

Clerk to the Council/RFO: J Hodgkiss
Chairman: Cllr R Ruscoe

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Cllrs T Clarke (TC), C Clode (CC), D Engler (DE), M Jones (MJ), E Markham (EM), T Osenton (TO), A Parkhurst (APa), A Price (APr), R Ruscoe (RR) (Chair), C Shaw (CS), P Stevens (PS), C Teckoe (CT), K Turner (KT), N Turner (NT), M Underwood (MU)

You are summoned to attend a **Full Council** meeting on **Monday 13th October 2025** at **7.15pm** in Bayston Hill Memorial Hall.



Julie Hodgkiss
Clerk to the Council

2nd October 2025

A G E N D A

- FC58.25/26 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE**
- FC59.25/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, members shall withdraw from any discussion or vote for which they hold a disclosable pecuniary interest.
- FC60.25/26 PUBLIC SPEAKING/QUESTIONS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS**
To allow members of the public the opportunity to speak on an item listed on the agenda for a maximum of 3 minutes.
- FC61.25/26 BAYSTON HILL JUNIORS**
To note a proposal from Bayston Hill Juniors re an additional astro turf facility.
- FC62.25/26 MINUTES**
To approve the minutes of the Full Council held on 8th September 2025.
- FC63.25/26 SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLORS REPORT**
Cllr Trickett

FC64.24/25	CHAIRS REPORT Cllr Ruscoe
FC65.24/25	CLERKS REPORT J Hodgkiss
FC66.25/26	BAYSTON HILL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN <i>MOTION - In light of the lack of grant funding for the Neighbourhood Development plan, the expected cost in the region of £25k and the time frame and uncertainty of the Shropshire Local plan it is proposed that, Bayston Hill Parish Council does not proceed with a Neighbourhood Development Plan and instead is prepared to seek professional planning advice in relation to consultation for the new Draft Shropshire Local Plan and any existing and future planning applications that may require this level of support. A far better use of our funds under the current circumstances. To task the Clerk with brining at least 3 quotes from appropriate Planning Consultants to the next Full Council, so that BHPC can be adequately prepared."</i>
FC67.25/26	PLANNING POLICY To review and update BHPC Planning Policy
FC68.25/26	EXTERNAL AUDITOR REPORT AND CERTIFICATE 2024/2025 To receive report from PKF Littlejohn.
FC69.25/.26	NJC PAY SCALE INCREASE To note the recent pay award
FC70.25/26	STANDING ORDERS To approve the amendments to BHPC Standing Orders
FC71.25/26	COUNCILLOR DISPENSATION TO A LEAVE OF ABSENCE To approve a 6-month leave of absence
FC72.25/26	PAYMENTS AND RECIEPTS To approve payments and receipts up to September 30 th 2025.
FC73.25/26	LONGMEADOW ROUNDABOUT To approve repair to play equipment
FC74.25/26	MONITORING OFFICER To review the response from the Monitoring Officer and agree any response.
FC75.25/26	POLICIES To approve any updates. • Lone Working Policy • Poor Performance Policy • Sick Leave Policy • Social Media Policy • Whistleblowing Policy

FC76.25/26

JD REPAIR

To approve the repair of the John Deere at £1139.21

Clerk to the Council/RFO: J Hodgkiss
Chairman: Cllr R Ruscoe

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held at 7:15pm on **Monday 8th September 2025** in The Memorial Hall.

Present: T Clarke (TC), C Clode (CC), D Engler (DE), M Jones (MJ), T Osenton (TO), A Price (AP), R Ruscoe (RR) – Chair, C Shaw (CS), P Stevens (PS), C Teckoe (CT), M Underwood (MU)

In attendance: Julie Hodgkiss – Clerk (JH)

FC37.25/26 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs N and K Turner – holiday, Cllr Markham – work commitments.

FC38.25/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

PS and TC declared a registered declarable interest in item FC41.25/26 as committee members of The Memorial Hall.

FC39.25/26 PUBLIC SPEAKING/QUESTIONS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

A member of the public spoke in favour of FC41.25/26

FC40.25/26 MINUTES

RESOLVED: MU proposed to approve the minutes of the Full Council held on 18th August 2025, seconded by DE and agreed by all members present.

FC41.25/26 REQUEST FOR CONTRIBUTING THIRD PARTY FUNDS

Bayston Hill Memorial Hall (MH) requested support for their grant application for Veolia. The MH will apply for £75k for the extension plans, and require £7.5k contributing 3rd party funds, should they be successful.

RESOLVED: TO proposed to approve a funding request from The Memorial Hall to be allocated from the CIL funds, seconded by MU. 7 members voted in favour, 4 against. Motion carried.

FC42.24/25 SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLORS REPORT

Cllr Trickett presented her pre-circulated report.

FC43.24/25 CHAIRS REPORT

Cllr Ruscoe presented his report highlighting the developments with the Redrow/Lyth Hill planning application.

FC44.24/25 CLERKS REPORT

Signed:..... Date:.....

J Hodgkiss presented her pre-circulated report.

- FC45.25/26 PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS**
RESOLVED: DE proposed to approve all payments and receipts, as per the attached schedule, including July and August 2025 including salary payments, seconded by MJ and agreed by all members present.
- FC46.25/26 PAVILION PROJECT BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN**
RESOLVED: MU proposed to approve the payment of £8221.90 for the BDNG and signing of the agreement with Shropshire Council. More payment scheme detail to be requested. Seconded by CC and agreed by all members present.
- FC47.25/26 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**
RESOLVED: MU proposed to approve the Chairman to sign a MOU between Shropshire Council and Bayston Hill Parish Council regarding future delivery of services, seconded by CC and agreed by all members present.
- FC48.25/26 AMENITIES PRICE LIST**
RESOLVED: MU proposed to approve 2025 amenities price list, effective October 1st, seconded by TO. 10 members voted in favour, 1 abstention, motion carried.
- FC49.25/26 LYTHWOOD LANE REPAIRS**
RESOLVED: MU proposed to approve quote for repairs, seconded by MJ. 10 members voted in favour, 1 abstention, motion carried.
- FC50.25/26 POLICIES UPDATE**
RESOLVED: MU proposed to approve any updates to workplace policies, seconded by MJ and agreed by all members present.
- FC51.25/26 FLOODLIGHTS ASTRO**
RESOLVED: MU proposed to approve quote for light replacement, seconded by CC and agreed by all members present.
- FC52.25/26 PARR POOL TREES**
RESOLVED: CC proposed to approve quote for tree work to remove 36 stems and associated work as advised for safety in January's tree report at the cost of £3850, seconded by MU and agreed by all members present.
RESOLVED: CT proposed to approve £1400 spend on a further tree survey for the rest of the trees the parish Council is responsible for, seconded by MU and agreed by all members present.
- FC53.25/26 PARISH VEHICLES**
Item deferred back to Services Committee.

Signed:..... Date:.....

- FC54.25/26 LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY (LNRS) CONSULTATION.**
RESOLVED: TO proposed to delegate powers to MU to act on behalf of BHPC on this matter, seconded by CC and agreed by all members present.
- FC55.25/26 SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL INFORMAL CONSULTATION PUBLIC PATH DIVERSION ORDER**
RESOLVED: CS proposed no objection in response to this consultation regarding Bayston Hill Quarry path, seconded by MJ and agreed by all members present.
- FC56.25/26 OPEN SPACE ASSESMENT**
Glebelands open space assessment noted.
- FC57.25/26 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**
Update from MU noted.

Signed:..... Date:.....

Bayston Hill Parish Council Planning Policy

Statement of Intent:-

Bayston Hill Parish Council takes its responsibilities as a public body, that is consulted about Planning requests for new property builds or adaptations of current building, very seriously and to this end has devised a policy that provides openness and transparency about the way in which it operates.

The Bayston Hill Parish Plan Review of 2010 states the following as being objectives as they relate to planning:-

- To ensure Bayston Hill remains a distinct and separate settlement with restricted development between the village and Shrewsbury town *within the established development boundary as defined in SAM.Dev.*
- To maintain the character and community feel of the village as *detailed in the Parish Plan.*
- That Bayston Hill remains a Community Hub within the established development boundary, as defined in the SAM.Dev Local Plan.

These three objectives form the foundations of our Planning Policy.

General Principles

General Principles which assist in maintaining our objectives are as follows:-

- In order to maintain our objectives we welcome extensions to properties that are in line with planning requirements provided they do not undermine the Council's core planning objectives
- We oppose properties being built in gardens as we believe that this undermines the character of the Village as well as encroaching on Environmental corridors. Environmental corridors are complex ecosystems that provide an avenue for wildlife movement, protection of natural resources, and green space buffers for humans.
- The maintenance and preservation of open spaces within the village to maintain amenity value so ensuring that the character and community feel of the village and environmental balance are maintained.

Carbon Neutrality

We expect all planning applications for development to pro-actively demonstrate how they are compatible with both BHPCs and Shropshire Council's declaration of a climate emergency and support the ambition of both organisations in reaching net zero emissions by 2030.

This includes:

- that any construction activity seeks to use low-carbon and carbon neutral materials wherever possible and maximises material efficiency.
- that the subsequent operation of any development maximises the potential use of renewable energy – for power, heating and mobility, as relevant
- The construction is as energy efficient as possible, and will be resilient to the future climate changes that are expected at that location (for instance in relation to flood risk, heat stress etc.)

Planning Procedure

The following is a description of the practices and processes undertaken by the Bayston Hill Planning Committee when considering a planning application.

- Upon notification of a planning application the Clerk will call at the earliest opportunity a planning meeting to give consideration and allow for comment by the Bayston Hill Parish Council Planning Committee. Notification of the meeting and Agenda will be posted on the Bayston Hill Parish Council website.
- The Agenda will provide links to the applications so that the members of the Planning Committee can access the application before the meeting so ensuring that there is opportunity for full discussion. The Clerk will also provide paper copies of applications where requested by members of the Committee.
- Where a Councillor has a personal or prejudicial interest they will declare that at the appropriate time and be exempt from discussions on that planning application as outlined in our Code of Conduct.

- The Council encourages local residents whether individuals, or representatives of interested parties to come and make representations to the council. All planning meetings related to individual planning or developer applications will be held in public
- When considering policies or responses to large scale developments the Committee reserves the right to hold meetings for members only where access to privileged information before formal applications could prejudice the Council's position.
- The Council welcomes pre-applications approaches on developments or individual applications which will always be dealt with in an open and transparent manner.
- When necessary, the Committee will undertake a site visit to give further insight into an application
- All applications will be dealt with on their own individual merits and in accordance with the objectives and principles outlined in this policy with consistency of response being given due weight.
- Where the Committee believes that the Planning Consent being sought is of such complexity or is contentious then they reserve the right, with the authority of the Full Council, to seek professional advice.
- The Planning Committee will respond to local, regional or national consultations on planning issues as appropriate.
- All applications will be considered against the **relevant current regulatory documents** such as the SAM.Dev Local Plan; the Adopted Core Strategy of Shropshire Council and the National Planning Policy Framework, which together form the material guidance for assessing planning applications.
- Following consideration of each individual matter, together with any comments from the public, the Committee will make its recommendations to Shropshire Council.
- Where the Planning Committee becomes aware or is notified of any planning infringements they will notify Shropshire Council Planning Authority.

