on the land required for the Cemetery

120/ Planning applications from Cherwell District Council

2324 **23/03048/F – 35 Churchill Road**

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no objections to this planning application.

23/03210/F – 5 Barberry Place

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no objections to this planning application.

23/03214/F – 173 Whitelands Way

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council raise concerns over the planning application due to:

There are two applications at the same time.

23/03223/F – 71 Shannon Road

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no objections to this planning application.

23/03268/F – Thomas Eddison House

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council welcome this planning application.

23/03269/F – Cooperative Foods

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council welcome this planning application.

23/03327/F – 68 Ravencroft

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no objections to this planning application.

23/03338/F – 6 Eaves Road

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has noted this planning application.

23/03365/OUT – A2 Dominion Devs Ltd & Police and Criminology

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no objections to this planning application and welcome the proposal.

23/03367/F – 34 Merganser Drive

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has noted and has no objections to this planning application.

23/03412/F – 230 Buckingham Road

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no objections to this planning application.

23/03427/F – Land Adj 83 & 85 part of Car Park, Sheep Street

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council welcome the proposal and would suggest installation of solar panels.

23/03431/F – 8 Hazel Grove

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has noted and has no objections to this planning application.

23/03440/MA56 – 51 Market Square

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council welcome this planning application.

23/03473/F – 44 Shearwater Drive

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council object to this planning application due to: Concerns of overdevelopment.

23/03482/ADV – 73 Sheep Street

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council welcome the planning application.

23/03503/F – 9 Windsor Close

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no objections to this planning application.

23/03526/F – 136 Anniversary Avenue East

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has noted the planning application.

23/03543/F – 16 Cypress Gardens

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no objections to this planning application.

23/03554/LB – The Cottage, Kings Head Court

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council welcome the planning application.

R3.0111/23 – Oxfordshire County Council Environment and Place County Hall
RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has noted the planning application.

121/ Withdrawn plan

2324 RESOLVED that Committee **NOTED** the Withdrawn plans:

23/02604/DEMPA – Central Government Registrar , Waverley House, Queens Avenue

Committee **RESOLVED** that Bicester Town Council **STRONGLY** object to this application and question why the building is to be demolished and request it is kept as is for use by the local community. Waverley House (Old Magistrates Court) is acknowledged as being a safe, sound and habitable building, and therefore there is no justifiable reason for it to be demolished. The building is an important Landmark and a Heritage asset to Bicester.

122/ Notification of planning decisions from Cherwell District Council

2324 RESOLVED that Committee **REVIEWED** the planning decisions from Cherwell District Council.

123/ Forward Plan

2324 RESOLVED that Committee **REVIEWED** and **COMMENTED** on the Forward Plan.

Officers to arrange with A2 Dominion to attend the next planning meeting.

Meeting closed: 20:17 hrs

Date of next Meeting: Tuesday 6 February 2024 – 7pm, The Chamber Room, Garth House

Minutes of the Planning Committee

A meeting of the **Planning Committee** was held on **Tuesday 6th February 2024** at **19:00 hrs** at the **The Chamber Room, Bicester Town Council, The Garth, Launton Road, Bicester, Oxon OX26 6PS.**

Present:

Cllr Nick Cotter (Chairman)
Cllr Tom Beckett
Cllr Donna Ford
Cllr Nicholas Mawer
Cllr Christopher Pruden
Cllr Les Sibley
Cllr Jim Webb
Cllr Paul Wheatley

In Attendance:

Paul Canning – Service Manager
Maria Galic – Administration Officer- Civic & Democratic

124/ Apologies for Absence

2324 RESOLVED that apologies for absence were received from Cllr Dan Hallett, Cllr Damien Maguire and Cllr Rachel Mallows.

125/ Declarations of Interest

2324 RESOLVED that declarations were received from the following councillors:

- Cllr Nick Cotter – Due to speaking to the applicant at 8 Epsom Way
- Cllr Nick Cotter and Cllr Christopher Pruden knowing the applicant for The Old Priory
- Cllr Nick Mawer – Due to being a member of Cherwell District Council Social Housing Committee

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

2324 RESOLVED that declarations were received from the following Councillors:

- Cllr Nick Cotter – As a councillor for Cherwell District Council
- Cllr Donna Ford – As a councillor for Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council
- Cllr Christopher Pruden – As a councillor for Cherwell District Council
- Cllr Les Sibley – As a councillor for Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council

127/ Declarations of Interest for District & County Councillors

2324 RESOLVED that declarations of interest were received from Cllr Tom Beckett, Cllr Nick Cotter, Cllr Donna Ford, Cllr Christopher Pruden, Cllr Nicholas Mawer and Cllr Les Sibley

Minutes: PL10/2324: Planning Committee Meeting
Tuesday 6th February 2024

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Signed

Dated

as Cherwell District Councillors and Cllr Donna Ford and Cllr Les Sibley as Oxfordshire County Councillors on the Planning Committee will make their comment's and decisions based upon information available at the time of the meeting. It is accepted that District and County Councillors may come to different decisions in the light of more information being made available at District or County Planning meetings.

128/ Minutes of the Planning Meeting

2324 To confirm the **MINUTES** and **RESOLUTIONS** of the following Planning meeting:

- **PL10/2324 – 6th February 2024**
- **PL09/2324 – 9th January 2024**

To amend Cllr Christopher Pruden's declaration of interest by removing Oxfordshire County Council

- **PL07/2324 – 7th November 2023**

To amend Cllr Paul Wheatley's attendance as present

129/ Public Session

2324 In accordance with the Standing Order 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 shall speak for more than 2 minutes.

130/ Updates on large developments and associated issues

2324

131/ North West Bicester

2324 Presentation held by A2 Dominion. The Committee **CONSIDERED** and **COMMENTED** on the plans for 1,000 new homes in North West Bicester.

132/ Graven Hill

2324 **RESOLVED** that no update was given.

133/ Other Business Strategic Sites

2324 **RESOLVED** that no update was given.

134/ Planning applications from Cherwell District Council

2324 **23/02878/OBL – Thames Valley Police Property Services Headquarters**

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council did not comment on this planning application.

23/03456/LB – City to City Estates Ltd, 51 Market Square

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council did not comment on this planning application.

23/03586/F – 124 Anniversary Avenue

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council did not comment on this planning application.

23/03589/F – 7 Cedar Drive

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council raise concerns with parking in this area.

23/03603/F – 122 Anniversary Avenue

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council did not comment on this planning application.

Minutes: PL10/2324: Planning Committee Meeting
Tuesday 6th February 2024

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Signed

Dated

23/03615/F – 3 The Oval

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council object to this planning application due concerns of overdevelopment.

23/03618/F – 6 Blythe Place

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council has no objections to this planning application but do have concerns of potential overdevelopment.

24/00011/F – 8 Epsom Way

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council did not comment on this planning application.

24/00054/LB (24/00055/ADV) – Nationwide Building Society, 33 Market Square

RESOLVED that Bicester Town welcome this planning application.