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

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

*For any statement to which the response is 'no', an explanation must be published

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

02 06 2025

and recorded as minute reference:

FC11.25/26

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

Chair

Clerk

Information required by the Transparency Code (not part of the Annual Governance Statement)

The authority website/webpage is up to date and the information required by the Transparency Code has been published.

Yes | No

☒ ☐

WWW.BAYSTONHILLPARISHCOUNCIL.ORG.UK

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

BAYSTON HILL PC ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	
1. Balances brought forward	405,974.75	373,106.05	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	182,825.45	197,059.44	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	36,818.71	61,204.40	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	104,643.95	115,981.71	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	147,868.91	215,155.50	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	373,106.05	300,232.68	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	352,550.64	280,949.78	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	442,922.57	468,641.22	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

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

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

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

John Dykes

Date

02 06 2025

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

02 06 2025

as recorded in minute reference:

FC12.25/26

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

[Signature]

Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2024/25

In respect of

Bayston Hill Parish Council – SH0018

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

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

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

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

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2025; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2024/25

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

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

In the completion of the Annual Internal Audit Report, and their detailed report, the internal auditor has drawn attention to weaknesses in relation to payroll, fidelity insurance and maintenance of their website. The smaller authority has confirmed that it has taken steps to address these weaknesses and implement appropriate improvements.

The smaller authority has not provided an adequate explanation for the variance between the prior and current year values in Box 3 of Section 2.

3 External auditor certificate 2024/25

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

Date

27/09/2025

Bayston Hill Parish Council

Notice of conclusion of audit

Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2025

Sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014

Section 16 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)

	Notes
1. The audit of accounts for Bayston Hill Parish Council for the year ended 31 March 2025 has been completed and the accounts have been published.	This notice and Sections 1, 2 & 3 of the AGAR must be published by 30 September. This must include publication on the smaller authority's website. The smaller authority must decide how long to publish the Notice for; the AGAR and external auditor report must be publicly available for 5 years.
2. The Annual Governance & Accountability Return including the auditor's certificate and opinion is available for inspection and copying by any local government elector of the area of Bayston Hill Parish Council on application to: (a) <u>JULIE HODGKISS</u> <u>PARISH OFFICE LYTH HILL RD S93 0EW</u> <u>01743 874 651</u> <u>clerk@baystonhillparishcouncil.org.uk</u> (b) <u>WEDNESDAYS 9am - 1pm</u>	(a) Insert the name, position and address of the person to whom local government electors should apply to inspect the AGAR (b) Insert the hours during which inspection rights may be exercised
3. Copies will be provided to any local government elector of the area on payment of £ <u>1</u> (c) for each copy of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return.	(c) Insert a reasonable sum for copying costs
Announcement made by: (d) <u>J. HODGKISS, CLERK</u>	(d) Insert the name and position of person placing the notice
Date of announcement: (e) <u>29th SEPT 2025</u>	(e) Insert the date of placing of the notice

Advice notes

24 Jul 2025

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES PAY AGREEMENT 2025/26

This advice note was last updated on 24 July 2025.

The National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) has reached an agreement on rates of pay applicable from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. We encourage employers to implement this pay award as soon as possible.

Backpay for employees who have left employment since 1 April 2025. If an ex-employee requests it, we recommend that employers pay any monies due to that employee from 1 April 2025 to the employee's last day of employment. The table below lists the new pay scales for clerks and other employees employed under the terms of the model contract, including SCPs 50 and above. These should be retrospectively applied from 1 April 2025.

Hourly rates have been calculated using the NJC-agreed formula: annual salary divided by 52.143 weeks (which is 365 days divided by 7) divided by 37 hours (the standard working week).

* Hourly rates

	1 April 2024		1 April 2025		Scale ranges
SCP	£ per annum	* £ per hour	£ per annum	* £ per hour	Based on SCP
2	£23,656	£12.26	£24,413	£12.65	Below LC Scale (for staff other than clerks)
3	£24,027	£12.45	£24,796	£12.85	Below LC Scale (for staff other than clerks)
4	£24,404	£12.65	£25,185	£13.05	Below LC Scale (for staff other than clerks)
5	£24,790	£12.85	£25,583	£13.26	Below LC Scale (for staff other than clerks)
5	£24,790	£12.85	£25,583	£13.26	LC1 (below substantive range)
6	£25,183	£13.05	£25,989	£13.47	LC1 (below substantive range)
7	£25,584	£13.26	£26,403	£13.69	LC1 (substantive benchmark range)
8	£25,992	£13.47	£26,824	£13.90	LC1 (substantive benchmark range)
9	£26,409	£13.69	£27,254	£14.13	LC1 (substantive benchmark range)
10	£26,835	£13.91	£27,694	£14.35	LC1 (substantive benchmark range)

11	£27,269	£14.13	£28,142	£14.59	LC1 (substantive benchmark range)
12	£27,711	£14.36	£28,598	£14.82	LC1 (substantive benchmark range)
13	£28,163	£14.60	£29,064	£15.06	LC1 (above substantive range)
14	£28,624	£14.84	£29,540	£15.31	LC1 (above substantive range)
15	£29,093	£15.08	£30,024	£15.56	LC1 (above substantive range)
16	£29,572	£15.33	£30,518	£15.82	LC1 (above substantive range)
17	£30,060	£15.58	£31,022	£16.08	LC1 (above substantive range)
18	£30,559	£15.84	£31,537	£16.35	LC2 (below substantive range)
19	£31,067	£16.10	£32,061	£16.62	LC2 (below substantive range)
20	£31,586	£16.37	£32,597	£16.90	LC2 (below substantive range)
21	£32,115	£16.65	£33,143	£17.18	LC2 (below substantive range)
22	£32,654	£16.93	£33,699	£17.47	LC2 (below substantive range)
23	£33,366	£17.29	£34,434	£17.85	LC2 (below substantive range)
24	£34,314	£17.79	£35,412	£18.35	LC2 (substantive benchmark range)
25	£35,235	£18.26	£36,363	£18.85	LC2 (substantive benchmark range)
26	£36,124	£18.72	£37,280	£19.32	LC2 (substantive benchmark range)
27	£37,035	£19.20	£38,220	£19.81	LC2 (substantive benchmark range)
28	£37,938	£19.66	£39,152	£20.29	LC2 (substantive benchmark range)
29	£38,626	£20.02	£39,862	£20.66	LC2 (above substantive benchmark range)
30	£39,513	£20.48	£40,777	£21.14	LC2 (above substantive benchmark range)
31	£40,476	£20.98	£41,771	£21.65	LC2 (above substantive benchmark range)
32	£41,511	£21.52	£42,839	£22.20	LC2 (above substantive benchmark range)
33	£42,708	£22.14	£44,075	£22.85	LC3 (below substantive range)
34	£43,693	£22.65	£45,091	£23.37	LC3 (below substantive range)
35	£44,711	£23.17	£46,142	£23.92	LC3 (below substantive range)
36	£45,718	£23.70	£47,181	£24.46	LC3 (below substantive range)
37	£46,731	£24.22	£48,226	£25.00	LC3 (substantive benchmark range)
38	£47,754	£24.75	£49,282	£25.54	LC3 (substantive benchmark range)
39	£48,710	£25.25	£50,269	£26.06	LC3 (substantive benchmark range)
40	£49,764	£25.79	£51,356	£26.62	LC3 (substantive benchmark range)
41	£50,788	£26.32	£52,413	£27.17	LC3 (substantive benchmark range)
42	£51,802	£26.85	£53,460	£27.71	LC3 (above substantive benchmark range)
43	£52,805	£27.37	£54,495	£28.25	LC3 (above substantive benchmark range)
44	£54,071	£28.03	£55,801	£28.92	LC3 (above substantive benchmark range)
45	£55,367	£28.70	£57,139	£29.62	LC3 (above substantive benchmark range)
46	£56,708	£29.39	£58,523	£30.33	LC4 (below substantive range)
47	£58,064	£30.10	£59,922	£31.06	LC4 (below substantive range)
48	£59,300	£30.74	£61,198	£31.72	LC4 (below substantive range)
49	£60,903	£31.57	£62,852	£32.58	LC4 (below substantive range)
50	£62,377	£32.33	£64,373	£33.37	LC4 (substantive benchmark range)
51	£63,881	£33.11	£65,925	£34.17	LC4 (substantive benchmark range)
52	£65,943	£34.18	£68,053	£35.27	LC4 (substantive benchmark range)
53	£68,000	£35.25	£70,176	£36.37	LC4 (substantive benchmark range)
54	£70,065	£36.32	£72,307	£37.48	LC4 (substantive benchmark range)
55	£72,145	£37.39	£74,454	£38.59	LC4 (above substantive benchmark range)
56	£74,198	£38.46	£76,572	£39.69	LC4 (above substantive benchmark range)
57	£76,277	£39.54	£78,718	£40.80	LC4 (above substantive benchmark range)

58	£78,315	£40.59	£80,821	£41.89	LC4 (above substantive benchmark range)
59	£80,247	£41.59	£82,815	£42.93	LC4 (above substantive benchmark range)
60	£82,221	£42.62	£84,852	£43.98	LC4 (above substantive benchmark range)
61	£84,243	£43.67	£86,939	£45.06	LC4 (above substantive benchmark range)
62	£86,319	£44.74	£89,081	£46.17	LC4 (above substantive benchmark range)



STANDING ORDERS

Adopted October 2018

Last Reviewed May 2025

Next review - May 2026

Based on NALC template MODEL STANDING ORDERS 2018 (ENGLAND) — UPDATED APRIL 2022

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Entries in **bold** contain legal and statutory requirements. It is recommended that councils adopt them without changing them or their meaning.

1 All Meetings

- a **Meetings shall not take place in premises, which at the time of the meeting, are used for the supply of alcohol unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- b **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- c **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice.**
- d **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 Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect the business on the agenda.
- f The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 1 (e) shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting. A member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes.

- g Subject to standing order 1(f) above. When there is an issue relating to the parish where more than one member of the public wishes to speak one member 'for' and one member 'against' of those groups needs to be nominated as spokesperson. That person then has three minutes to put the views of the residents to the Parish Council. All residents are still able to write to the Parish Council expressing their views and these letters will be read and taken into account prior to the Council making its decision.
- 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 At all meetings of the Council the Chair may at his/her discretion and at a convenient time in the transaction of business, adjourn the meeting so as to allow any members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business to be transacted at that meeting.
- j In accordance with standing order 1(e) above, the Chair 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 employee for a written or oral response.
- k A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.
- l 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 Chair of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.
- m Any person speaking at a meeting shall address his/her comments to the Chair.

- n Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wishes to speak, the Chair shall direct the order of speaking.
- o A person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To “report” means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.**
- p A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.
- q 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.
- r Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chair of the Council may in his/her absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chair of the Council (if any).
- s The Chair of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chair is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chair of the Council (if there is one) shall preside. If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.
- t 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.

- u **The Chair of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his/her casting vote whether or not s/he gave an original vote.** *(See also standing orders 2 (h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chair of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.)*

- v **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/her vote for or against that question.** Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.