24/0090/F – 27 Launton Road

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council raise concerns of overdevelopment.

24/00106/F – Marigold View 53b Hamilton Close

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council did not comment on this planning application.

24/0011/F – 53 Buckingham Road

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council object to this planning application due to:

- overdevelopment of the site
- concerns that previous plans submitted have not been included in current planning

24/00113/F – 42 London Road

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council did not comment on this planning application.

24/00124/LB – The Old Priory, Priory Lane

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council did not comment on this planning application.

24/00131/F – 32 Kings End

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council did not comment on this planning application.

24/00154/F – 42 Brashfield Road

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council did not comment on this planning application.

R3.0114/23 – Oxfordshire County Council, Environment and Place County Hall

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council did not comment on this planning application.

23/03073/HYBRID – PHL Ltd & Countryside Properties, Phase 2 SW Bicester

RESOLVED that Bicester Town Council have no objections to this planning application but do raise concerns over the limited number and proximity to local amenities available to residents such as a GP Surgery. Additionally, the Committee request financial contributions as per s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, in order to support raising funds for a new cemetery in Bicester.

135/ 2324 Notification of planning decisions from Cherwell District Council

RESOLVED that Committee **REVIEWED** the planning decisions from Cherwell District Council.

136/ Withdrawn plan

2324 RESOLVED that Committee **NOTED** the Withdrawn Plan.

137/ Refused

2324 RESOLVED that Committee **NOTED** the Refused Plan.

138/ Forward Plan

2324 RESOLVED that Committee **REVIEWED** and **COMMENTED** on the Forward Plan.

- Officers to arrange for A2 Dominion to return to present their final plan
- Town Clerk to update Councillors on the Market Square
- The addition of a 'Neighbourhood Plan' as a 5th element of the Forward Plan

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 27th February 2024 – 7pm, The Chamber Room, Garth House

CLOSE OF MEETING: 20:26 hrs

Minutes of the Policy Committee

A meeting of the **Policy Committee** was held on **Monday 29th January 2024** at **19:00 hrs** at the **The Chamber Room, Bicester Town Council, The Garth, Launton Road, Bicester, Oxon OX26 6PS.**

Present:

Cllr Rachel Mallows (Chairman)
Cllr Paul Wheatley (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Alisa Russell
Cllr Dan Hallett
Cllr Les Sibley
Cllr Damien Maguire

In Attendance:

Phil Evans, Town Clerk
Jodi Clarke, Office Administrator

40/2 Apologies for Absence

324 RESOLVED that apologies were received from Cllr Harry Knight.

41/2 Declarations of Interest

324 RESOLVED that no declarations were received.

42/2 Minutes of Policy Committee

324 RESOLVED that the Committee **APPROVED** the following minutes:

- **POL03/2324** – Monday 30th October 2023 at 19:00hrs

43/2 Public Session

324 RESOLVED that no public were present.

44/2 Major Town Initiatives

324 RESOLVED that the Committee **NOTED** the following:

- **Bicester Vision CIC Executive board meeting** held on Thursday 2nd November 2023
- **Bicester Vision CIC Partnership meeting** held on Thursday 7th December 2023

45/2 Policies and Procedures

324 RESOLVED that the Committee **REVIEWED & APPROVED** the following Policies:

- GP7 – Grant Aid Policy

Officers to change Section 2.8 from “Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting” to “Finance Committee”

Officers to promote Grant Aid more than previous years.

- GP24 – Tree Management Policy
- GP26 – Councillor Vacancy Policy

46/2 Allotment Tenancy Agreement Changes

324 RESOLVED that the committee **APPROVED** the changes to the allotment tenancy agreement.

47/2 Allotment Privacy Notice Changes

324 RESOLVED that the committee **APPROVED** the changes to the allotment privacy notice.

48/2 Exclusion of Press and Public

324 RESOLVED That in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1990, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the items set out below on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the general interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

49/2 Standing Report - Lease's

324 Nai's House Lease:

Officers are asked to put a report to the Finance Committee with the costs of the utility charges along with a recommendation.

Officers are asked to bring the Lease back to the Policy Meeting on the 19th February.

Officers are to add the following to the Forward Plan:

- Costing on repairs i.e. Windows, double glazing.
- Look into Grants that may help fund the Repairs.
-

Appendix 1b: Thames Water

Cllr Hallett thanked the Town Clerk and his team for the ongoing work in regards to the Jubilee Lake.

RESOLVED that the Committee **APPROVED** the Town Clerk to begin drafting the Heads of Terms once the Pathway work is completed.

Appendix 1c: Savior Fare Lease:

RESOLVED that the Committee **OBJECTED** to the changes in section 10.1.

RESOLVED that the Committee **APPROVED** the re-wording on section 20.3 but to have the same meaning as the original.

50/2 Ground Maintenance Contract Update

324 The existing Contract expires on the 31st March 2024.

RESOLVED that the Committee **NOTED** the report.

51/2 Forward Plan
324

Officers to change section 3 to Assets Adoption for better clarity.

Councillors raised that some residents are not receiving the Garth Gazette in the post. Officers to look into why this is not being received in some areas of Bicester.

Officers are asked to post about the 20mph Zones in Bicester onto the Town Councils Facebook Page.

RESOLVED that the committee **NOTED** the report.

Date of next Meeting: Monday 19 February 2024 at 19:00

CLOSE OF MEETING: 20:22 hrs

Minutes of the Allotments Working Party

A meeting of the **Allotments Working Party** was held on **Wednesday 14th June 2023** at **19:00 hrs** at **The Council Chambers at The Garth, Launton Road, OX26 6PS**.

Present:

Cllr Sam Holland
Cllr Rich Oliver
Cllr Jim Webb
Cllr Paul Wheatley

In Attendance:

Jodi Clarke, Office Administrator
Paul Canning, Service Manager
Conor Pattison, Outdoor Supervisor

1 Appointment of Chair

RESOLVED that Working Party **APPOINTED** Cllr Maguire as the Chair for the Allotment Working Party.

RESOLVED that Cllr Wheatley would stand in for Cllr Maguire as Chair for this meeting only.

2 Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED that apologies were received from Cllr Maguire and Rennie Buxton (Colne House Rep).

3 Declaration of Interest

RESOLVED that no Declarations of Interest were received.

4 Proposed Allotment Deposit Increase

Cllr Wheatley asked that another Item be added to the end of the Agenda to allow tenants to discuss any issues.

RESOLVED that the Working Party **APPROVED** that the Proposal of the Allotment Deposit Increase goes to the Environment Committee.

RESOLVED that the Working Party asked Officers to make Section 23 of the Tenancy Agreement more of an incentive for tenants to clear their plots once handed back.

5 Outstanding Rent

RESOLVED that the Working Party **NOTED** the Report.

RESOLVED that the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) notifies tenants when payment comes via BACS or Cheque.

6 Best Kept Allotment Trophy

An error to the report was found on page 10 of Agenda Item 6. The recommendation is to read as:

“4.1 Working Party is **RECOMMENDED** to **APPROVE** Figure 1 & 3 to be taken to the Environment Committee.”

RESOLVED that the Working Party **APPROVED** that Figure 1 & 3 are to be taken to the Environment Committee, with the amendments of choosing an outside organisation or party to judge the plots along with an opt in & out from for tenants to complete.

RESOLVED that Office Administrator will create a specification sheet for tenants to go by.

RESOLVED that Office Administrator would look into having different categories.

7 Forward Plan

RESOLVED that the Working Party **NOTED** the Forward Plan.

8 Issues

RESOLVED that BTC will replace the bench that was broken by workers at Anson Way Allotments.

RESOLVED that Officers will look into the wording of the Inspection Letters as tenants find them quite hostile.

RESOLVED that Officers will discuss with Cherwell District Council about garden waste collection for the allotment sites.

RESOLVED that Officers will look into the boundary of the chain link fence at Evenlode Allotments to ensure the hedge is BTC to manage.

RESOLVED that Officers would look into whether Green Bins can be collected from the sites.

RESOLVED that the Service Manager will get the Tree Officer at Cherwell District Council to look at the trees on AW19 & AW04.

9 Date of the Next Meeting

Date of next Meeting: Wednesday 9 August 2023 at 19:00

CLOSE OF MEETING: 19:54 hrs

Minutes of the Allotments Working Party

A meeting of the **Allotments Working Party** was held on **Wednesday 9th August 2023** at **19:00 hrs** at the **The Garth, Launton Road, OX26 6PS**.

Present:

Cllr Damien Maguire (Chairman)

Cllr Sam Holland

Cllr Jim Webb

Cllr Paul Wheatley

In Attendance:

Paul Canning, Service Manager

Jodi Clarke, Office Administrator

10 Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED and **APPROVED** that the following apologies were received from:

- Cllr Rich Oliver

11 Declaration of Interest

RESOLVED that no declarations were received.

12 Minutes of the Allotment Working Party

RESOLVED and **APPROVED** that the minutes of the following meeting:

- AWP01/2324 – 14th June 2023 at 19:00pm

RESOLVED that amendments are needed to Cllr Wheatley name on item 1 & 4, and to change 'from' to 'form' before it goes to the Environment Meeting on the 12th September.

13 Best Kept Allotment Award

RESOLVED that the working party **COMMENTED** and **NOTED** the report.

RESOLVED that the working party asked for item 1.1 to be removed from the Best Kept Allotment Criteria and 1.2 changed to 75%.

14 Inspection Letter

RESOLVED that the working party **APPROVED** the changes to the inspection letters.

RESOLVED that the outdoor supervisor will arrange to do the inspections with the site reps.

15 Tenancy Agreement

RESOLVED that the working party **NOTED** the contents of the report.

RESOLVED that working party **APPROVED** the changes to the Tenancy Agreement for 1.3, 1.4, 1.5 & 1.6 to be taken to the Environment Committee.

RESOLVED that the working party requested a Fire Risk Assessment before approving 1.7 and to take this to the Environment Committee.

16 Privacy Notice

RESOLVED that the working party **APPROVED** the changes to the Privacy Notice to be taken to the Environment Committee.

17 Notice boards

RESOLVED that the working party **APPROVED** the following to be taken to the Environment Committee:

- AF30/A2 for Colne Close, Evenlode House and Anson Way Allotments.
- AF30/6A2 for Leach Road and Claypits Allotments.

18 Forward Plan

RESOLVED that the working party **NOTED** the report.

19 Date of the Next Meeting

6th December 2023 at 19:00pm

Date of next Meeting: Wednesday 29 November 2023 at 19:00

CLOSE OF MEETING: 19:49 hrs

Minutes of the Bicester Traffic Advisory Group

A meeting of the **Bicester Traffic Advisory Group** was held on **Thursday 30th November 2023** at **14:00 hrs** at the **The Chamber Room, Bicester Town Council, The Garth, Launton Road, Bicester, Oxon OX26 6PS.**

Present:

Cllr Donna Ford
Cllr Rachel Mallows

In Attendance:

26 Apologies

RESOLVED that **APOLOGIES** were received apologies from Cllr Dan Hallett

27 Minutes of the Bicester Traffic Advisory Group

RESOLVED to confirm the minutes of the Bicester Advisory Group's meeting

BTAG01/2324 – Thursday 22nd June 2023.

28 Update of items outstanding not covered elsewhere on the Agenda 20mph public consultation

OCC hosted a public consultation regarding the 20mph speed limit and details have been displayed in the Garth Gazette.

Cllr Ford opened with an update

Cllr Sibley commented 20mph outside schools and shopping locations to be immediate

Cllr Mallows suggested a scoring system for the consultation measurement

Committee members worked to re-frame questions with OCC officers.

29 Report from Oxfordshire County Council Officer

RESOLVED that committee **NOTED** report and made the following comments

1d. Sheep Street (ETRO)

A proposal for a ETRO to permit people to cycle through the southern part of Sheep Street is to take an informal consultation.

Committee raised concerns regarding market trade and insurance.

Committee questioned the infrastructure and possible requirement of traffic regulations

- Officers to request design

Cllr Catling has done a report on the Southwold barrier leading onto Buckingham Road

-Legal compliance for barriers to be clarified

30 Report from Cherwell District Council Officer

RESOLVED that the committee **NOTED** the report

**31 Matters raised by Group Members/Residents
Enforcement officer**

The enforcement officer has been reported using double yellow lines.

Whiteland's signage

Signage to be looked at for overflow carpark

Road safety

Road safety on Vendee Drive

Safety of pathway between Esso and Bicester village

Cllr Pratt commented CDC enforcement team are aware

32 Speed Cameras

RESOLVED that committee **APPROVE** the letter addressed to Thames Valley Police.

Cllr Ford proposes all camera's within the town are switched on

33 Forward Plan

Customer parking – Lambourne Crescent

Air pollution report - CDC

34 Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 25th January 2024, 14:00hrs

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 25 January 2024 at 14:00

CLOSE OF MEETING: 14:48 hrs

Minutes of the Community Sports Working Group

A meeting of the **Community Sports Working Group** was held on **Thursday 26th October 2023** at **19:00 hrs** at **The Chamber Room, The Garth, Launton Road, OX26 6PS**.

Present:

Cllr Tom Beckett
Cllr Christopher Pruden
Cllr Jim Webb

In Attendance:

Paul Canning, Service Manager
Jodi Clarke, Office Administrator
Nigel Simpson, Cherwell District Council
Chris Cassidy, KEA Club
Paul Davis, ACE Academy
Claire Finn, Launton Ladies
Kev Hook, Bure Park
Matt Korn, Bure Park
Chris Clark, Launton FC
Craig Morley, BRFC
Jude Williams, Highfield Juniors
Maz Heslop, Chesterton FC
Chris Wales, Bicester Town Colts

2423 Apologies for Absence

/24 RESOLVED that Apologies were received from:

- Cllr Nicholas Mawer
- Michael Williams – Talent iD
- Granville Williams – BRFC, Craig Morley is substituting for Granville.
- Brian Leach – Ivy FC
- Steve & Ally Payne – Bicester Fossils Walking Football
- Jaime Adams – Glory Farm FC

2523 Declarations of Interest

/24 RESOLVED that a declaration of interest was received from Cllr Jim Webb as he is a member of Bicester Fossils Walking Football.