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

- x If prior to a meeting, a Councillor has submitted reasons for his/her absence at the meeting which is then approved by a resolution, such resolution shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the approval was given.

- y **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.

- z An interest arising from the code of conduct adopted by the Council, the existence and nature of which is required to be disclosed by a Councillor at a meeting shall be recorded in the minutes. (See also standing order 7 below.)
- aa 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 three.
- bb If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.
- cc Meetings shall not exceed a period of 2 hours.

2 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 councillors elected take office.**
- b **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council decides.**
- c **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.**
- d **In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and**

times as the Council decides.

- e **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair (if there is one) of the Council. ~~The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council shall be expected to serve for no more than a two-year term of office.~~**
- f **The Chair of the Council, unless s/he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his/her successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- g **The Vice-Chair of the Council, if there is one, unless s/he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chair of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- h **In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, s/he shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Chair of the Council has been elected. The current Chair of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council but shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- i **In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, s/he shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chair of the Council has been elected. S/he may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- j **Following the election of the Chair of the Council and Vice-Chair (if there is one) of the Council at the annual meeting, the order of business shall include:**

- i. **In an election year, delivery by the Chair of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chair 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. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, employees and other local authorities.
- iv. Review of the terms of references for committees.
- v. Appointment of members to existing committees.
- vi. Appointment of any new committees, confirmation of the terms of reference, the number of members (including, if appropriate, substitute councillors) and receipt of nominations to them.
- vii. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations.
- viii. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses.
- ix. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back.
- x. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future.
- xi. Review of the Council's and/or employees' memberships of other bodies.
- xii. Establishing or reviewing the Council's complaints procedure.
- xiii. Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation.
- xiv. Establishing or reviewing the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media
- xv. Setting the dates, times and place of ordinary meetings of the full

Council for the year ahead up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.

- xvi. Review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment.
- xvii. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks.
- xviii. Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures.
- xix. Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence.

3 Proper Officer

- a The Council's Proper Officer shall be either (i) the 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 councillors by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the councillor has consented to service by email).~~

Upon the Council having first resolved that service of summons on councillors confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda for a meeting by delivery or post at their residences at least 5 clear days before a meeting is not expedient, electronically serve on councillors a summons confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda of a meeting of the Council and a meeting of a committee and a sub-

committee at least 5 clear days before the meeting provided any such email contains the electronic signature and title of the Proper Officer. *(Amended 10 June 2019 – minute 23.19/20)*

- ii. **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**

See standing order 1(b) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 1(c) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a committee.

- iii. Subject to standing orders 4(a)–(h) below, include in the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 3 days before the meeting confirming his/her withdrawal of it.
- iv. **Convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chair of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his/her 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. Hold declarations of acceptance of office from councillors.
- viii. Retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests and any changes to it and keep copies of the same available for inspection.
- 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 requests (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980.)

- xiv. Arrange for legal deeds to be signed by 2 councillors and witnessed (*See also standing orders 13(a) and (b).*)
- xv. Arrange or manage for 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 a book for such purpose;
- xvii. Refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chair of Planning or in his/her absence the Vice-Chair of Planning 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 Planning Committee.
- xviii. Action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in standing orders.
- xix. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
- xx. retain custody of the seal of the Council (if there is one) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.

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

- a 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 days before the next meeting.
- b 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.

- c 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 3 clear days before the meeting.
- d If the wording or nature of a proposed motion is considered unlawful or improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the Chair of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the Councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included or rejected in the agenda.
- e Having consulted the Chair 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.
- f Notice of every motion received in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be numbered in the order received and shall be entered into a book, which shall be open to inspection by all councillors.
- g 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 in a book for that purpose, which shall be open to inspection by all councillors.
- h 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.

5 Motions not requiring written notice

- a Motions in respect of the following matters may be moved without written notice to the Proper Officer.
- i. To approve the absences of councillors.
 - ii. To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting.
 - iii. To correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of the previous meeting.
 - iv. To move to a vote.
 - v. To defer consideration of a motion.
 - vi. To refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee or an employee.
 - vii. To appoint a person to preside at a meeting.
 - viii. To change the order of business on the agenda.
 - ix. To proceed to the next business on the agenda.
 - x. To require a written report.
 - xi. To appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members.
 - xii. To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
 - xiii. To extend the time limits for speaking.
 - xiv. To close or adjourn debate.
 - xv. To receive nominations to a committee or sub-committee.
 - xvi. To note the minutes of a meeting of a committee or sub-committee.
 - xvii. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by a committee or a sub- committee or an employee.
 - xviii. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by an employee, professional advisor, expert or consultant.
 - xix. To authorise legal deeds signed by two councillors and witnessed.
(See standing orders 13(a) and (b) below.)
 - xx. To amend a motion relevant to the original or substantive motion under consideration which shall not have the effect of nullifying it.
 - xxi. To exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest.
 - xxii. To not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public.
 - xxiii. To exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct.

- xxiv. To temporarily suspend the meeting.
 - xxv. To suspend a particular standing order except those which are mandatory by law.
 - xxvi. To adjourn the meeting.
 - xxvii. To close the meeting.
 - xxviii. To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies.
 - xxix. To answer questions from councillors.
- 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 Chair may direct for it to be dealt with at the present meeting for reasons of urgency or expedience.

6 Rules of debate

- a Motions included in an agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear on the agenda unless the order is changed at the Chair's direction for reasons of expedience.
- b Subject to standing orders 4(a)–(h) above, a motion (including an amendment) shall not be considered unless it has been proposed and seconded.
- c Subject to standing order 3(b)(iii) above, a motion included in an agenda not moved by the councillor who tabled it, may be treated 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 shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is

given at the meeting and, if requested by the chair of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chair.

- f A councillor may move amendments to his/her own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, an amendment to it shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- g To avoid pre-determination, no pre-discussion of an issue, or indication of voting stance/personal views on a particular issue be made in e-mail correspondence by any councillor. No attempt should be made to engage in a debate.
- h An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- i If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the chair of the meeting.
- j Subject to standing order 6(l) below, only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chair of the meeting.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chair considers this expedient but shall be voted upon separately.
- l A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- m If an amendment is not carried, other amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chair.
- n If an amendment is carried, the original motion, as amended, shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the substantive motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.

- o The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- p 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.
- q Unless permitted by the chair of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:
 - i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
 - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he/she last spoke;
 - iii. to make a point of order;
 - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
 - v. to exercise a right of reply.
- r During the debate of 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 s/he considers has been breached or specify the irregularity in the meeting s/he is concerned by.
- s A point of order shall be decided by the Chair and his/her decision shall be final.
- t Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chair of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived his/her right of reply.
- u Excluding motions moved under standing order 6(v) below, the

contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the chair of the meeting.

- v Subject to standing order 6(r) above, when a councillor's 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 silent or for him/her 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;
 - ix. to suspend any standing order, except those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.

7 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** All councillors shall undertake training in the code of conduct within 6 months of the delivery of their declaration of acceptance of office.
- c** Unless he/she 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/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He/she may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he/she had the interest.
- d** Unless he/she 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/she has another interest if so required

by the Council's code of conduct. He/she may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he/she had the interest.

- e 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.
- f** A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by a meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required and that decision is final.
- g** Subject to standing orders 7(e) and (h), a dispensation request shall be considered at the beginning of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required.
- h** A dispensation request shall confirm:
 - i. The description and nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
 - ii. Whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
 - iii. The date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
 - iv. An explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- i A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 7(e) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:**
 - i. **Without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;**
 - ii. **Granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or**

- iii. **It is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

8 Questions

- a A councillor may seek an answer to a question concerning any business of the Council provided 5 clear days' notice of the question has been given to the Proper Officer.
- b Questions not related to items of business on the agenda for a meeting shall only be asked during the part of the meeting set aside for such questions.
- c Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.

9 Draft Minutes

- a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.
- b 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 5(a)(iii) above.
- c Minutes, including any amendment to correct their accuracy, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Chair of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d If the Chair of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, s/he shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same

effect:

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

- e 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.
- f **If the Council’s gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000, it shall publish draft minutes on a website which is publicly accessible and free of charge not later than one month after the meeting has taken place.**

10 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, in the opinion of the Chair, there has been a breach of standing order 10(a) above, the Chair shall express that opinion and thereafter any councillor (including the Chair) may move that the person be silenced or excluded from the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion.
- c If a resolution made under standing order 10(b) is ignored, the chair of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

11 Previous resolutions

- a A resolution (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within 6 months except either by a special motion, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least 8 councillors of the Council, 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 11(a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further 6 months.

12 Voting on appointments

- a 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 Chair's casting vote.

13 Execution and sealing of legal deeds

See also standing order 3(b)(xiv) above

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless the same has been authorised by a resolution.
- b In accordance with a resolution made under standing order 13(a) above, any two members of the Council, may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.

14 Committees

See also standing order 1 above

- 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 appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;
 - v. may appoint substitute councillors to a committee whose role is to replace ordinary councillors at a meeting of a committee if ordinary councillors of the committee have confirmed to the Proper Officer 5 days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
 - vi. an ordinary member of a committee who has been replaced at a meeting by a substitute member (in accordance with standing order 14(d)(v) above) shall not be permitted to participate in debate or vote on business at that meeting and may only speak during any public participation session during the meeting.
 - vii. Every committee shall at its first meeting before proceeding to any other business, elect a Chair and may elect a Vice-Chair who shall

hold office until the next committee meeting following the Annual Council meeting of the Council, and shall settle its programme of meetings for the year.

- viii. Shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee, which, in both cases, shall be no less than three.
- ix. Shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee in any agenda item.
- x. 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.
- xi. Shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend.
- xii. May dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.
- e. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman, ex-officio, shall be voting members of every committee.

15. Extraordinary meetings of the council, committees and sub-committees.

See also standing order 1 above

- a The Chair of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
- b If the Chair of the Council does not call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within 7 days of having been requested to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.**
- c The Chair of a committee (or a sub-committee) may convene an

extraordinary meeting of the committee or sub-committee at any time.

- d If the Chair of a committee (or a sub-committee) does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting within 7 days of having been requested by to do so by a quorum of councillors from that committee, any two members of the committee (or sub-committee) may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee (or a sub-committee). The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the quorum of councillors.

16 Accounts and Financial Statement

- a “Proper practices” in standing orders refer to the most recent version of “Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioner’s Guide”.
- b All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the Council’s financial regulations, which shall be reviewed at least annually.
- c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December each year a statement to summarise:
 - i. the Council’s receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for each quarter;
 - ii. the Council’s aggregate receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the year to date;
 - iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported and which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.
- d As soon as possible after the financial year end at 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 quarter and the year to date for information; and

- ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 1 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- e. The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with the 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 at least 14 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

17 Responsible Financial Officer

- a. 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 Financial Controls and Procurement

- a. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
 - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
 - v. whether contracts with an estimated value below 30,000 due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.

- b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- c. 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. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
 - iv. 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;
 - v. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- d. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- e. **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Government from time to time, the Council must consider whether the contract is subject to the requirements of the current procurement legislation and, if so, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.**
tender.
- f. **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time, the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.**

19 Inspection of documents

- a Subject to standing orders to the contrary or in respect of matters which are confidential, a councillor may, for the purpose of his/her official duties (but not otherwise), inspect any document in the possession of the Council or a committee or a sub-committee, and request a copy for the same purpose. The minutes of meetings of the Council, its committees or sub-committees shall be available for inspection by councillors.