2623 Minutes of the Community Sports Working Group

/24 RESOLVED that the Working Party **APPROVED** the minutes from:

- **CSWG02/2324** – held on the 31st August 2023 at 19:00hrs

2723 3 Strike System

/24 RESOLVED that the working party **COMMENTED & NOTED** the 3-strike system report.

Bure Park commented that the first two no shows in September were due to the

Whitelands contact details not being handed out, making it difficult for the club to notify the site.

RESOLVED that Whitelands are to include the teams/age group that are using the slots at the time of the no shows for all future no shows.

2823 Pitch Allocation

/24 RESOLVED that the working party **COMMENTED & NOTED** the report.

RESOLVED that the working party **COMMENTED & APPROVED** the new deadline date of the 26th November 2023.

Bure Park raised concerns about another user that has attempted to use there equipment and use the pitches without booking, this was raised on the day of the incident. They also believe the team to be a none Bicester team.

The officer it was reported to looked into this straight away and found that the user had booked the pitch on the Saturday morning at 8:30am due to a system error turning all the weekend cut off times off. The error wasn't caught until this was raised by Bure and the officer on the day asked the team to leave and was shown the booking had been made, due to the print out for the day being done at 7:00am it was not on the schedule. The system error has since been resolved.

RESOLVED that officers will keep and eye on the club in question and take actions as needed.

2923 Pitch Marking

/24 RESOLVED that a verbal update was given. Touching base on the current issues with pitches and what Bicester Town Council have done to resolve the issues, these include:

- Re-sizing pitches to fit.
- Different layouts.
- Creating more space between the pitches.

The Service Manager thanked the clubs that have supported Bicester Town Council through this period of time when we were short staffed and while our new staff are finding their feet.

Clubs aired their concerns about some of the layout on 2 particular sites, these being Sunderland Drive and Pingle Field.

Bure Park asked whether the 3rd 7v7 would be put back in, the Service Manager informed them that at this current time the layout would stay the same but with 2x 7v7 pitches instead of 3x 7v7. The club expressed that in doing this it would mean they have to stop some teams playing, the Service Manager insured that if the required use went up the layout would be reviewed.

RESOLVED that Bure Park have been asked to inform the Facilities Administrator via Sports@bicester.gov.uk if they require a pitch but none are available, they will then keep this data internally and monitor.

Launton FC raised that Launton will not use Sunderland Drive while it is in such an unacceptable state, the senior 11v11 is too close to the 9v9 creating no 3 meter run off as per the FA rules & regulations.

Both clubs expressed that they have offered help and have been ignored, all they want is for children to be able to play football in a safe environment. They feel frustrated and just want the best for Bicester.

RESOLVED that the Service Manager has noted the issues and will go away and speak with the Town Clerk about the issues and the help that is being offered.

3023 Wrist Bands

/24 RESOLVED that the Verbal update was given.

The Service Manager informed the group that due to the amount of wristbands found around the site and Kingsmere, they are looking to change this for a hand stamp to which the coaches would the vouch for the children with in their group.

The group expressed that the Whitelands Team are doing a great job, no one behind the goals and no one except the user are on the pitch.

BRFC asked about the monitoring of the rugby pitches when rugby cannot use the in the Summer, marked pitches are designated and shouldn't have people using it. They informed the council that that Cherwell use to have wooden signs on the pitches but since the takeover these haven't been seen.

RESOLVED that the Service Manager will look into the status of the site as to whether it is a recreational area and from there they will review if needed.

Teams informed the group that the Cricket pitch wouldn't be used as the changing facilities are too far from the pitch, some suggested putting a 9v9 pitch there instead. Since 26th September 2022 no users have booked the Cricket Pitch.

RESOLVED that the Service Manager would look into the Cricket pitch.

BRFC also raised that the Flood Light still haven't been installed, they asked for timings for this.

RESOLVED that the Service Manager would email Cherwell for the timings.

3123 Forward Plan

/24 RESOLVED that the Working Party **COMMENTED & NOTED** the Forward Plan.

The Service Manager informed the group that the 9v9 goals for Whitelands would need to go to the Finance meeting on the 20th December 2023.

The Chairman feels this is too long to wait and have requested that the Service Manager tries to call a Special Meeting.

RESOLVED that the Service Manager will try to call a special Finance Meeting.

3223 Date of next meeting

Minutes: 03/2324: Community Sports Working Group Meeting
Thursday 26th October 2023

Page 3 of 4

Signed

Dated

/24

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 4 January 2024 at 19:00

CLOSE OF MEETING: 20:02 hrs

Minutes of the Events Working Party

A meeting of the **Events Working Party** was held on **Wednesday 13th September 2023** at **19:00 hrs** at the **Council Chamber, Garth House, Launton Road, OX26 6PS**.

Present:

Cllr Christopher Pruden (Chairman)
Cllr Donna Ford
Cllr Harry Knight
Cllr Damien Maguire
Cllr Jim Webb

In Attendance:

Paul Canning – Service Manager
Shannon O'Connor – Office Administrator – Events and Marketing

23/ Apologies for Absence

2324 RESOLVED that apologies were received from Cllr Rich Oliver.

24/ Declarations of Interest

2324 RESOLVED that Cllr Christopher Pruden could have a Declaration of interest as he hosted a political stall at the Bicester Pride event 2023.

25/ Confirmed Minutes

2324 UN-RESOLVED as the events working party minutes from Wednesday 5th July were not included into the agenda pack.

26/ Markets Update

2324 Committee did **NOT** receive a market update report from Cherwell District Council.

27/ Election of Chair

2324 RESOLVED that Cllr Christopher Pruden is the elected chair of the Events Working Party.

28/ Bicester Town Council Events

2324 RESOLVED that the Working Party **REVIEWED** and **COMMENTED** on the following events:

- Armed Forces Day
- Cancelled Music event 1
- 80's Music night

Cllr's **COMMENTED** on tower lights and toilets for the 80's night and suggested in 2024 we have more.

- Christmas light switch on report
- Event dates for 2024
- Advertising plan for BTC events, 2024

29/ Other Events

2324 RESOLVED that Bicester Pride gave an update on how the Bicester Pride event went and proposed a new date for 2024 – 7th September 2024
Cllrs recommended Bicester Pride get their open space application in ASAP.

RESOLVED that OYAP provided an update on the current status, OYAP announced they will be stopping works and will begin to phase out at the end of 2023

30/ Community

2324 RESOLVED that Bumble Creative provided an introduction to themselves, officers are due to meet with Nicolette and discuss the working relationship for BTC events and the community involvement.