20 Restrictions on Councillor Activities

- a Unless duly authorised by Full Council, 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 or
 - iii. make statements/decisions on outside bodies or other public meetings.

21 Matters affecting council employees

- a If a meeting considers any matter personal to a council employee, it shall not be considered until the Parish Council has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded pursuant to standing order 1(d) above.
- b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior employee shall notify the Chair of the Full Council or delegated staffing committee, or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chair of the Full Council or delegated staffing committee of any absence occasioned by illness or urgency and that person shall report such absence to the Council or delegated staffing committee at its next

meeting.

- c The Chair of the Full Council or delegated staffing committee or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chair shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and/or appraisal of all staff and shall keep a written record of it. The review and/or appraisal shall be reported back and shall be subject to approval by resolution by the Full Council.
- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior employee, the Clerk, shall contact the Chair of the Full Council or delegated staffing committee or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chair, in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Full Council or delegated staffing committee.
- e Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance and disciplinary matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by [the employee's job title] relates to the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Full Council or delegated staffing committee, this shall be communicated to another member of the Full Council or delegated staffing committee, which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Full Council or delegated staffing committee.
- f Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of Council employees shall keep written records of all meetings relating to their performance, and capabilities, grievance and disciplinary matters.
- g In accordance with standing order 22 (a), only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 21(f).

22 Management of Information

See also standing order 23.

- 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.**

23 Responsibilities to Provide Information

See also standing order 22.

- 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 ***[If gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000]* The Council shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.**
OR
***[If gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is the higher) exceeds £200,000]* The Council, shall publish information in**

accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.

24 Responsibilities under Data Protection

Legislation

(Below is not an exclusive list).

See also standing order 22.

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

25 Relations with the press/media

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

26 Liaison with Principal Councillors

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the councillor of the Principal Council representing its**

electoral ward.

- b Unless the Council otherwise orders, a copy of each letter/electronic mail sent to the Principal Council shall be sent to the councillor representing its electoral ward.

27 Code of Conduct Complaints

- a Upon notification by the Principal 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 22, report this to the Council.
- b Where the notification in standing order 27(a) relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chair of Council of this fact, and the Chair shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the Council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 27(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 Principal 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/her. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

28 Standing Orders Generally

- 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, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice of at least 8 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 4.
- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible.
- d The decision of the chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.
- e A resolution permanently to add, vary or revoke a Standing Order which occur outside the Annual Council Meeting shall, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the council.

QUOTE 313856

Design Manufacture Installation

Correspondence Address:

Bayston Hill Parish Council

The Parish Office
Lyth Hill Road
Bayston Hill
Shropshire

SY3 0EW

Ref : Peter Orrell

Mob : 07848 033 943

Delivery Address:

Long Meadow Play Area
Long Meadow
Bayston Hill
Shrewsbury
SY3 0EW

Quote No.

313856

Your Reference

Peter Orrell

Our Reference

Date

11 Aug 2025

We thank you for the enquiry and are pleased to quote for, and hope to be favoured with your valued orders which will have our best attention at all times.

Qty. Code

Service of AbilityWhirl Roundabout with parts

1.00	D009-SERVICE	Service of Inclusive Roundabout (excluding parts)
6.00	001487-90-00	Replacement Wheel Kit
4.00	001030-01-00	Split Flange Spacer (2mm) S/S

Please note - due to the age of this roundabout we cannot guarantee a service will rectify the issue. Over the years the roundabout has had design changes and we no longer hold all the spare parts for the version you have.

Supply & install*
Excl. VAT

£475.00
£288.00
£100.00

Subtotal	£863.00
VAT @ 20.00%	£172.60
Total	£1,035.60

Yours Faithfully

Amy Jones

Terms Pro-forma. Quotation is valid for 7 days from quote date. *The prices stated are only valid if all above items are purchased together as one order. Part order may be subject to price changes. Please contact sales for a new quote if a part purchase is required.

Unless otherwise stated, price is based on good lorry access, site being level and even, installation in a soft dig area, site has good water drainage, and ground clear of any old foundations, rocks, underground cables or pipes. Whilst every care will be taken to minimise damage to the site GL Jones Playgrounds Ltd will not accept responsibility for any unavoidable damage caused due to soft ground.



QUOTE 313856-A

Design
Manufacture
Installation

Correspondence Address:

Bayston Hill Parish Council

The Parish Office

Lyth Hill Road

Bayston Hill

Shropshire

SY3 0EW

Ref : Peter Orrell

Mob : 07848 033 943

Delivery Address:

Long Meadow Play Area

Long Meadow

Bayston Hill

Shrewsbury

SY3 0EW

Quote No.

313856-A

Your Reference

Peter Orrell

Our Reference

Date

11 Aug 2025

We thank you for the enquiry and are pleased to quote for, and hope to be favoured with your valued orders which will have our best attention at all times.

Qty. Code

1.00 D009-021-01(22)

New D009 Roundabout Top

New AbilityWhirl with Flat & Cradle Seats (incl. New Platewheel, Sproket and Chain for Existing Restrictor) (Aluminium Deck - Blue) Galv & PC

Supply & install*
Excl. VAT

£10,560.00

Subtotal

£10,560.00

VAT @ 20.00%

£2,112.00

Total

£12,672.00

Yours Faithfully

Terms Pro-forma. Quotation is valid for 7 days from quote date. *The prices stated are only valid if all above items are purchased together as one order. Part order may be subject to price changes. Please contact sales for a new quote if a part purchase is required.

Unless otherwise stated, price is based on good lorry access, site being level and even, installation in a soft dig area, site has good water drainage, and ground clear of any old foundations, rocks, underground cables or pipes. Whilst every care will be taken to minimise damage to the site GL Jones Playgrounds Ltd will not accept responsibility for any unavoidable damage caused due to soft ground.



Clerk to the Council/RFO: J Hodgkiss

Chairman: Cllr. R Ruscoe

"Protecting and improving the quality of life for all Bayston Hill residents"

Bayston Hill Parish Council
Lyth Hill Road
Bayston Hill
SY3 0EW

clerk@baystonhillparishcouncil.org.uk

Wednesday, 20 August 2025

Dear Tim,

We would like to raise a complaint regarding the conduct of both Cllrs and Officers at the Northern Planning Committee of 19th August 2025.

- 1) Listed on the Planning Portal, the Standard Consultation Expiry date was listed as 26th August. Therefore, this item was being considered prior to the period ending. The officer explained that this was solely due to the limits of the technology plus the period was extended for a specific consultee. This caveat was not stated on the portal; therefore, we consider this a clear breach of transparency. This matter should not have been considered by members prior to the consultation window closing.
- 2) At the conclusion of the debate, a proposal was made AND seconded for **objection** by Cllrs (this can be viewed at 1:33 mins of the recording). Without invitation of the Chairman (Standing Order 18.6) an officer proceeded to intervene in the decision. In breach of Standing Order 18.7c the Chairman allowed the proposal to be altered without the motion having been put forward to a vote. We see this as a breach of the code of conduct on behalf of the Chairman and a breach of Standing Orders "when it is appropriate for an officer to speak."
- 3) The Development Manager then pointed out that the applicant had sent a note of intention to appeal due to non-determination (after 45 minutes of debate), the Development Manager instructed the committee that their option was to defer - as objection would be indefensible at appeal, thus taking away the democracy of the whole process.
- 4) The solicitor present then endorsed the Development Manager comments, also uninvited by the Chairman. The solicitor nor the Committee Clerk corrected the Chairman on procedure. At 1:44 the solicitor admits that in his career he has only, on a handful of occasions, seen an officer **intervene** in a decision.

- 5) Both the Development Manager and the solicitor present hung importance on cost implications. This is not a material planning matter and should not be of influence on members. This is not in the interests of residents.
- 6) At 1:46, the Development Manager challenges a Cllr via the Chairman to explain “density” and quite correctly the member tells the officer that they (members) are not expected to know planning law – that is what officers are there for.

On the whole, it was an undemocratic spectacle yesterday. It was unprofessionally and procedurally dealt with incorrectly by both the officers and the Chairman. Several members of the committee, in this public forum, raised concerns over the way the business was conducted also. This application has been hard fought against by residents and Bayston Hill Parish Council and we feel that the matter was not given adequate consideration.



Julie Hodgkiss
Clerk to the Council
On behalf of Bayston Hill Parish Council

Ms Julie Hodgkiss
Clerk to Bayston Hill Parish Council

By email only: clerk@baystonhillparishcouncil.org.uk

25th September 2025

Dear Ms Hodgkiss,

Complaint About Northern Planning Committee – 19th August 2025

Thank you for your letter of 20th August complaining about the conduct of both Cllrs and Officers at the Northern Planning Committee on 19th August. Whilst I understand that you will have been instructed to make this complaint on behalf of the Parish Council, I am disappointed by the tone of some of the points being made and the failure to acknowledge that the complaints process is generally not regarded as an appropriate mechanism (by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman) for resolving disputes between public bodies.

Nevertheless, I acknowledge the strength of feeling this planning application (24/00765/FUL concerning Land West Lyth Hill Road has generated and so I have prepared a detailed response to the points you have made.

You have specifically criticised the actions of Charlotte Morrison, Planning and Development Services Manager, and James Felton, the Council's Solicitor, during the consideration of application. As Service Director for Legal, Governance and Planning I am responsible for Mrs Morrison directly as her line manager and for James Felton as solicitor in Legal Services for which I am Service Director.

As such, I am the appropriate person to respond to your complaint. There is also an element of your complaint around the role of the chair of planning committee and the integrity of the planning process which would fall under the remit of the monitoring officer and again I am the appropriate person to respond to your complaint in this context.

Turning now to the substance of your complaint, I have set these out in full below followed by my response to each:



1) Listed on the Planning Portal, the Standard Consultation Expiry date was listed as 26th August. Therefore, this item was being considered prior to the period ending. The officer explained that this was solely due to the limits of the technology plus the period was extended for a specific consultee. This caveat was not stated on the portal; therefore, we consider this a clear breach of transparency. This matter should not have been considered by members prior to the consultation window closing.

As you have acknowledged, this was explained during the committee meeting itself in that it was not a general open consultation, it was simply to seek comments from one technical consultee, which were received before the committee meeting. The limits of the online system meant this distinction could not be shown. The application was validated in 21 March 2024 and has therefore been subject to an extensive period of wider consultation and the period for consultation before which no decision can be made had expired before the matter came to committee. I accept that it would be better if the system could make the distinction described but do not consider this indicated any lack of transparency or that the matter could not have been considered by committee on 20 August.

2) At the conclusion of the debate, a proposal was made AND seconded for objection by Cllrs (this can be viewed at 1:33 mins of the recording). Without invitation of the Chairman (Standing Order 18.6) an officer proceeded to intervene in the decision. In breach of Standing Order 18.7c the Chairman allowed the proposal to be altered without the motion having been put forward to a vote. We see this as a breach of the code of conduct on behalf of the Chairman and a breach of Standing Orders “when it is appropriate for an officer to speak.”