31/ Forward Plan

2324 RESOLVED that the working party **REVIEWED** and **COMMENTED** on the Forward Plan

- Christmas light switch on update
- Christmas light trail event plan

Date of next Meeting: Wednesday 8 November 2023 at 19:00

BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL

Monday 11th March 2024

Mayors Report

Chairman: Councillor Harry Knight

Contact: harry.knight@bicester.gov.uk

Phil Evans – Town Clerk

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

Ward Affected: All Wards

1. Overview

During the period of 9th January 2024 – 10th March 2024 the following visits were made:

The Mayor and Consort attended the following functions:

January

26th – Brackley Town Council Burns Dinner

February

6th – Brookside Primary School

11th – CDC Chairmans Sunday Lunch and Charity Auction

15th – Oxfordshire Gang Show, Radley College Theatre

16th – BTC Pub Quiz, The Nightingale

17th – Rapunzel Pantomime, The Cooper School

March

1st – Didcot Town Mayor's Charity Dinner

8th – Banbury Town Mayor's Civic Dinner

BTC07/2324
Monday 11th March 2024

BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL FULL COUNCIL REPORT

Monday 11th March 2024

Southwold Play Area

Chairman: Councillor Harry Knight (Mayor)

Contact: harry.knight@bicester.gov.uk

Phil Evans – Town Clerk

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

Ward Affected: East Ward

1. Overview

The request from the Environment Office for expenditure in excess of £25,000 on the Southwold Play Area and the recommendation from the RFO that the spend for phase 1 area design be taken from the earmarked reserve for Play Area / Open Space Investment (9011/901)

2. Background

In the Finance Committee meeting on Tuesday, 13th February 2024, The Committee reviewed the request from the Environment Committee for an allocation of spend of £90,000 to be taken from Projects Play Area/Open Space Investment (4313 / 110). The Committee then considered the recommendation from the RFO at that time, that the project instead be funded from earmarked reserves as there were insufficient funds in the Investment. The Committee **AGREED** to use remaining funds from Projects Play Area and for the balance to be taken from earmarked reserves.

However, the work on phase 1 will not be carried out nor payment made within the financial year 2023/2024 and it is therefore now the recommendation that the full cost be allocated to the earmarked reserve for Play Areas / Open Space Investment. It is further recommended that any unspent balance on the Projects Play Area / Open Space Investment (4313 / 110) at the end of the financial year be transferred to the earmarked reserve for Play Areas / Open Space.

Council will receive a detailed report on the totality of earmarked reserves and the general reserve after the end of the financial year.

3. Recommendation

Council is asked to:

- **APPROVE** the proposed expenditure of £90,000 on the Southwold Play Area and the spend is to come from earmarked reserves for Play Areas / Open Space Investment.

BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL REPORT

Monday 11th March 2024

Review of Financial Regulations

Chairman: Councillor Harry Knight

Contact: harry.knight@bicester.gov.uk

Phil Evans – Town Clerk

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

Ward Affected: All Wards

1. Overview

The purpose of this report is to conduct a review of Financial Regulations for consideration of the Committee and onward presentation to Policy Committee before adoption by Full Council.

2. Background

The Town Council's Financial Regulations were last reviewed in August 2022 and at that time a review date of August 2024 was set. However, in the interim internal audit report considered by the Finance Committee on 19th December 2023 there were two recommendations relating to Financial Regulations – these were:

“Confirm that the Parish Council has adopted and recently reviewed Financial Regulations.

Financial regulations are based on the NALC model. These were reviewed and readopted in the full council in August 2022. **There is evidence of typos and the document is due to be reformatted, council may want to attend to this before the next formal review date.**

Check that the council's Financial Regulations are being routinely followed.

Financial regulations 2.2 deals with bank reconciliation and reporting to committee. The reconciliations are being prepared and signed and reported to committee. **However, the regulation needs to be updated to allow rather than preclude the chair of finance to carry out this task.”**

In the light of these recommendations the review of Financial Regulations was brought forward.

3. Proposed Amendments

Some minor amendments addressing “typos” and formatting issues have been made.

Additionally three substantive amendments are proposed to the text of the document. These are as follows:

Financial Regulation 1.1 – it is proposed to remove a footnote which refers to the council's standing orders as "Model standing orders for councils © 2018 National Association of Local Councils". This is an erroneous reference because, while based on the NALC model standing orders, the council's standing orders are its own.

Financial Regulation 2.2 – following the internal auditor's recommendation it is proposed to replace this paragraph currently worded as follows:

"On a regular basis, following a meeting of the Finance Committee, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chairman of the Finance Committee shall be appointed by the Finance Committee to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. Any exceptions shall on conclusion be reported to and noted by the Finance Committee."

With the following wording:

"On a regular basis, monthly for the current account and quarterly for all other accounts, and at each financial year end, the Chairman of the Finance Committee shall verify bank reconciliations produced by the RFO. The Chairman shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall, on conclusion, be reported to and noted by the Finance Committee."

Financial Regulation 9.1 – it is proposed to revert to the wording from the NALC model Financial Regulations because since the last review of these regulations the Town Council has taken on responsibility for Whitelands Sports Village and while the RFO has responsibility for the collection of all sums due – the postholder cannot actually collect such sums at remote locations and must rely on the supervision of staff who actually collect the sums.

Currently FR 9.1 says:

The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of the RFO.

It is proposed that it should now say

The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of, and under the supervision of, the RFO.

These proposed amendments have been incorporated into a revised draft of Financial Regulations which are appended to this report.

4. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to **NOTE** this report and the amendments to Financial Regulations that have been approved and passed onto Full Council

BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL REPORT

Monday 11th March 2024

Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Control

Chairman: Councillor Harry Knight

Contact: harry.knight@bicester.gov.uk

Phil Evans –Town Clerk

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

Ward Affected: All Wards

1. Overview

The purpose of this report is to:

- Address the finding of the external auditor in relation to the 2022/23 accounts;
- Review of the effectiveness of the systems of internal control; and
- Enable the Council to give a positive answer to Assertion 2 on the Annual Governance Statement.

2. Background

In September 2023 the council's external auditor qualified the Town Council's 2022/23 accounts with the following finding:

"The council has confirmed that during the year they did not review certain governance documents including their internal controls. The Council is required to review the effectiveness of its internal controls on an annual basis as per the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 section 6 paragraph 1 and the Practitioners' Guide at paragraph 1.20. Therefore the Council should have provided a 'no' response at assertion 2" [of the Annual Governance Statement]

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.

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" Assertion 2 in the Annual Governance Statement in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) which forms part of the external audit.

Further guidance on Assertion 2 is to be found in the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) Practitioners' Guide published by NALC (<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/our-work/jpag/3859-practitioners-guide-2023/file>). Paragraphs 1.14 -1.21 and 5.39 - 5.67 of the Practitioners' Guide refer.

The Finance Committee conducted an initial review of the effectiveness of internal control on 10 October 2023 and has since monitored progress against an action plan drafted as part of the review.

The processes referenced in the Practitioners' Guide are reproduced below in quotes and normal type and the suggested findings have been given in italic script.

3. Processes Reviewed

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."

Financial Regulations were last adopted in August 2022 and are on the agenda for adoption at this meeting; Standing Orders were adopted in March 2021 and are also on the agenda for this meeting. Both documents are fit for purpose and largely adhered to – some changes to Financial Regulations have been made better to reflect the actual working practices as regards bank reconciliations.

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.

Authorities need to have in place safe and efficient arrangements to safeguard public money. Where doubt exists over what constitutes money, the presumption is that it falls within the scope of this guidance."

"Authorities need to have in place safe and efficient arrangements to safeguard public money".

Arrangements are covered by Financial Regulations and monitored by the Town Clerk, Internal Auditor and the Finance Committee.

"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 and monitored by the Town Clerk, Internal Auditor and the Finance Committee. However, for part of the year the absence of a permanent RFO was a weakness given that locum cover was only part time. A new, full-time RFO was appointed and commenced employment on 15 January 2024..

"Authorities need to ensure controls over money are embedded in Standing Orders and Financial Regulations."

Adequately covered and reviewed by Internal Auditor and scrutinised by the Finance Committee.

“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 are reviewed by the Finance Committee which is progressing the issue of accounts with dated mandates. The Finance Committee has identified that some significant sums are held in non-interest bearing accounts and now that a new RFO in post this will be a priority for change. No sweep arrangements exist.

“If held, corporate credit card accounts need to have defined limits and be cleared monthly by direct debit from the main bank account.”

The Town Clerk has a credit card with a monthly limit of £700 (reduced from a previous £800). It is cleared monthly by direct debit (by recent decision of the Finance Committee)

“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.”

As previously discussed by this Committee this has been an area of weakness for the Council with regard to the bank accounts infrequently used. Nonetheless the Council has taken action to correct this weakness and has approved appropriate mandates.

“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”.

The risk assessment and internal controls do focus on the safety of assets particularly money but there has been significant turnover of staff and training for existing staff and staff yet to be recruited would be beneficial.

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.”

Staff are employed on national terms and conditions which are subject to national review; specific remuneration of staff is subject review by the Personnel Sub-Committee, an external provider processes payroll upon the instruction of the Town Clerk (reviewed by the RFO), an external HR Consultant is retained. In due course responsibility for instructing the external payroll provider will pass to the RFO. Processes checked by Internal Auditor. A previous weakness in that re-enrolment, as required by the Pensions Act, was delayed has now been mitigated by completion of re-enrolment process required by the Pensions Regulator.

VAT.

“The authority needs to have robust arrangements in place for handling its responsibilities with regard to VAT.”

VAT claims are submitted quarterly directly from the finance system as part of Making Tax Digital (MTD)”. The June quarter claim was delayed by the departure of the previous RFO but the September and December quarter claims were submitted on time. New guidance on VAT on sports activities has been implemented.

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.”

Covered by Financial Regulations, significant improvements to recording system on-going. Processes checked by Internal Auditor. Full Council to agree the Fixed Asset register before the end of the financial year and it is on the agenda for this meeting.

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. No new loans taken out in 2022/23 or to date in 2023/24.

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 conduct the initial review required for 2023/24.

4. Recommendation

Council is recommended to **APPROVE** the content of the report that has been passed on from the finance committee.

BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL REPORT

Monday 11th March 2024

Standing Orders

Chairman: Councillor Harry Knight

Contact: harry.knight@bicester.gov.uk

Phil Evans –Town Clerk

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

Ward Affected: All Wards

1. Overview

The purpose of this report is to minute that the Full Council have reviewed the Standing Orders within the calendar year.

2. Background

The Standing Order were reviewed by the standing order sub-committee on the 7th November 2023 – please see appendix 1

3. Recommendation

Council is recommended to **APPROVE** the standing orders review for 2024/2025



BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

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
V20	20 th Aug 2020		Various	2021
V21	8 th March 2021		Procurement thresholds Jan 22 & removal of Town Clerk title & replacing with Town Clerk.	October 2023

Bicester Town Council
The Garth
Launton Road
Bicester
OX26 6PS

These Standing Orders were approved by a Meeting of the Council held on **30th October 2023**

Some of the standing orders are compulsory as they are laid down in Acts of Parliament. These are printed in ***CAPITAL, BOLD, ITALICS*** type. These standing orders cannot be altered.

Signed

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. Evans', is shown on a white background.

Mr P Evans
Town Clerk

Date: **30th October 2023**

Version No 21

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1 Meetings

Mandatory for full Council meetings	*
Mandatory for committee meetings	**
Mandatory for sub-committee meetings	***

- * a **Meetings shall not take place in premises, which at the time of the meeting, are used for the supply of alcohol unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- *
** b **When calculating the 3 clear days for notice of a meeting to councillors and the public, the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning shall not count.**
- c **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting.**
- *
** d **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**
- e Subject to standing order 1(d) above, members of the public are permitted to make representations, ask questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda.
- f The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with standing order 1(d) above] shall not exceed 10 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- g Subject to standing order 1(e) above, each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than 2 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- h In accordance with standing order 1(e) above, a question asked by a member of the public during a public participation session at a meeting shall not require a response or debate.
- i In accordance with standing order 1(e) above, the Chairman may direct that a response to a question posed by a member of the public be referred to a Councillor for an oral response or to an officer for a written or oral response.
- j A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.
- * k A person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort)]. The Chairman may at any time permit an individual to be seated when speaking.
- l Any person speaking at a meeting shall address his comments to the Chairman.

- m Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wishes to speak, the Chairman shall direct the order of speaking.
- n **Subject to standing order 3(m), a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To “report” means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.**
- o **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission**
- * ** p In accordance with standing order 1(d) above, the press shall be provided reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.
- q **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman (Town Mayor) may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman (Deputy Mayor).**
- * r **The Town Mayor if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Town Mayor is absent from a meeting, the Deputy Town Mayor, if present, shall preside. If both the Town Mayor and the Deputy Town Mayor are absent from a meeting, a Councillor as chosen by the Councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- * ** *** s **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.**
- * ** *** t **The Chairman may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote. (See also standing orders 2 (h) and (i) below.)**
- * ** *** u **Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on any question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a Councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before the vote is taken.**
- * ** *** v **The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:**
 - i. the time and place of the meeting;
 - ii. **the names of councillors who are present** and the names of councillors who are absent, reporting those who have conveyed apologies;
 - iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
 - iv. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
 - v. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
 - vi. if there was a public participation session; and the resolutions made.
- * ** *** w **The code of conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to councillors in respect of the entire meeting.**

- *
**
*** X **A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter.**
- *
** y **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than 3.**
- *** z Sub-committees shall have a quorum of 3.
- *
**
*** aa **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be adjourned. Any outstanding business of a meeting so adjourned shall be transacted at a following meeting.
- bb Meetings shall not exceed a period of 2 hours unless specifically agreed otherwise.
- *
**
*** cc The Town Clerk may change the date of a meeting in consultation with the Chairman of the meeting concerned.