3) The Development Manager then pointed out that the applicant had sent a note of intention to appeal due to non-determination (after 45 minutes of debate), the Development Manager instructed the committee that their option was to defer - as objection would be indefensible at appeal, thus taking away the democracy of the whole process.

4) The solicitor present then endorsed the Development Manager comments, also uninvited by the Chairman. The solicitor nor the Committee Clerk corrected the Chairman on procedure. At 1:44 the solicitor admits that in his career he has only, on a handful of occasions, seen an officer intervene in a decision.

5) Both the Development Manager and the solicitor present hung importance on cost implications. This is not a material planning matter and should not be of influence on members. This is not in the interests of residents.

6) At 1:46, the Development Manager challenges a Cllr via the Chairman to explain “density” and quite correctly the member tells the officer that they (members) are not expected to know planning law – that is what officers are there for.



I have taken these issues together as they all relate to the Committee procedures but before doing so, I need to provide some relevant context. Mrs Morrison is the Council's chief planning officer, being the Planning and Development Services Manager and the Council's most senior chartered town planner (Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute). James Felton is one of the Council's planning solicitors and acts on behalf of the Head of Legal at planning committee.

Also of relevance are the following extracts from the council's constitution and specifically the Local Protocol for Councillors and Officers dealing with Regulatory Matters, which provide guidance for the behaviour of both members and officers at planning committee (the full Constitution is available online using the following link [Document Part 5 Codes and Protocols — Shropshire Council](#))

“17.3 If the Planning Committee makes a planning decision contrary to the officers' recommendation (whether for approval or refusal), a detailed minute of the committee's reasons is made, the reasons for approval with suggested conditions or for refusal should clearly be stated. The officer should also be given an opportunity to explain the implications of the contrary decision at the meeting. The courts have expressed the view that such reason should be clear and convincing.”

And

“17.4 Where the Planning Committee is minded to determine an application contrary to the officer recommendation, it may not continue to determine that application at that Planning committee meeting if the application represents a significant departure from the Development Plan or where the Committee's resolution might not in the view of the Group Manager (Environment) or the Development Manager in consultation with the Corporate Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) be defensible if challenged and result in compensation or damages being available to, or claimed by, the applicant under a statutory provision. In these circumstances the matter will stand referred to the next relevant Planning Committee for decision.”

The proposal was to “object” to the application, which is somewhat ambiguous and clarity in decision making is required. It is the clear role of the senior officer present at planning committee, in this case Mrs Morrison, to ensure that decisions made by committee are made on the basis of all the information required and that any decision is made in the context of and knowledge about, the implications of such a decision. I would also point out that Council Procedure Rule 18.6 provides:

*“A chief or senior officer may speak in presenting a report or **in presenting advice** or answering questions of a factual nature during debate. Any other contributions will be at the invitation of the Chairman.”* (my emphasis)



In addition, following the May elections, there are a large number of new members who are new to the committee process, decision making, procedure and language of what is a complex process. Indeed, even experienced members can need to be appraised of the implications of any decision they make.

In this case Mrs Morrison, supported by Mr Felton, and in accordance with the constitution, considered that the reasons cited by members for objecting to the application would not be defensible if challenged and, in her professional opinion, would result in a cost to the council under the statutory provisions (Town and Country Planning Act 1990, sections 78, 322 and Schedule 6, and the Local Government Act 1972, section 250(5)).

Costs can be awarded at appeal and the detail of the proposal to object was not, in the opinion of Mrs Morrison, sufficient or clear enough to fulfil the requirements of a reasonable decision. It was Mrs Morrison's view that the debate was centred around the density of the development, which is a valid planning reason, but that members would benefit from further explanation as to the implications of a decision on this basis. As a result, Mrs Morrison correctly, in my view, guided the committee to a deferment. As a number of members of this committee are new to planning and to local government it is incumbent on officers to ensure that they are aware of all of the options when supporting them in determining applications for planning permission. Mr Felton advised the committee that he concurred with the advice Mrs Morrison had given committee regarding the proposed reasons for their decision. That was a reasonable professional position for him to take. I do not see how that can be a breach of Council Procedure Rule 18.6.

Having heard Mrs Morrison, the proposer (Cllr Rowley) indicated he would modify his proposal to one of deferral as density remained a concern. I consider that to be in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 18.8 which permits members to "alter" their motions. Subsequent discussion indicated that officers would work with the developer to seek a lower density. The Chair asked the seconder to the original proposition (Cllr Ebbs) if he was happy to second the revised proposition and he indicated he was. It was this proposition that was later put to the vote and carried. I do not consider that the Chairman acted other than in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules and I therefore do not intend to commence an investigation into whether he might have breached the Code of Conduct. Cllr Owen will be informed of that decision.

I also conclude that Mrs Morrison was acting in accordance with the Council's constitution using her professional judgment, in consultation with Mr Felton as the legal advisor present. They did have power to advise committee that if they voted to refuse the application for the reasons put forward it would stand deferred. No vote to refuse was in fact put to committee as the proposer revised their proposal. This was procedurally acceptable and as such the vote to defer was not defective, and the chair conducted that process in a proper way.



I do accept that it would have been clearer for the councillors and the members of the public observing if the relevant extracts from the Constitution (as set out above) had been read out so the power it gives officers was clear to all and I have asked officers to ensure they do this in future.

In terms of Point 3 above, it is acknowledged that the notice of intention to appeal on the grounds of non-determination received from the developer could have been disclosed to planning committee members at an earlier stage. I note your comment that the notice of appeal was a material fact, however it was not a material consideration in terms of the planning merits of the application and so I am satisfied that planning committee could have made a decision on the application without knowledge of the intention to appeal, should committee have resolved to approve the development. It was the proposal to object to the development which triggered the need for members to be appraised of the intention.

While best practice dictates that committees are kept informed of significant developments in relation to applications under consideration, there is no statutory requirement mandating immediate notification of receipt of an appeal notice. The purpose of officer advice is not to disadvantage members, but to ensure that the committee's deliberations are robust, defensible, and compliant with the principles established within the Council's Constitution and relevant legislation. Officers are aware of the importance of trust and clear communication with elected members, especially when applications are complex or contentious. The process is designed to protect both the Council's interests and those of the public, ensuring that decisions are properly justified and that the Council is not exposed to unnecessary legal or financial risks. In this case, the guidance provided to defer the decision was a precautionary measure to allow for further clarification and to ensure that, should the matter proceed to appeal, the Council's position would be well-founded and defensible.

On appeal, costs can be awarded against a council if it is considered they have acted unreasonably in refusing an application. It is lawful for officers to advise councillors of the possible cost consequences of their decisions notwithstanding that the cost implications are not actually part of the planning judgement. The National Planning Practice Guidance advises (at ID16-028-20140306):

"The aim of the costs regime is to: [...] encourage local planning authorities to properly exercise their development management responsibilities, to rely only on reasons for refusal which stand up to scrutiny on the planning merits of the case, not to add to development costs through avoidable delay"

Therefore, I conclude officers did not act improperly in informing committee about possible costs consequences as they did.



On the whole, it was an undemocratic spectacle yesterday. It was unprofessionally and procedurally dealt with incorrectly by both the officers and the Chairman. Several members of the committee, in this public forum, raised concerns over the way the business was conducted also. This application has been hard fought against by residents and Bayston Hill Parish Council and we feel that the matter was not given adequate consideration.

I appreciate the strength of feeling that this has generated, but as I mentioned in my opening paragraph, I am surprised by the tone of your criticism of fellow local government officers with extensive planning and committee experience. I am afraid that I can't agree with your assessment of how the meeting was run. It is entirely appropriate and, indeed, essential that the committee's decisions are underpinned by clarity, defensibility, and a full awareness of their implications. Officers, such as Mrs Morrison in this instance, have a duty under the council's constitution and planning legislation to ensure that all decisions are both reasonable and justifiable, particularly given the complexity of the statutory framework (e.g. Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Local Government Act 1972). This responsibility is heightened when, as noted, many committee members are new to planning procedures and may require additional support in understanding the potential consequences of various actions.

Conclusion

I consider that officers took necessary steps to ensure that members were fully informed about the ramifications of the decision they intended to take, that the matter was appropriately deferred for further consideration following proper voting procedures.

Therefore, I do not uphold your complaint.

It is hoped that, in accordance with the statutory requirement cited in the national planning policy framework, the Local Planning Authority will now be able to work with the developer to facilitate improvements to the scheme which reflect the discussions held at planning committee.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for taking the time and effort to draw these issues to our attention. I hope you feel that the issues you have raised in your complaint have been fully addressed and that you are satisfied with the outcome.

Ordinarily, if you remain dissatisfied with any aspect of your complaint response, you will have the opportunity to request that the Council's Complaints Monitoring Officer undertake a review at Stage 2 of the Council's corporate complaints procedure.



However, I also fulfil the function of the Council's Complaints Monitoring Officer and the option of Stage 2 is not open to you. As a Parish Council you are also unable to raise your complaint with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (please see LGSCO statement here: <https://www.lgo.org.uk/make-a-complaint/fact-sheets/other-topics/parish-councils>) You may be aware, however, that identical complaints about this Planning Committee have been raised by a concerned individual who will have that option.

Yours sincerely,



Tim Collard
Assistant Director of Legal, Governance and Planning (Monitoring Officer)
Shropshire Council
01743 252756





BAYSTON HILL LONE WORKING POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

The Council recognises that its employees are required to work by themselves for significant periods of time without close or direct supervision in the community, in isolated work areas and out of hours. The purpose of this policy is to protect such staff so far as is reasonably practicable from the risks of lone working.

The Council also recognises it has an obligation under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSW Act) and the Management of Health & Safety at Work (MHSW) Regulations 1999, for the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees.

2. SCOPE

The policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of the Council's employees.

3. DEFINITION

The Health and Safety Executive defines lone workers as "those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision". This covers all of the Council's employees, all of whom are required to carry out their duties for all or part of their working day working in isolation.

4. AIMS

The aim of the policy is to,

- (a) Increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working.
- (b) Ensure that the risk of lone working is assessed in a systematic and ongoing way, and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk so far as is reasonably practicable.
- (c) Ensure that appropriate training is available to all staff in all areas that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone.
- (d) Ensure that appropriate support is available to staff who have to work alone.
- (e) Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES



5.1 Clerk to the Council

The Clerk on behalf of the Council is responsible for,

- ensuring that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working.
- providing resources for putting the policy into practice.
- ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the Council regularly reviews the effectiveness of this policy.
- ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy.
- ensuring that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly.
- putting procedures and safe systems of work into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone.
- ensuring that staff are given appropriate information, instruction and training.
- ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident.
- managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents.

5.2 Employees

Employees are responsible for,

- taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions.
- co-operating by following rules and procedures designed for safe working.
- reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate.
- taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of the policy.
- reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment is essential to good risk management.

Assessment will be carried out for and by all staff whose working practice makes them vulnerable. This includes staff that are site based but work in isolation as well as mobile staff whose work takes them out into the community.

Recommendations will be made to eliminate or to reduce the risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

A risk assessment will be carried out and documented in a risk assessment form.

Risk assessments for site based lone workers will include,

- Safe access and exit.
- Risk of violence.



- Safety of equipment for individual use.
- Channels of communication in an emergency.
- Site security.
- Security arrangements i.e. alarm systems and response to personal alarms.
- Level and adequacy of on/off site supervision.

Risk assessments for mobile lone workers will, additionally, include,

- travelling between sites.
- Reporting and recording arrangements.
- Communication and traceability; and personal safety/security.

Following completion of the Risk Assessment, consideration will be given to any appropriate action that is required.

7. INCIDENT REPORTING

An incident is defined as “an unplanned or uncontrolled event or sequence of events that has the potential to cause injury, ill health or damage”.

In order to maintain an appropriate record of incidents involving lone workers it is essential that all incidents be reported to the Clerk who will prioritise each incident and identify any immediate action. Staff should ensure that all incidents where they feel threatened or ‘unsafe’ (even if this was not a tangible event/experience) are reported. This includes incidents of verbal abuse.

8. CONTACTING/INVOLVING POLICE

The Council is committed to protecting staff from violence and assault and will support criminal proceedings against those who carry out assault. All staff are encouraged to report violent incidents to the police and will be supported by the Council throughout the process. Except in cases of emergency, employees should inform the Clerk of any incident immediately. The Clerk will thereafter take responsibility for contacting the police to report the details of the incident.

9. SUPPORT FOR STAFF

Employees working for the Council should know that their safety comes first. Staff should be aware of how to deal with situations where they feel they are at risk, or unsafe. Staff should also be able to recognise how their own actions could influence or even trigger an aggressive response. The Clerk will ensure that all lone workers training needs are assessed and that they receive appropriate training.

10. IMMEDIATE SUPPORT FOLLOWING A VIOLENT INCIDENT

In the event of a violent incident involving a lone worker, the Clerk will immediately ensure that the employee receives any necessary medical treatment and/or advice.



If an incident occurs out of office hours the Council Chairman should be contacted. The Clerk will also consider whether the employee needs specific information or assistance relating to legal or insurance aspects. The Clerk will also ensure appropriate written and verbal reporting of any violent incident.

11. LONE WORKING FOR THE CLERK

Where the items above relate directly to the Clerk as a staff member the appropriate controls will be exercised by the F&P Committee or, in emergency situations, by the Chair of the F&P Committee.

Reviewed by F&P Comm	Nov 2022
Adopted by FC	Dec 2022
Review date	Sept 2025



PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Purpose and Scope

This procedure is designed to help and encourage employees to achieve and maintain standards of job performance which are acceptable to the council. The aim is to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all.

This document:

- Supports both us and you to bring about positive changes in work performance and attitude, when needed, and,
- Explains how we will deal with instances of performance that fall below our standards, in a fair and consistent way.

It applies to all staff following successful completion of a probationary period, whether full time, part time or temporary. It does not apply to volunteers or agency staff.

Principles

- Informal coaching and supervision will be considered to improve performance
- No formal warnings will be given until the causes of poor performance have been considered
- For formal warnings you will be advised of the nature of the poor performance and will be given the opportunity to state your case at a formal performance improvement meeting before any decision is made
- You will be provided, where appropriate, with copies of examples of poor performance in advance of a formal performance improvement meeting
- At all formal stages of the procedure you will have the right to be accompanied by a fellow employee or trade union representative
- You will have the right to appeal against any formal warnings issued

Where poor performance is believed to be the result of deliberate negligence, or where serious errors have been made to the detriment of the council, we may decide to use our disciplinary procedure instead.

Informal feedback

Before this procedure is engaged, you will receive feedback setting out the concerns about your performance and how it must improve. This procedure is designed to be used when such informal discussions do not lead to an improvement in your performance to an acceptable level.

Process

Where informal discussions have not led to an improvement in performance, the council will follow the following procedure.

First stage of formal procedure - first written warning

You will be invited to a formal meeting during which your performance will be discussed. The letter inviting you to attend will give examples of what the council considers to be poor performance; and advise you of your right to be accompanied at the meeting.

At the meeting, you will be given the opportunity to respond; the causes of the poor performance will be considered; and where training and development is appropriate this will be considered.

Having listened to your response, you may be issued with a first written warning for unsatisfactory performance if your performance does not meet acceptable standards. This will set out: -

- The performance problem
- The improvement that is required
- The timescales
- Any help that may be given
- The right of appeal
- You will be advised that it constitutes the first stage of the formal procedure and
- That the warning will remain on your file for 12 months

A record of the warning will be kept on your file.

If your performance improves to an acceptable level following the first meeting, the council will meet with you to confirm that your performance is now satisfactory. This will be confirmed in writing to you. Providing that satisfactory improvement is sustained, the warning will be disregarded after 12 months for the purposes of providing an employment reference. However, the warning will be considered again if the poor performance re-starts.

Second stage of formal procedure - final written warning

If the concerns about your performance continue, you will be invited to a second formal meeting during which your performance will be discussed. The letter inviting you to attend will give examples of what the council considers to be poor performance; and advise you of your right to be accompanied at the meeting.

At the meeting, we will discuss the progress made following the first meeting and you will be given the opportunity to respond; and where training and development is appropriate this will be considered.

Having listened to your response, if your performance hasn't improved to a satisfactory level, you may be issued with a final written warning for unsatisfactory performance. This will set out: -

- The performance problem
- The improvement that is required
- The timescale
- Any help that may be given
- The right of appeal
- That the warning will remain on your file for 12 months
- Advise you that it constitutes the final written warning and will also warn that failure to improve may lead to dismissal

A record of the warning will be kept on your file.

If your performance improves to acceptable level following the second meeting, the council will meet with you to confirm that your performance is now satisfactory. This will be confirmed in writing to you. Providing that satisfactory improvement is sustained, the warning will be disregarded after 12 months for the purposes of providing an employment reference. However, the warning will be considered again if the poor performance re-starts.

Final stage of formal procedure – dismissal

If the concerns about your performance continue, you will be invited to a formal meeting during which your performance will be discussed. The letter inviting you to attend will give examples of what the council considers to be poor performance; and advise you of your right to be accompanied at the meeting. The letter will also advise you that dismissal may be considered. At the meeting, we will discuss the progress made following the second meeting and you will be given the opportunity to respond. Having listened to your response, if your performance hasn't improved to a satisfactory level, dismissal will be considered, or where appropriate redeployment to an alternative role.

Any offer to redeploy you will be entirely at the council's discretion. Such an offer will be made only where there is a vacancy that we are confident you would be able to perform to a satisfactory level. The alternative job may be on different terms of employment. It will normally be offered only as an alternative to dismissal in circumstances in which we are satisfied that you should no longer be allowed to continue to work in your current role. While you will be free to refuse any offer of redeployment, the only alternative available will usually be dismissal.

If the council believes that there is no alternative role available and suitable for you, but that you have not met an acceptable standard of performance, we may decide to dismiss. Any dismissal will be with full notice or payment in lieu of notice.

If the decision to dismiss is taken, you will be provided in writing with;

- Reasons for dismissal
- The date on which the employment will terminate
- The right of appeal

Appeals

If you wish to appeal against a formal warning or dismissal you must do so by writing to the Clerk within five working days. The Clerk will arrange for an appeal meeting to take place. Wherever possible, your appeal will be heard by a more senior officer or a subcommittee made up of councillors who have not previously been involved in the matter.

You have the right to be accompanied at the appeal meeting by either a work colleague or a trade union representative. At the appeal hearing, the decision to impose the sanction will be reviewed and you will be entitled to make representations about the appropriateness of that decision.

The outcome of the appeal will be confirmed to you in writing, explaining the grounds on which the decision was reached. The outcome of the appeal will be final.

Rescheduled meetings

If you fail to attend a scheduled Performance Improvement Meeting without satisfactory reason, we will reschedule the meeting. We will advise you that if

you do not attend the rescheduled meeting without a satisfactory reason, we reserve the right to make a decision in your absence. We will however confirm that if you do not wish to attend the hearing, you may send written representations, join the hearing by telephone or send a representative on your behalf.

Right to be accompanied

You have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or a Trade Union representative to all formal meetings in this procedure. The council will also consider requests to be accompanied to any investigation meetings.

A work colleague will be allowed time off to accompany you to the meeting and the council will support any work colleague who agrees to be a companion. A companion must feel able to agree to the request on the basis that they will not be treated to any detriment if they accept. However, the companion can decline a request.

It is your responsibility to ensure your companion is aware of the meeting arrangements and that they have any documentation in good time. If your chosen companion is not available at the time proposed for the meeting, you must provide us with alternative dates that you are both able to meet. These dates must be within the following five working days unless the council can agree to alternative arrangements.

If you and your representative are unable to meet with the council within a reasonable time, we will discuss alternative arrangements to enable you respond to the concerns. If we are unable to meet with you personally, this may mean that the council considers the concerns in your absence with your companion attending on your behalf or considering a written response.

Confidentiality and data protection

We aim to deal with performance improvement matters sensitively and with respect for the privacy of the individuals involved. All staff must treat as confidential any information communicated to them in connection with a performance improvement matter.

A written record of all meetings conducted under this procedure will be made, either by the person holding the meeting or by an additional person arranged by the council to take notes.

The council processes any personal data collected during the performance improvement procedure in accordance with its data protection policy and privacy notice as issued to our employees. Any data collected is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of completing the performance improvement procedure.

Inappropriate access or disclosure of employee data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the organisation's data protection policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

— policy ends here —

Notes

This policy is designed to provide employers and employees with a consistent framework to improve performance. If performance does not improve to

standards as reasonably expected by the council, this policy provides a procedure that can enable a fair dismissal. The procedure must be applied fairly and reasonably.

1. Scope

This policy does not apply to staff within their probationary period.

2. Reasonable adjustments

When managing performance, it may become apparent that an employee has a health condition that is covered by the Equality Act. You may need to ask consent from the member of staff to seek an Occupational Health (OH) report to better understand their health condition.

If the employee has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities, the council will need to establish what adjustments may be required to support the employee in the workplace. OH will help you to understand what this could mean. The council will need to assess what changes can be reasonably made.

With regards to performance concerns, a reasonable adjustment could be to:

- allow an employee to work flexible hours to enable them overcome fatigue arising from their disability.
- reallocate minor duties because an employee has difficulty doing them because of a disability.
- Allow more time for an employee to complete a piece of work because of a disability.

Not considering making a reasonable adjustment to support an employee with a health condition covered by the Equality Act would amount to disability discrimination.

3. When to go formal

Day-to-day performance management is critical to ensure that you have a good understanding of the challenges a member of staff has, explore any training or support required, and provide positive and developmental feedback on performance.

When work isn't being done as you reasonably expect, it may be because there is a mismatched understanding, external difficulties that hinder performance, or a lack of skill or will. Until you have had that conversation, you may not know where the problem lies.

In the busy day-to-day work, there isn't always time to take a step back and reflect. Holding regular, monthly meetings with the staff member is important because it provides a space to discuss and better understand what the challenges are. If things are not going as you would like, these regular meetings are an opportunity to review and clarify your expectations.

If this doesn't lead to improved performance, then you should explain the impact this is causing the council and emphasise the importance of what you need them to do. Using SMART objectives will give greater clarity on expectation (SMART - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound).