2 Rules of debate

- a Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the chairman of the meeting.
- b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been proposed and seconded.
- c A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.
- d If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- e An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion (as amended) becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- g An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the chairman of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chairman.
- h A councillor may move an amendment to his own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- i If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the chairman of the meeting.

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

- viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
- ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.
- s Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chairman of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived his right of reply.
- t Excluding motions moved understanding order 1(r), the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 5 minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.

3 Ordinary Council meetings

See also standing order 1 above

- a **In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new councillors elected take office.**
- b **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.**
- c **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.**
- d **In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council directs.**
- e **The election of the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor of the Council shall be the first business completed at the annual meeting of the Council.**
- f **The Chairman of the Council, (Town Mayor) unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- g **The Vice-Chairman of the Council, (Deputy Town Mayor) unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- h **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council (Town Mayor) has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a successor Chairman of the Council (Town Mayor) has been elected. The current Chairman of the Council (Town Mayor) shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council (Town Mayor) but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- i **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and must**

give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

- j Following the election of the Chairman of the Council (Town Mayor) and Vice-Chairman (Deputy Town Mayor) of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council, the order of business can be as follows.
 - i. **In an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**
 - ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council and to receive and note minutes of and/or to determine recommendations made by committees.
 - iii. Appointment of standing committees, confirmation of the terms of reference, the number of members (including, if appropriate, substitute councillors) and receipt of nominations to them, including the appointment of Chairman to each.
 - iv. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back.
 - v. In a year of elections, if a Council's period of eligibility to exercise the power of competence being expired the day before the annual meeting, to review and make arrangements to reaffirm eligibility.
 - vi. Setting the dates, times and place of ordinary meetings of the Council and committees for the year ahead.

4 Committees and Sub-Committees

- a **Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.**
- c **Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;
 - iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
 - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the

- terms of office of members of such a committee;
- v. may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer ~~(—) days before the meeting~~ that they are unable to attend;
- vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chairman of the standing committee;
- vii. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
- viii. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;
- ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
- x. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.

5 Extraordinary Meetings of The Council, Committees and Sub-Committees

- a The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
- b If the Chairman of the Council does not call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting shall be signed by the two councillors.**
- c The chairman of a committee [or a sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or the sub-committee] at any time.
- d If the chairman of a committee [or a sub-committee] does not call an extraordinary meeting within seven days of having been requested to do so by two members of the committee [or the sub-committee], any two members of the committee [or the sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee (or a sub-committee).

6 Motions for a meeting that require written notice to be given to the Proper Officer

- a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents
- b In accordance with standing order 3(b)(iii) above, no motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is included in the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Council's Proper Officer at least 5 clear working days before the next meeting.
- c The Proper Officer may, before including a motion in the agenda received in accordance with standing order 4(a) above, correct obvious grammatical or

typographical errors in the wording of the motion.

- d If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 4(a) above is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it in writing to the Proper Officer in clear and certain language at least 5 clear working days before the meeting.
- e If the wording or nature of a proposed motion is considered unlawful or improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the Chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the Councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included or rejected in the agenda.
- f Having consulted the Chairman or councillors pursuant to standing order 4(d) above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion in the agenda shall be final.
- g Notice of every motion received in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be numbered in the order received and appropriate records kept which shall be open to inspection by all councillors.
- h Every motion rejected in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be duly recorded with a note by the Proper Officer giving reasons for its rejection. Appropriate records shall be kept and shall be open to inspection by all councillors.
- i Every motion and resolution shall relate to the Council's statutory functions, powers and lawful obligations or shall relate to an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.

7 Motions at a meeting that do not require written notice

- a Motions in respect of the following matters may be moved without written notice.
 - i. To appoint a person to preside at a meeting.
 - ii. to move to a vote.
 - iii. To correct an inaccuracy in the minutes of the previous meeting.
 - iv. To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience.
 - v. To proceed to the next business on the agenda.
 - vi. To close or adjourn debate.
 - vii. To refer by formal delegation a matter to a committee or to a sub-committee or an employee.
 - viii. To appoint a committee or sub-committee or any councillors (including substitutes) thereto.
 - ix. To receive nominations to a committee or sub-committee.
 - x. To require a report and/or recommendations be made by a committee or a sub- committee or an employee.

- xi. To require a report and/or recommendations made by a professional advisor, expert or consultant.
 - xii. To amend a motion relevant to the original or substantive motion under consideration which shall not have the effect of nullifying it.
 - xiii. To extend the time limit for speeches.
 - xiv. To exclude the press and public for all or part of a meeting.
 - xv. To silence or exclude from the meeting a Councillor or a member of the public for disorderly conduct.
 - xvi. To give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by standing orders.
 - xvii. To suspend any standing order except those which are mandatory by law.**
 - xviii. To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies.
 - xix. To answer questions from councillors.
 - xx. to temporarily suspend the meeting.
 - xxi. To adjourn the meeting.
 - xxii. to close the meeting.
- b If a motion falls within the terms of reference of a committee or sub-committee or within the delegated powers conferred on an employee, a referral of the same may be made to such committee or sub-committee or employee provided that the Chairman may direct for it to be dealt with at the present meeting for reasons of urgency or expedience.

8 Code of conduct and dispensations

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the council.
- b Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- c Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has another interest if so required by the council's code of conduct. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- d **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Proper Officer and that decision is final.

- f A dispensation request shall confirm:
 - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
 - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
 - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
 - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- g Subject to standing orders 8(d) and (f) above, dispensations requests shall be considered by the Proper Officer before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- h **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 8(e) above if having regard to all relevant circumstances the following applies:**
 - i. **without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business or**
 - ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the council's area or**
 - iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

9 Code of Conduct Complaints

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

10 Draft Minutes

- a If a copy of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting has been circulated to councillors no later than the day of service of the summons to attend the scheduled meeting they shall be taken as read.
- b No discussion of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting shall take place except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the minutes shall be raised in accordance with standing order 7(a)(iii) above.
- c Minutes, including any amendment to correct their accuracy, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d Upon a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, any previous draft minutes or recordings of the meeting shall be destroyed.

11 Disorderly conduct

- a No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b If person(s) disregards the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or be excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c If a resolution made in accordance with standing order 11(b) above, is disobeyed, the Chairman may take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce it and/or he may adjourn the meeting.

12 Previous resolutions

- a A resolution (whether affirmative or negative) shall not be reversed within 6 months except either by a special motion, the written notice by at least 5 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.
- b When a special motion or any other motion moved pursuant to standing order 12(a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further 6 months.

13 Voting on appointments

Where more than 2 persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. Any tie may be settled by the Chairman's casting vote.