If this doesn't lead to improved performance, discuss the reasons and decide whether it is sufficiently serious to proceed to the formal stage.

Note: It is quite common for managers to spend a lot of time in the informal stages, providing coaching and support for extended periods of time and then becoming exasperated, wanting to dismiss, if performance doesn't improve. Irrespective of the time spent informally managing the situation, employers are expected to have used all the formal stages of the procedure before getting to the point of dismissal.

4. How long is reasonable to wait before moving to the next formal stage?

This will depend on the nature of the improvement required. Some performance improvements can be made immediately (i.e. ensuring agendas are published with three full days' notice), whilst others may take longer (i.e. learning an accounts package to ensuring the budget is monitored and monthly reporting to the council).

5. Avoid bullying allegations

It is understandable that an employee may feel very uncomfortable when performance concerns are discussed. It is not unusual for an employee to believe (or claim to believe) that they are being bullied, and possibly raise a grievance. This is more likely to happen if the performance concerns have been going on for some time and not addressed. If the employee raises a grievance, the formal performance management process should be paused whilst the grievance is addressed.

There are a few ways to help reduce the risk of bullying allegations: -

- Where possible, share your concerns with a peer and get another view on whether your expectations are reasonable (ensuring there is no breach of data protection);
- Make sure that any positive performance is recognised and communicated (preferably supported in writing);
- Ensure feedback is specific and not presented with emotional or subjective language;
- Ensure you have the evidence to support your concern before raising the concern (where relevant);
- Ensure negative feedback is not given in open plan; arrange a meeting when you will have time to discuss the issues;
- Plan what you intend to say when giving feedback and stick to it – having scripted bullet points will help you stick to the facts;
- Avoid raising concerns from third parties that you cannot substantiate;
- Where concerns are shared by others, encourage them to provide feedback directly (this is not appropriate if a more junior employee has voiced a concern)
- Be selective; where there are numerous concerns, focus on the most important ones and 'park' the less serious;

Important notice

This is an example of an employment policy designed for a small council adhering to statutory minimum requirements and does not constitute legal advice. As with all policies it should be consistent with your terms and conditions of employment.

This document was commissioned by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) in 2019 for the purpose of its member councils and county associations. Every effort has been made to ensure that the contents of this

document are correct at time of publication. NALC cannot accept responsibility for errors, omissions and changes to information subsequent to publication.

This document has been written by the HR Services Partnership – a company that provides HR advice and guidance to town and parish councils. Please contact them on 01403 240 205 for information about their services.

Adopted by FC	Dec 2022
Review date	Sept 2023
Next Review	Sept 2025

DRAFT



SICKNESS ABSENCE POLICY

What to do if you are unwell

If you are away from work because of sickness you must:

- Telephone the Clerk (electronic messages are acceptable), before your contractual (or normal start time for work) on the first day of absence providing details and how long you expect to be off. If you are unable to call personally, someone else may call for you. It is your responsibility to ensure the Council is notified. You must then make contact each day (unless otherwise agreed with the Clerk).
- If you are away for seven days or less (including weekends and other non-working days), you must complete a self-certification form and provide it to the council when you are back at work.
- If you are away for more than seven days (including weekends and other non-working days), you must send in a 'fit to work' statement from your doctor and continue to do so as each new certificate is issued to you. This certificate gives details as to whether you are too ill to work or whether you are well enough to work with suitable support from the Council. This gives you and the Council the opportunity to discuss suitable arrangements which will support your return to work. The form also gives more space for the doctor to provide information about your condition and helpful tick boxes to suggest common ways to help you return to work.
- All sickness or injury absence will be entered on your employment record and will be monitored from time-to-time.

Return-to-work meetings

On the first day back at work after a period of sickness absence your manager may want to meet informally. If this is not possible on your first day back, the meeting may take place later. The return-to-work meeting should take place in a private place, and all discussions should be private and confidential. The meeting would normally include

- a welcome back to work;
- outline the purpose of the return-to-work meeting; which is to manage and monitor absence and attendance to identify any problem areas and offer support where appropriate;
- a discussion about the reasons for absence, in a supportive way and to understand whether the council can take any steps to help the employee's attendance;
- explain that the absence will be recorded;
- establish if medical advice has been sought (if appropriate);
- ensure the self-certification form has been completed or a fit note from the doctor has been provided;

- a discussion on absence over the last 52 weeks, the impact on pay and any next steps; and
- a handover of work where appropriate.

Medical appointments

The council recognises that employees will, from time to time, need to attend medical appointments. Please try to arrange medical appointments in your own time or, if this is not possible, at times that will cause the minimum amount of absence from work or inconvenience to the council. The council will allow reasonable time off work with pay for such appointments.

Statutory Sick Pay

If you are ill and unable to attend work, you may be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP). SSP is currently paid after 4 Qualifying Days absence from work. The Qualifying Days are your normal working days that are in your contract. Tax and National Insurance will be deducted from SSP and if you earn below the lower earnings limit, you will not qualify for SSP.

Medical advice

The Council may want to obtain advice on your fitness for work from occupational health advisers or medical practitioners. Examples of when the Council might refer to occupational health or a medical practitioner include the following:

- to seek a medical report on your illness or injury;
- to establish when you might be able to return to work;
- to understand when you are likely to be fully fit to resume your normal duties;
- to understand what alternative duties you might be fit to undertake if you are unfit to resume your normal duties;
- to understand when you are likely to be fit to undertake any alternative duties;
- to ask for guidance on your condition, for example if there is a possibility that you are disabled or ambiguity as to the exact nature of the condition;
- to ask what reasonable adjustments could be made to working conditions or premises to facilitate a return to work;
- to understand the likely recurrence of the illness or injury once you have returned to work; and
- to discuss any adjustments that could be made to accommodate your disability, if you are disabled.

The Council will pay the cost of the report and you will have the right to see it. The Council will also be provided with a copy of the report and once we have seen it, we will want to meet you to discuss the findings and consider options available to you.

If you choose not to consent to an Occupational Health referral, any decisions in relation to your employment may be made without the benefit of access to medical reports.

Persistent short-term absence

Persistent short-term absence is where an employee is frequently absent from work for relatively short periods due to sickness. We understand most employees will have some short-term sickness absence from time to time. However, if you are frequently and persistently absent from work, this can

damage efficiency and productivity, and place an additional burden of work on your colleagues and councillors.

Therefore, it is essential that frequent absence is dealt with promptly and consistently and in some circumstances, the Council may begin a capability or disciplinary procedure as part of the absence management process. If we do so, we will meet with you to set attendance targets. Following a review meeting we may issue a formal warning if those targets are not met. You will be given written notice in advance of any formal meeting and you can be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative. You may appeal against a formal warning. If your absence remains unacceptable after a second formal warning, the council may bring your employment to an end following consultation with you.

If frequent absence is due to an underlying long-term health condition then we will also request, with consent, a medical report either from an Occupational Health Physician or your G.P. or consultant to establish further information about your health and how the council can support your attendance.

When considering the reasons for absence, and deciding on whether a formal meeting is appropriate, the council will not consider any pregnancy related absence. The council will also make adjustments where absences are related to a disability by allowing a higher level of absence before considering whether disciplinary action is appropriate.

The council will consider any alternative employment options before making any decision about ending employment. You will have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative at formal meetings and a right of appeal against a formal warning or dismissal sanction. The monitoring of absence operates on a rolling 52-week period.

Where it appears that there is no acceptable reason for an absence or if you have not followed the correct absence notification procedure, the matter should be treated as a conduct issue and dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

Long-term absence

As a guide, long term absence is any absence which lasts or is expected to last over 4 weeks. In all cases of long-term absence, it is essential for the Council to maintain contact with you. In cases where the return date is less certain this will take the form of consultation and will include:

- Discussions at the start of the absence and periodically throughout
- Obtaining better information on your health and likely prognosis, ideally through an Occupational Health Physician
- Where appropriate alerting you to the fact that your absence is becoming a problem, and
- Allowing you the opportunity to state your opinion of your condition and giving consideration to that opinion

Where ill-health means that you are unlikely to return to work for a long period of time, the council may need to consider bringing your employment to an end. In these circumstances, the council will:

- Review your absence record to assess whether or not it is sufficient to justify dismissal
- Consult with you

- Obtain up-to-date medical advice
- Advise you in writing as soon as it is established that termination of employment has become a possibility
- [Discuss whether you may be able to access benefits from the Local Government Pension Scheme (where appropriate)]
- Meet with you to discuss the options and consider your views on continuing employment before any decisions are made, allowing you to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative
- Review if there are any alternative jobs that you could do prior to taking any decision on whether or not to dismiss
- Allow a right of appeal against any decision to dismiss you on grounds of long-term ill health
- Following this meeting, inform you of the final decision

Absence as a result of disability

Where you experience sickness absence as a result of a disability it will be treated in line with the provisions contained within the Equality Act 2010 (formerly as part of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995). This will include considering whether any reasonable adjustments can be made.

Data protection

The Council will treat personal data collected during the absence management process in accordance with its data protection policy on processing special categories of personal data. Information about how your data is used and the basis for processing your data will be provided in our employee privacy notice. When relying on legitimate interests as the legal ground for processing your data, you can object to the processing. This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

Adopted by FC	Dec 2022
Review date	Sept 2023
Next Review	Sept 2025

— policy ends here —

Notes

1. Green Book terms

If the council adopts Green Book terms and conditions of employment, employees are entitled to receive sick pay for the following periods: -

During 1st year of service

1 month's full pay and (after completing 4 months service)

2 months half pay

During 2nd year of service

2 months full pay and

2 months half pay

During 3rd year of service

4 months full pay and

4 months half pay

During 4th and 5th year of service

5 months full pay and

5 months half pay

After 5 years' service

6 months full pay and

6 months half pay

The period during which sick pay shall be paid, and the rate of sick pay, in respect of any period of absence shall be calculated by deducting from the employee's entitlement on the first day the aggregate of periods of paid absence during the twelve months immediately preceding the first day of absence.

Periods of full pay will include SSP. In periods of half pay, employees receive half pay in addition to SSP provided the total does not exceed normal pay. If an employee abuses the sickness scheme or is absent on account of sickness due or attributable to deliberate conduct prejudicial to recovery or the employee's own misconduct or neglect or active participation in professional sport or injury while working in the employee's own time on their own account for private gain or for another employer sick pay may be suspended.

2. Council's Sick Pay

The legal requirement is to pay Statutory Sick Pay (subject to eligibility) and anything additional is for the council to decide. Any additional sick pay is known as 'occupational sick pay' (OSP). The council will need to commit to paying any OSP it decides to offer and take into account the cost of National Insurance and the cost of any temporary staff required to cover the absence. It would be unusual to bring an employment contract to an end before the occupational sick pay expires.

If a member of staff already has a paid sick leave entitlement, you cannot unilaterally change their entitlement. Councils can change the policy for all new staff joining after a defined date provided this is consistently applied.

3. Return-to-work meetings

Return to work meetings should ideally take place following every absence, with notes taken, agreed and stored on file. They are especially important if the absence has been caused by, or related to incidents at work. Having a written record of a return to work meeting may help the council defend later claims or allegations.

Sometimes it is not practical to have return to work interviews after every absence so councils may decide to do so only after 2 absences in a 2-month period, or where the absence is work-related.

4. Medical appointments

There is no legal requirement to pay time off for medical appointments, except antenatal appointments. Please see the Maternity and Parental leave policies for details.

A council may decide that staff should make up the time (if possible) or take it without pay. If a council decides to offer payment for medical appointments, it is sensible to put some limit on this.

5. Medical advice

Health information is considered to be personal sensitive information under Data Protection legislation and particular care must be taken when processing medical information. The Information Commissioner website (<https://ico.org.uk>) contains guidance.

An Occupational Health report can comment on an individual's health in relation to the employee's role. It will be important to provide the OH physician or nurse a referral form with full details of the employee's job, the concerns you have about their health in relation to their work and be specific about the questions you need answering. Any report should then be discussed with the employee before the council decides on any follow up actions. If the report makes recommendations, these must be carefully considered and discussed with the employee.

6. Health and wellbeing

All employers have duty to provide a safe place of work which includes the physical environment as well as mental health. There are a range of initiatives that can promote health and wellbeing (see Fit for Work: <https://fitforwork.org>). Also, the Health and Safety Executive has useful information on their website including a stress risk assessment (www.hse.gov.uk/stress/risk-assessment.htm).

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SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Social Media Policy

The Council realise that social media and networking websites have become a regular part of everyday life and that many people enjoy membership to sites such as Facebook and Twitter. This policy is to provide councillors and staff with guidelines on responsibilities of use.

The Council's aim is to inform members of the community and the wider local area, through as many communication channels as possible, about what is happening within the Parish and local area and share important news and information.

The Council's social media channels supplement the information published on their website. Council can remind people of important events and alert followers instantly to breaking news.

Use of Official Accounts

The Council operate Facebook and Twitter accounts for the promotion of activities and events and as a communication and broadcast tool.

Examples of acceptable corporate content are:

- Marketing campaigns
- Consultation documents
- News feed & emergency information
- Event listings
- Key dates
- Short debates & quick comments on hot topics and relevant news (discussion board)
- Polls and information gathering
- Useful links

The following outlines the limits of their use:

An official account on any social media website may only be set-up with consent from the Council.

Once approved, each account will be set up by the Clerk.

Only authorised staff may use these accounts to post online and access to the account is strictly limited. The Council's social media accounts are managed and monitored daily by the Clerk. Only the Clerk is allowed to post links to the corporate website, partner websites, 'Useful' links for example local transport sites etc, links to other Facebook pages, local media e.g. Shropshire Star, National organisations

All information published on the internet must comply with the Council's confidentiality policy and data protection.

Social media accounts will primarily be used to promote the 'good news' and information, supplementing content already published on the Council's website.

Any employee, Councillor or member of the public who becomes aware of social networking activity that would be deemed distasteful should make the Clerk aware as soon as possible.

Facebook

The Clerk manages the Council's Facebook page. Facebook pages are used to highlight news, make announcements, engage with the community and share information.

Comments posted on and messages received on the Facebook page are views of individuals and do not represent the views of the Council.

Request for something to be posted on the Council's Facebook page, should be directed to the Clerk.

Social media moderation policy

The Facebook page is reactively moderated. The Council cannot accept responsibility for the content of any comment.

The Council reserve the right to remove comments received on Facebook that:

Contain abusive, obscene, indecent or offensive language, or link to obscene or offensive material

Contain swear words or other sorts of profanity

Are completely removed from the topic of conversation or are not relevant to the item posted on the wall

Contain abusive language towards an individual involved in the thread, other organisations or the page administrator

Constitute spam or promote or advertise products, except where it is for an event, publication or similar item that has direct relevance to the subject of discussion. Information about locating and sharing knowledge and expertise is welcomed, but within the specific discussion

Are designed to cause nuisance to the page administrator or other users

For serious and/or persistent breaches of the moderation policy, we reserve the right to prevent users from posting further comments.

Twitter

The Council Twitter account is managed by the Clerk.

If you follow the Council on Twitter you can expect regular tweets covering:

News and press releases

Statements

Photos

Retweets of notable announcements

Information forwarded on from Shropshire Council

If the Council follows a Twitter account it does not imply any kind of endorsement.

The Clerk will review all @ messages daily and re-tweet where we feel applicable.

The Council also will not normally reply to direct messages. The limitations of Twitter's format means that we would not be able to give a full and useful reply. The Council, therefore, ask that in these instances contact is made with the Council using the contact form on the website.

All tweets must be:
Timely and appropriate
Mindful of the audience
Accurate without any spelling mistakes or typos
Factually correct and without personal opinion
Concise and not designed to promote a discussion
In line with data protection

Any complaints/issued raised on Twitter should be reported to the Clerk.

Use of Photos and Video

Only The Clerk has permission to upload photos and videos. The appropriate permissions must be obtained for all imagery

Personal Accounts on Social Media

Staff need to use social networking in a way that does not conflict with the terms of their contract of employment. The absence of, or lack of, explicit reference to a specific website or service does not limit the extent of the application of this policy. Where no policy or guidelines exist, employees should use their professional judgment and take the most prudent action possible. If the Council is referred to in a way that is deemed defamatory or confidential information is disclosed, it reserves the right to report the comment and request that it be removed.

Councillors are at liberty to set up accounts using any of the tools available but should ensure they are clearly identified as personal and do not in any way imply that they reflect the Council's view. Councillors should at all times present a professional image and not disclose anything of a confidential nature. Comments of a derogatory, proprietary or libellous nature should not be made and care should be taken to avoid guesswork, exaggeration and colourful language.

Purdah

In the six week run up to an election – local, general or European – councils have to very careful not to do or say anything that could viewed in any way to support any political party or candidate. The period is known as purdah. The Council will continue to publish important service announcements using social media but will monitor and potentially have to remove responses if they are overtly party political.

Will the Council respond to direct messages posted on social networking sites?

If appropriate, the Clerk will endeavour to respond as quickly as possible to all questions received via social networking sites. All formal requests, comments, enquiries or complaints should be emailed to the Council using the contact form on the website.

The Council may monitor forums and blogs to gain indirect feedback. The Council may post replies on forums or blogs to answer queries or address factual corrections, but would generally take a cautious approach before getting involved in contentious issues.

The Council reserves the right to take any necessary steps to protect members of the Parish community and will delete any comments referencing the Council, which are deemed abusive or offensive in anyway.

Social Networking Accounts are monitored between 9am-5pm, Monday – Friday.

Adopted by FC	Dec 2022
Review date	Sept 2023
Next Review	Sept 2025

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Policy

It is important that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by staff or others working on behalf of the council is reported and properly dealt with. We therefore require all individuals to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others in the council. This policy sets out the way in which individuals may raise any concerns that they have and how those concerns will be dealt with.

Background

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 amended the Employment Rights Act 1996 to provide protection for workers who raise legitimate concerns about specified matters in the public interest. These are called "qualifying disclosures". A qualifying disclosure is one made by an employee who has a reasonable belief that:

- a criminal offence;
- a miscarriage of justice;
- an act creating risk to health and safety;
- an act causing damage to the environment;
- a breach of any other legal obligation; or
- concealment of any of the above;

is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed. It is not necessary for you to have proof that such an act is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed - a reasonable belief is sufficient. You have no responsibility for investigating the matter - it is the council's responsibility to ensure that an investigation takes place.

If you make a protected disclosure you have the right not to be dismissed, subjected to any other detriment, or victimised, because you have made a disclosure. We encourage you to raise your concerns under this procedure in the first instance.

Principles

- Everyone should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing at work. Staff and others working on behalf of the council should be watchful for illegal or unethical conduct and report anything of that nature that they become aware of.
- Any matter raised under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation reported back to the person who raised the issue.
- No employee or other person working on behalf of the council will be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means that the continued employment and opportunities for future promotion or training of

the worker will not be prejudiced because they have raised a legitimate concern.

- Victimisation of an individual for raising a qualified disclosure will be a disciplinary offence.
- If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure our disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.
- Maliciously making a false allegation is a disciplinary offence.
- An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a manager, you should not agree to remain silent. You should report the matter to the Clerk or the Chair of the Council.

Procedure

If you believe a Councillor has breached the councillor Code of Conduct, then raise it with the Chair of the Council. Concerns relating to an alleged breach of the councillor Code of Conduct will be referred to the Monitoring Officer for investigation.

This procedure is for disclosures about matters other than a breach of your own contract of employment, which should be raised via the Grievance Procedure.

Stage 1

In the first instance, any concerns should be raised with the Clerk, who will arrange an investigation of the matter. The investigation may involve you and other individuals involved giving a written statement. Any investigation will be carried out in accordance with the principles set out above. Your statement will be taken into account, and you will be asked to comment on any additional evidence obtained.

The Clerk (or delegated officer) will take any necessary action, including reporting the matter to the Council, or any appropriate government department or regulatory agency. The Clerk (or delegated officer) will also invoke any disciplinary action if required. On conclusion of any investigation, insofar as confidentiality allows, you will be told the outcome and what the council has done, or proposes to do, about it. If no action is to be taken, the reason for this will be explained.

Stage 2

If you are concerned that the Clerk is involved in the wrongdoing, has failed to make a proper investigation or has failed to report the outcome of the investigations to the relevant person, you should escalate the matter to the Chair of the Council. The Chair will arrange for a review of the investigation to be carried out, make any necessary enquiries.

Stage 3

If on conclusion of stages 1 and 2 you reasonably believe that the appropriate action has not been taken, you should report the matter to the relevant body.

This includes:

- HM Revenue & Customs
- The Health and Safety Executive
- The Environment Agency
- The Serious Fraud Office
- The Charity Commission

- The Pensions Regulator
- The Information Commissioner
- The Financial Conduct Authority

You can find the full list in The Public Interest Disclosure (Prescribed Persons) Order 2014:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/496899/BIS-16-79-blowing-the-whistle-to-a-prescribed-person.pdf

Data protection

When an individual makes a disclosure, we will process any personal data collected in accordance with the data protection policy. Data collected from the point at which the individual makes the report is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of dealing with the disclosure.

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

Adopted by FC	Dec 2022
Review date	Sept 2023
Next Review	Sept 2025

— policy ends here —

Notes

The wording of this policy is based on an employee's statutory right to make a disclosure in the public interest. Adopting and applying this policy as it stands will support the council to comply with this right.

1. Legal considerations

An employee making a genuine disclosure under this policy is protected from victimisation and any unfavourable treatment. If a member of staff believes they have been treated differently because they have made a disclosure, they may be able make a claim to an Employment Tribunal irrespective of whether they are a casual, fixed term worker, or an established member of staff.

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Shropshire

Quote

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1 x Outer Air Filter		£24.91
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2 x Deck Wheel Kit	£44.38	£88.76
1 x Skid Plate		£87.35
1 x Deflector Plate		£44.96
2 x Bumper	£3.85	£7.70
1 x Pin Fastener		£26.66
1 x Spring		£3.85
1 x 20ltr Hy-Gard Oil		£77.55
1 x Consumables		£20.00
1 x Labour – Approx 8-10 Hours		£600.00
	Total	£1139.21
	VAT	£227.84
	Grand Total	£1367.05