14 Management of Information

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

15 Execution and sealing of legal deeds

- a **A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the council unless authorised by a resolution.**
- b **In accordance with a resolution made under standing order 15(a) above, the Council's common seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Proper Officer in the presence of two members of the Council who shall sign the deed as witnesses.**

16 Proper Officer

- a **The Council's Proper Officer shall be either (i) the Town Clerk or such other employee as may be nominated by the Council from time to time or (ii) such other employee appointed by the Council to undertake the role of the Proper Officer during the Proper Officer's absence. The Proper Officer and the employee appointed to act as such during the Proper Officer's absence shall fulfil the duties assigned to the Proper Officer in standing orders.**
- b **The Council's Proper Officer shall do the following.**
 - i. **At least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee, serve on the councillors, by email delivery or post at their residences, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda, (provided the councillor has consented to service by email);**
 - ii. **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda at least 3 clear days before a meeting of the Council or a meeting of a committee or a sub-committee (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council**

convened by councillors is signed by them);

- iii. Subject to standing orders 6(a)–(e) above, include in the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 5 days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it.
- iv. **Convene a meeting of full Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office.**
- v. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**
- vi. **Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities.**
- vii. Receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office from councillors.
- viii. Hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests.
- ix. Keep proper records required before and after meetings;
- x. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures;
- xi. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer;
- xii. Receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- xiii. Assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);
- xiv. Arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
- xv. Arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with the Council's financial regulations;
- xvi. Record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in the electronic system for such purpose;
- xvii. Refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chairman or in his absence Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee within 2 working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the Planning Committee;
- xviii. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme;
- xix. Retain custody of the seal of the Council which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect;
- xx. Action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in standing orders.

17 Responsible Financial Officer

The council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

18 Accounts and Accounting Statements

- a “Proper practices” in standing orders refer to the most recent version of Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners’ Guide (England).
- b All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the Council’s financial regulations, which shall be reviewed regularly and at least bi-annually by the Finance Committee.
- c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable a statement to summarise in reports to the Finance Committee:
 - i. the Council’s receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for each period;
 - ii. the Council’s aggregate receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the year to date;
 - iii. the balances held at the end of the period being reported and which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.
- d As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
 - i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council’s receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the last period and the year to date for information; and
 - ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- e The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply the form of accounts determined by the Council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for the year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all councillors prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

19 Financial controls and procurement

- a The council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, following review by the Finance Committee, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;

- ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
 - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
 - v. whether contracts with an estimated value below **£25,000** due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
- b Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly for fitness of purpose.
- c **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds in standing order 19(f) is subject to Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include a requirement on the Council to advertise the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website regardless of what other means it uses to advertise the opportunity unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).**
- d Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:
 - i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
 - iii. the invitation to tender shall be advertised via the Public Procurement website and in any other manner that is appropriate;
 - iv. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
 - v. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
 - vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- e Neither the council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- f **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £181,302 for a public service or supply contract or in excess of £4,551,413 for a public works contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU)) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements**

in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include advertising the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website and in OJEU.

- g A public contract in connection with the supply of gas, heat, electricity, drinking water, transport services, or postal services to the public; or the provision of a port or airport; or the exploration for or extraction of gas, oil or solid fuel with an estimated value in excess of £363,424 for a supply, services or design contract; or in excess of £4,551,413 for a works contract; or £820,370 for a social and other specific services contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in OJEU) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016.**

20 Handling Staff Matters

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of Council or a committee or a sub-committee is subject to standing order 14.**
- b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the chairman of the Policy Committee or, if he is not available, the vice-chairman of the Policy Committee of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the Personnel sub-committee at its next meeting.**
- c Councillors appointed by the Personnel Sub-Committee shall conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of the Town Clerk. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in Personnel Sub-Committee.**
- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior member of staff shall contact the chairman of the Policy Committee or in his absence, the vice-chairman of the Policy Committee in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Personnel Sub-Committee**
- e Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by Town Clerk relates to the chairman or vice-chairman of the Policy Committee, this shall be communicated to another member of the Personnel Sub-Committee], which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Personnel Sub-Committee.**
- f Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.**
- g In accordance with standing order 14(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 20(f).**

21 Responsibilities to provide information

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

22 Responsibilities under data protection legislation

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

23 Relations with the press/media

All requests from the press or other media for an oral or written statement or comment from the Council shall be processed in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.

24 Restrictions on councillor activities

Unless authorised by a resolution, no individual councillor shall in the name or on behalf of the Council, a committee or a sub-committee:

- i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
- ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

25 Variation, revocation and suspension of standing orders

- a Any or every part of the standing orders, except those which are mandatory by law, may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.
- b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, not mandatory by law, shall be proposed by a special motion to the Council on the recommendation of the Policy Committee.

26 Standing orders to be given to councillors

- a The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a

councillor upon delivery of his declaration of acceptance of office.

- b The Chairman's decision as to the application of standing orders at meetings shall be final.

BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL REPORT

Monday 11th March 2024

RFO Appointment

Chairman: Councillor Harry Knight

Contact: harry.knight@bicester.gov.uk

Phil Evans –Town Clerk

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

Ward Affected: All Wards

1. Overview

The position of the responsible Finance Officer is an important role within a Council and therefore should be acknowledge and approved at Full Council.

2. Background

Helen Pool has been appointed in the role, she is a local resident with heart set in community – She has worked at Bure Park Primary School since 2007 and more recently had a spell with Bardwell School. She is very approachable and has the necessary qualifications to be a success at the council.

3. Recommendation

Council is recommended to retrospectively **APPROVE** the appointment of the new responsible finance officer.

BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL FULL COUNCIL REPORT

Monday 11th March 2024

Change in Committees

Chairman: Harry Knight

Telephone: 01869 252915 harry.knight@Bicester.gov.uk

Town Clerk: Phil Evans

Contact: 01869 252915 phil.evans@Bicester.gov.uk

Ward Affected: All

1. Overview

A request has been made for the following changes on committees:

Sports Working Group

Cllr Damien Maguire to be added, Cllr Tom Beckett to be removed, the Tasking Group will elect its own Chairman at the next meeting.

Policy Committee

Cllr Tom Beckett to be added, Cllr Damien Maguire to be removed.

2. Recommendation

Council is asked to **NOTE** and **APPROVED** the above changes on committees.

**BICESTER TOWN COUNCIL
Full Council Report**

Monday 11th March 2024

Motion – Regeneration of Market Square

Chairman: Harry Knight

Telephone: 01869 252915 harry.knight@Bicester.gov.uk

Town Clerk: Phil Evans

Contact: 01869 252915 phil.evans@Bicester.gov.uk

Ward Affected: All

1. Motion

This council understands the concerns raised by residents and businesses regarding the plans for the potential regeneration of market square.

We welcome the offer to appoint a member from this council to the oversight board for the project when it is set up.

This council resolves to formally invite the consultants for the project to the 1st available full council meeting of this council following their appointment.

2. Recommendation

The Council is asked to **CONSIDER** the motion from Cllr Ford and seconded from Cllr Mallows. Should Cllr Mallows not second the motion Cllr Mawer will be asked as an alternative.